Report on Croatia's 2006 progress report

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The Council commends Croatia for the progress it has made in the past year. It states that the accession negotiations have begun well and first results have been obtained and that Croatia is now required to build on the progress made.

The Council recalls that, in line with the Negotiating Framework, the advancement of the accession negotiations continues to be guided by Croatia's progress in preparing for accession.

Particular attention should be paid to accelerating the pace of reforms in the areas of judicial and public administration reform, the fight against corruption, and economic reform.

Rigorous implementation of Croatia's obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, in particular in the areas of state aid and real estate acquisition, will be essential to maintain Croatia's positive momentum on the path to EU membership.

The Council welcomes Croatia's full cooperation with ICTY and emphasises that Croatia needs to maintain it.

Croatia also needs to pay due attention to good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation, including making the necessary efforts towards finding solutions to outstanding bilateral issues, in particular border disputes.