

Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération
en Europe

**INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE DELEGATIONS OF
CANADA, ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN, NORWAY AND SWITZERLAND
IN RESPONSE TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SLOVENIA,
H.E. DR. DIMITRIJ RUPEL,
697TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
24 JANUARY 2008**

The Delegations of Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland extend a warm welcome to the Foreign Minister of Slovenia, His Excellency, Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, and thank him for his address in his new capacity as President of the Council of the European Union.

We note with satisfaction that the EU attaches great importance to this Organization, and we are pleased with the experience and knowledge of the OSCE that the former Chairman-in-Office brings to the Presidency.

Our Delegations share the priorities just outlined in the EU Presidency's address. We fully support the continuation of an OSCE presence in Kosovo, regardless of the outcome of ongoing discussions.

In addition, we are pleased that the EU remains seized of issues in Afghanistan. In particular we welcome news that EUPOL is scheduled to be fully operational in March 2008.

We are also pleased that the EU maintains its focus on issues in Central Asia and those resulting from the protracted conflicts and that it will continue its cooperation with the OSCE to meet these challenges.

We share the Slovene Foreign Minister's disappointment that we were unable to agree to a Convention giving the OSCE a legal personality and privileges and immunities. It is our hope that we can agree to this document in 2008.

Our Delegations also regret the decision of the Russian Federation to suspend its implementation of the CFE Treaty and will support all efforts to ensure that this important Treaty regime remains viable.

We would further like to echo the words of support FM Rupel has just given to the ODIHR and, in particular, its election monitoring work. The activities

undertaken by this Institution are pivotal to the security of all participating States of the OSCE.

Finally, we would be remiss not to stress the value our Delegations place on the excellent cooperation we have always enjoyed with the EU at all levels.

We would particularly highlight our regular information and consultation meetings with the EU Troika, excellently conducted by Ambassador Ana Barata in the last six months of 2007.

Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are pleased to continue these consultations with the Slovenian Ambassador, Stanislav Rascan, in an effort to fulfill our shared priorities in 2008.