



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

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Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

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EU statement on participation in Human Dimension meetings

Mr Chairman, I would like to return to the matter, raised on separate occasions by the Russian Federation and Belarus, of participation at OSCE Human Dimension Meetings. European Union Member States took careful note of the views expressed and have conveyed these to our capitals. Member States make every effort to share their experience by fielding experts at OSCE meetings.

As the EU has repeatedly expressed, we remain fully committed to OSCE activities in all three dimensions. We continue to believe that NGOs have a vital role to play in these activities, as reflected in our commitments, and that our human dimension meetings play an indispensable role in enabling them to promote the implementation of these commitments.

We share the view that attendance by NGOs at Human Dimension Meetings should be further improved and that participating States must continue their efforts to ensure that our meetings remain of high interest to them.

In this regard, we consider it essential that enough time is given to preparing Human Dimension Events, so that good speakers and experts can be found.

OSCE participating States need to focus meetings on the most pressing human rights challenges in the region, and to demonstrate that we are prepared to respond

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constructively to criticism and recommendations raised, in particular by NGOs and civil society representatives. The EU therefore strongly supports the recommendation of the Director of ODIHR made at last week at Permanent Council; that we should introduce systematic follow-up to the recommendations put forward at Human Dimension events.

Mr. Chair, the European Union thanks colleagues for raising the issue and stands ready to engage in further discussion on it.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

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