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**Conference notes IRRI-KIIB**

Conference chaired by Mark Eyskens, Minister of State, Belgium.:

***"Croatia's accession to the EU:
3 D view (Determination, Dynamics, Dialogue)"***

**H.E. Mrs. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic**,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia.
Brussels, 6 October 2005

Summary; this is not an official record of proceedings and specific remarks are not necessarily attributable.

Minister Grabar-Kitarovic gave a brief introduction about Croatia’s path underway to the EU membership and about the decision of the EU Council on October 3 to launch membership talks with Croatia.

The Minister informed the public about Croatia’s “3-D approach” regarding the enlargement process: dynamics, determination and dialogue. The Minister stated that enlargement will continue to be one of the successful EU policies. It brings benefits with the respective countries.

The perspective of membership has proven to be a strong incentive for the countries in South Eastern Europe to proceed with the reforms. “The dynamics of the process should be continued, along with the process of rethinking the institutions and some of the aspects of the Constitutional Treaty”, she said.

Mrs. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic believes in an assessment on individual basis. Each country’s efforts and achievements in the reform processes should be properly evaluated. The Minister stressed that the opening of the accession negotiations was a strong message to Croatia and to its neighbours to continue with the necessary reforms in a determined manner. Croatia proves as a role model that South Eastern Europe has indeed a European perspective.

The Minister highlighted the importance of Dialogue in the enlargement process: dialogue with the citizens, with the region and with the EU. The Croatian government is building a Communication Strategy to present the benefits and the challenges of EU membership. Mrs. Grabar-Kitarovic felt that Croatia has to assist and support its neighbours in their reform process. Croatia has already exchanged its experiences with them. It also works with its neighbours to resolve open issues. “The joint interest is a lasting stabilisation and sustainable development of the whole region”, she added. The dialogue with the EU is one at all levels to communicate a Croatia that wants to entry the EU as a constructive partner, able to act as an anchor of stability and to work towards strengthening the EU.

There is still a long way to go in completing all the reforms, but the Minister believed that “the future of the region is bright and European”. It is up to Croatia and it neighbours “to provide results and to prove that they are valuable partners”.

Further Information:

- on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European integrations: [website](http://www.mfa.hr/MVP.asp?pcpid=1612)
- on EU-Croatia: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/candidate.htm> (general); [EU's relations with Croatia](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/croatia/)
- on the Delegation of the EC to Croatia: <http://www.delhrv.cec.eu.int/en/eu_and_country/issues.htm>
   Euractiv dossier : [EU-Croatia relations](http://www.euractiv.com/Article?tcmuri=tcm:29-129605-16&type=LinksDossier)

- news articles:

\* Turkey, Croatia Begin EU Entry Talks - 04/10/2005:
"Formal ceremonies in Luxembourg shortly after midnight Monday marked the official beginnings of Turkey and Croatia's EU accession talks."
Southeast European Times: [read this article](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2005/10/04/feature-01)

\* Rehn urges Croatia to adhere to European values, norms - 10/10/2005
"During a weekend visit to Croatia, EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn urged Zagreb authorities to focus on meeting the conditions for EU membership. Serious and persistent breach of European values and laws could lead to the suspension of the country's accession talks, he warned." (AP, HINA, Xinhua - 09/10/05; AFP, AP - 08/10/05)
Southeast European Times: [read this article](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2005/10/10/feature-01)

Croatian News Agency HINA: <http://www.hina.hr/nws-bin/ehot.cgi>

Report made by Vanlauwe