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Greek Presidency of the European Union

**EU Statement
in the Opening Plenary of the OSCE Annual Security
Review Conference, 25 June 2003**

I am delighted to be here, and to speak on behalf of the European Union, at the very first OSCE Annual Security Review Conference. I am aware of the extensive work that lay behind the Porto decision to establish such a conference, and the considerable efforts necessary since then to bring it to fruition. This success demonstrates at the same time the effective and wide-ranging cooperation between the PC and the FSC which has developed over the last few years.

The theme of this plenary is the OSCE's role in the European Security landscape. We have heard the thought-provoking views of Ambassador Everts and Deputy Minister Rotfeld, our distinguished keynote speakers, on this issue. The EU's position is clear: that role is central to stability and security in the over-all OSCE area, and its importance in the 21st Century is undiminished.

The EU is developing its military and civilian capabilities for crisis management in the context of the European Security and Defence Policy. These evolving capacities call for an intensified and mutually reinforcing cooperation between the EU and other international institutions, including the OSCE. It is only through working closely together that we can effectively address the new challenges to our security and stability.

Over the last twenty years the CSCE, and then the OSCE, has played a crucial role in handling the momentous changes, which fundamentally altered the political and security landscape of Europe. The range of arms control agreements and CSBMs that it generated, provided the transparency and verifiability to underpin the successful transition away from a bi-polar, pact-to-pact, world. The OSCE has demonstrated over the last decade its ability to serve as a unique forum for political dialogue. The breadth of its membership, and its underlying basis of consensus decision making, have ensured a constant dialogue of equals, all having a voice, small and large alike. Throughout this period the Organization has contributed to enhancing

security in its broadest and most comprehensive form, human and individual security as well as national and state security in all its aspects. It has consolidated protection and enhancement of human rights with institution building and societal development, the promotion of democratic principles and the rule of law, including civilian democratic control of armed and security forces.

During this period, the OSCE has developed its role in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. It has instruments that make it a key actor in this field: the cross-dimensional mandate, the institutions and missions, the ability to act both in the open and in confidence in order to prevent conflict. There is more to be done. Cooperation between the OSCE and other international organizations has been enhanced and continues to be crucial. As participating States, we should also look at our role - in sharing information, in cooperating with the OSCE, in translating warning signals into action. Regional issues, in particular the frozen conflicts, must remain at the heart of OSCE's agenda.

Demonstrably, the OSCE has done much to manage the initial crucial period of change. Now it seems we face another. We increasingly face new types of threats to security, arising from intra-state or cross-border conflicts or activities. Even within the OSCE region we encounter disquieting armed confrontation, and in some areas stability can only be guaranteed by an international military and civil presence. Terrorism, in all its forms, and in its frightening new guises, ultimately threatens us all. Criminal activities, from the seemingly innocent smuggling of cigarettes, to the disgrace of trafficking in people, have spread where state authority is weakest.

Together, the participating States of the OSCE are in a strong position to deal with such phenomena. Our Organization needs to build on its existing strengths, its far-reaching politico-military acquis, its experiences in the field of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, its institutions, missions and field presences, and the unique body of expertise on which it can call. The OSCE's inclusiveness and three-dimensional approach give it unique political and operational capabilities. Its multi-dimensional character allows it to address the crucial question of how to suppress terrorism and crime while fully respecting human rights. It also retains the politico-military acquis to handle those risks which contain a military dimension. The EU faces the same challenges as the OSCE, and it is our task to go forward together, complementing each other's political commitment and practical engagement in the process for the reintegration of Europe.

In conclusion, the EU looks forward to the ASRC becoming a regular and important part of the OSCE calendar. The Union encourages participants to this Conference to make good use of this opportunity to address security issues in a cross-dimensional manner.

The Acceding Countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia and the

Associated Countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey align themselves with this statement.