

**RCC Fourth Anniversary
14 March 2012, Hotel Inn Holiday**

Speaking points by the Head of European Union Delegation to Bosnia and
Herzegovina, Peter Sørensen, for the panel

"From Ownership to responsibility: Regional Cooperation in South East Europe
and EU Membership"

Secretary General, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me congratulate Regional Cooperation Council and its Secretariat
for its 4th birthday!

I believe that recent positive developments, including the agreement between
Belgrade and Pristina on the participation in regional fora, will pave the way for
another powerful impulse for enhanced and more result-oriented cooperation in
South East Europe.

Secretary General,

RCC Board meeting tomorrow will examine the progress made in the
implementation of the RCC's Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013. EU is
looking forward to a substantial discussion on the assessment of the first year of
the implementation of the Strategy, which will identify best practices and
lessons learned as well as gaps that need to be filled.

The achievements of the RCC during the past year are indeed important creating
good neighbourly relations, promoting stability in the area and helping its
members from the region to advance towards the EU. For example, in the

crucial area of Justice and Home Affairs, with the signing of the Regional Strategic Document almost a year ago in Montenegro.

We now look forward to concrete and tangible results in cooperation in fighting organised crime, corruption and gaps in criminal justice, to the benefit of all the people in the region. To achieve this cooperation among the police services of the region, between prosecutors, between courts and judges, in the area of extradition is essential.

Regional cooperation and good neighbourly relation are part of the SAP conditionality. This is one side. The other is that regional cooperation is a value in itself. It does not stop with European integration. Benelux, the Nordic Council, Visegrad 4 and other regional groupings are telling.

The RCC, first of all, monitors all levels of regional cooperation. In this sense, you are our eyes and ears in the region, and your input could be further utilised in the future Annual Enlargement Package.

Then, the RCC can help the enlargement process by looking at the "big picture" and identifying existing gaps in cooperation and the key priorities of the region in addressing them. It will concentrate its efforts on areas that could have maximum impact and value added for the countries of the region.

With these words, allow me to congratulate, once again, the RCC, its Secretary-General and the staff of the Secretariat and the Brussels Liaison Office, and wish them all the best in the organisation's future endeavours.