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OSCE Chairmanship Conference on “Security Implications of Climate Change in the OSCE Region” Bucharest 5-6 October 2009

EU Speaking Points

The European Union would like to thank the Greek Chairmanship, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania and the OCEEA for organizing this timely conference and for preparing an interesting as well as balanced agenda.

The conference takes place at a crucial time, in the run-up to the important Copenhagen conference in December and soon after climate change aspects were discussed at the UN General Assembly and at the G20 meeting in Pittsburgh. Furthermore, UN climate change talks are taking place in Bangkok at this very moment.

The issue of climate change is high on the agenda of the EU. Consequently the EU takes a very active role in the process leading up to the Copenhagen conference and is willing to do its part.

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The EU's views on the security implications of climate change are outlined in its paper from March 2008 on "Climate Change and International Security". In this public document, which reflects the long-term approach that this problem merits and the major impact it will have on our nations, it is stated, *inter alia*, that "climate change is best viewed as a threat multiplier which exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability".

The potential link between climate change and security has also been recognized by the UN with the UN General Assembly resolution on "Climate Change and its Possible Security Implications", unanimously adopted in early June this year. As requested by the General Assembly, the UN Secretary General has submitted a comprehensive report on the possible security implications of climate change, based on the views of the Member States and relevant regional and international organizations, OSCE included.

The EU naturally also attaches importance to the issue of security implications of climate change in an OSCE context. We agree that the main forum responsible for climate change is the UN, not least as regards negotiations on future global action on climate change. However, as stated at several occasions in the OSCE context, the EU believes that the OSCE – given its comprehensive approach to security – has a role to play in addressing the security implications of climate change. In the Madrid Declaration of 2007, the OSCE participating States recognized that the OSCE has a complementary role to play, within its mandate, in addressing this challenge in its specific region.

The EU very much appreciates that the agenda of this conference has a very OSCE-specific focus and that one of the sessions pertain to the interrelated issues of climate change and energy. We feel confident that in our discussions over two days we will be able to jointly identify more clearly the way ahead for the OSCE as regards security implications of climate change. In our view, this conference constitutes an important step in developing the OSCE's complementary role – building on its comprehensive approach to security – with regard to this very important topic.

Lastly, the EU would like to once again express its great appreciation to the Greek Chairmanship, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania and the OCEEA for organizing this timely conference. The EU looks forward to fruitful discussions on this most relevant topic. We would also like to thank our Romanian hosts for their hospitality and warm welcome to all participants.