



Ramallah, 13 August 2006  
S228/06

## Summary of remarks to the press

by Javier SOLANA,

EU High Representative for the CFSP,

Ramallah, West Bank, 13 August 2006

The following is an edited summary of remarks to the press by Mr Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), on 13 August in Ramallah, West Bank, following meetings with Abu MAZEN, President of the Palestinian Authority, and Saeb EREKAT, Chief Palestinian Negotiator:

*"I wanted to come here and to visit the President in order to pass a very clear message of support, of the support of the international community, and of the support of the European Union for the President and the people of Palestine. Now that a lot of things are taking place in the region we do not want to give the impression that we forget. We must not forget. We know very well that the centre of gravity of the crisis in the Middle East, if we want it to be solved, is the Palestinian-Israeli problem. And we want to put all our energy and all our intensity into seeing how we can move the situation towards finding a solution. I have found the President very committed and I hope very much that in the coming days we will talk again on the phone, and at the end of the week, and we will see if we can come to some decisions."*

**Question:** *Did you discuss the issues of the Rafah border crossing and the kidnapped soldier in Gaza?*

**Answer:** *Yes, we discussed the two issues. On Rafah, I had a meeting this morning with the Minister of Defence of Israel and we are going to see if we can find a mechanism whereby Rafah can be reopened. We know that the situation is more difficult now than it was before but we have responsibilities, the Palestinians and the Israelis, to keep it open and we would like very much to keep it open. I have passed a clear message to the Israeli Minister of Defence.*

*And yes, we discussed the soldier. I cannot give you any special information. I am concerned and I would like very much to see the soldier released. I have no doubt that efforts will continue in a very constructive manner so that we can move the situation forward and improve it and I make an appeal again to anybody who can do anything in that direction to do as much as possible and the sooner the better. Every day counts.*

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

The Spokesperson of the Secretary General, High Representative for CFSP

+32 (0)2 281 6467 / 8239 / 5150 / 5151 +32 (0)2 281 5694

internet: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>

e-mail: [presse.cabinet@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:presse.cabinet@consilium.europa.eu)

**Question:** *Did you discuss the future of the Palestinian government? Do you have any proposals for solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?*

**Answer:** *We have discussed both today and, as you know, the President continues with negotiations and he is going to Gaza tomorrow and the day after. We will talk on phone in the middle of the week to see how things move. And, before the end of the month, before the UN General Assembly starts in September, we would like to have something more concrete to say.*

**Question:** *Are you worried about the situation?*

**Answer:** *Yes, I am worried, of course, about the situation. I would like to see a better situation.*

**Question:** *Did you discuss the Palestinian prisoners?*

**Answer:** *Yes, that is another thing that we talked about, yes.*

**Question:** *Do you think that tomorrow will be the day of the ceasefire in Lebanon?*

**Answer:** *I think that tomorrow morning there will be a ceasefire and I hope very much that there will be one. It is very, very important not only to have a ceasefire but to have a sustainable ceasefire. As you know, I have been in Lebanon and Israel and I have been talking to everyone and I hope very much that we will have a ceasefire.*

---