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OSCE Conference on fight against racism and discrimination in Brussels on 13 and 14 September 2004

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VIENNA/BRUSSELS, 16 August 2004 Brussels to host OSCE Conference on fight against racism and discrimination Tolerance and the fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination will be the focus of an international OSCE conference that will take place in Brussels on 13 and 14 September. Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, HRH Prince Filip of Belgium and the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Solomon Passy, will open the event. Keynote speakers will include Prince Hassan of Jordan, Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomeu and Marieluise Beck, the German Governments Commissioner for Foreigners Issues. The conference, which will be hosted by Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht, is a result of a decision by the 55-nations OSCE Ministerial Council held in Maastricht last December. International experts, representatives of governments, OSCE participating States and institutions as well as of civil society and non-governmental organizations are expected to attend the conference. In four workshop sessions, they will look at the legislative and institutional mechanisms concerning the issue; at the role of governments and civil society; at the question of discrimination of migrant workers and at ways to promote tolerance and respect for diversity through education and the media. The conference will be held at the Brussels Expo («Heysel»), Auditorium 2000 and Hall 10, Place de la Belgique, 1020 Brussels. It will be entirely open to the media. Access to the conference premises for media representatives will be by special press card, obtainable only by prior accreditation. Please note that media representatives already accredited to the Belgian foreign and interior ministries (FPS) must also apply for special accreditation. The accreditation process will take place between Monday, 16 August, and Friday, 10 September 2004. We recommend that media representatives apply as early as possible. Accreditation forms and other information on technical questions are available on a special website at http://www.osce.org/documents/cio/2004/07/3393_en.pdf. The special press cards can be collected from the Press desk at the Conference centre from 8.00 till 18.00 on Monday 13 September and from 8.00 till 15.00 on Tuesday 14 September. A pre-registration desk will be opened on Sunday 12 September from 14.00 till 18.00 at the main entrance of the Public Federal Service Foreign Affairs (Ministry) located 15 rue des Petits Carmes/Karmelietenstraat, 1000 Brussels - 150m from the upper end of the «Petit-Sablon» park, subway station "Porte de Namur"). A valid press card and an identification document carrying a passport photograph will be requested at collection. During the conference, the press working area will offer workspaces with phone connections, the use of which is free of charge. As PCs will not be provided, journalists should bring their own laptops and mobile phones to the press working area. Events that are not accessible directly for reasons of space will be broadcast into the press centre via closed circuit TV. Plenary sessions of the conference will be simultaneously translated between the six official OSCE languages (English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish). Stand-up backdrops for photo opportunities and TV interviews will be set up in areas close to the conference hall. All participants should take into account the fact that high-level security measures will be operating throughout the conference. N.B. Registration procedures for NGOs can be found at http://www.osce.org/documents/cio/2004/07/3259_en.pdf.

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