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**Informal meeting of the plenary
on the United Nations System-wide Coherence
“Delivering as One”**

Statement by

H.E. Ambassador Sanja Štiglic
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on behalf of the European Union

New York, 28 March 2008

Excellencies,

I have the honour today to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and the EFTA country Iceland, as well the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

The first year of implementation of the "Delivering as One" programme is behind us. This gives us the opportunity to discuss the developments on the ground while strengthening UN coherence. It is in this light that the EU would like to convey our appreciation to the Co-Chairs of the informal consultations of the General Assembly on UN System-wide Coherence for convening this meeting. Furthermore, we would like to thank the representatives of all countries, which have volunteered to experiment the recommendations to bring forward system-wide coherence, for their valuable presentations about the progress achieved, lessons learnt and existing challenges.

Based on the feedback of Pilot countries, we have come to realise that 2007 was a year of planning, setting and building the »One framework«. Nevertheless, we have also understood that the process, which is proceeding at a different pace in each country, has moved rapidly. The EU is happy to note that progress, very much in line with Member States' recommendations of the 2007 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness, was achieved in several areas:

- National ownership and leadership, which are of primary importance, have been clearly proven as the drivers of the development process. This being the case, we can assume that there is no "One Size Fits All" approach to development and that development assistance by the United Nations development system is responding to the varying development needs of programme countries and is in alignment with their national development plans and strategies.
- Greater alignment of UN System activities to the national programmes, plans and priorities of Pilot countries has been affirmed by their national authorities. In general, a process of harmonisation of development partners in support of countries' development strategies has been witnessed.

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

- Progress has also been achieved in creating a system, leading to empowered and impartial Resident Coordinators. Pilot countries nevertheless highlighted that the role of the Resident Coordinator must be adequately enhanced, which is essential for delivering results at the country level.

The Co-Chairs noted during their visit of Pilot countries that an increase in transaction costs occurred in the initial phase of implementation of the "Delivering as One" Programme. Despite this rise, due to increased efficiency the first savings have been produced, some of them also ploughed back into development. The EU strongly supports this approach and believes further thought should be given to mechanisms, meant for obtaining this goal. The EU considers the issue of funding for the UN's operational activities as a key question.

Today's meeting will allow us to identify areas, which still need to be looked at in order to move forward. A positive assessment has been made by Pilot countries and of those several other countries, which are currently exploring, with local UN offices, mechanisms to promote efficiency, and reduce duplications. We have heard that due to the changing development cooperation environment, opportunities have been created for the repositioning of the United Nations and its operational activities. It is this change that will enable the United Nations to remain at the heart of multilateralism and to carry out its role: the effective contribution to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you.