



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



8817/05 (Presse 112)

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PRESS RELEASE

2660th Council meeting

General Affairs and External Relations

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Brussels, 23 and 24 May 2005

President **Mr Jean ASSELBORN**
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Immigration of Luxembourg

* Some external relations items were adopted without debate at the 2659th meeting on General Affairs (8816/05)

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Main Results of the Council

*Situation in **Darfur** : in preparation for the expansion of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) the Council stressed that the EU would lend all possible support to military, police and civilian efforts, in response to AU requests, by presenting a comprehensive and substantial offer to the AMIS donor conference in Addis Ababa on 26 May 2005. The various possible forms of such support are being considered, with particular regard to planning, logistics, equipment, strategic and tactical airlift, development of the AU's observation capabilities, and training. Here the Council highlighted the need - in the interests of complementarity and transparency - to consult with other prominent members of the international community.*

*The Council expressed its profound concern at the latest developments in eastern **Uzbekistan**. It strongly condemned the reported excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force by the Uzbek security forces. It deeply regretted the failure so far by the Uzbek authorities to respond adequately to the United Nations' call for an independent international inquiry into these events and urged the Uzbek authorities to reconsider their position. Depending on the response, the Council will consider further steps.*

*With the Defence Ministers present, the Council considered an important dimension of **ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy)**. In particular, the Council:*

- took stock of the capabilities process in the context of implementation of the 2010 Headline Goal;*
- noted the encouraging developments regarding battlegroups;*
- welcomed the first report on the activities of the European Defence Agency and the action plan on the creation of a European defence equipment market adopted by the Agency's Steering Board (a ministerial meeting of the Steering Board was held in the margins of the Council);*
- decided to launch - on 8 June 2005 - the EUSEC RD Congo Mission, a European Union mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.*

*In addition, ahead of the United Nations summit in September 2005, the Council agreed to more ambitious **development aid** commitments in order to speed up progress towards achieving the Millennium development goals set by the international community in 2000.*

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OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

Please see "General Affairs" press release 8816/05 Presse 111.

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site <http://ue.eu.int>.
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the abovementioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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Member

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Mr Javier SOLANA

Secretary-General of the Council of the European
Union/High Representative for the CFSP

ITEMS DEBATED**EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY - *Council conclusions***

With the Ministers for Defence present, the Council reviewed a series of ESPD-related developments.

It adopted the following conclusions:

"Military capabilities***Requirements Catalogue***

1. In the context of implementation of the 2010 Headline Goal, the Council approved a Requirements Catalogue incorporating the results of the technical work done to date and elements of the iterative process between the EU Military Committee and the Political and Security Committee. The Catalogue will be the basis for future work. It contains considerations regarding strategic planning hypotheses, the five illustrative scenarios and an initial list of the capabilities required to meet the aims set in the 2010 Headline Goal. The Council will approve the final 2005 Requirements Catalogue once the operational analysis has been applied and its results have been approved.

Single Progress Report

2. The Council noted the Single Progress Report on military capabilities, drawn up in line with the EU Capability Development Mechanism. The Council welcomed the Capability Improvement Chart, which is an integral part of the Single Progress Report and makes it possible to keep track of the progress made under the European Capability Action Plan (ECAP). An overview of the chart will keep the public and the media informed. In this context, the Council considered that further progress will be necessary in the development of military capabilities to remedy the current shortfalls, taking advantage of the impetus given by the establishment of the European Defence Agency and taking account of the evaluation of the EPAC.

ECAP evaluation

3. The Council approved the ECAP evaluation report drawn up by the EU Military Committee and the European Defence Agency. The report contains a detailed review of the Project Groups set up under the ECAP, thereby enabling their work to be refocused in the light of the new 2010 Headline Goal. Consequently, most of the Project Groups will migrate to a new, more integrated process associated with the functions and tasks of the European Defence Agency as defined in the Joint Action of 12 July 2004 on the establishment of the Agency, which include coordinating the implementation of the (ECAP) and any successor plan. The Council asked the European Defence Agency and the relevant Council bodies to implement the report's recommendations and conclusions without delay.

Rapid response

4. The Council noted the encouraging outcome of the Battlegroups Coordination Conference on 11 May 2005. The Council noted that the first two years of full operational capability, 2007 and 2008, will be covered by battlegroups formed by Member States, along with one third State, in accordance with the Council conclusions of 22 November 2004, except in the second half of 2007, for which one of the two contributions required is still awaited. The Council encouraged the Member States to make good this deficiency at a future Battlegroups Coordination Conference so that, as from January 2007, the EU will be fully capable of running two concomitant rapid response operations involving a battlegroup, and of launching the two operations almost simultaneously. The Council also noted that initial offers had been announced for the period beyond 2008.
5. The Council welcomed the SG/HR's report on an accelerated decision-making and planning process for EU rapid response operations, submitted in March 2005.

The Council approved the recommendations made on that basis by the Political and Security Committee, taking into account the advice of the EU Military Committee. These recommendations are designed to ensure that the EU decision-making and planning process can be completed in five days, from approval of the crisis management concept by the Council to the decision to launch an operation, in particular for operations involving battlegroups. The Council asked its relevant subsidiary bodies to implement these recommendations without delay.

6. The Council welcomed the progress made by its subsidiary bodies in implementing the battlegroups concept, and particularly in defining standards and criteria for battlegroups.

7. The Council noted that the EU-NATO Capability Group had continued to address issues of coherent and mutually reinforcing development of military capabilities in the EU and NATO where requirements overlap, including on EU Battlegroups-NATO Response Force. All EU Member States were informed of these issues.
8. The Council welcomed the adoption of the Model Agreement on the status of the forces for EU military crisis management operations. It asked its competent bodies to continue work on providing the EU with the means of improving its rapid reaction capabilities still further.

European Defence Agency

9. The Council welcomed the first report on the activities of the European Defence Agency, presented to it by the Head of the Agency, the SG/HR for the CFSP. The Council encouraged the Agency to continue implementing its 2005 work programme and stressed the importance of the four flagship projects launched by the Agency in its four areas of operation. These projects concern command, control and communications (C3), drones, combat armoured vehicles and the European defence equipment market.
10. The Council received with satisfaction the action plan adopted by the Steering Board of the Agency on the creation of a European defence equipment market. It asked the Agency to implement the plan swiftly, in particular as regards the voluntary arms acquisition regime.
11. The Council also welcomed the progress made regarding resumption of the relevant activities of the Western European Armaments Group and the Western European Armaments Organisation and encouraged the Agency to complete this task within the planned timeframe.
12. The Council stressed the importance of the first three-year financial framework for the Agency, which would be submitted to it for approval in the autumn and would set the level of ambition for the Agency up to the end of 2008.

Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina

13. The Council welcomed the action taken under Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is part of the EU's comprehensive approach in the country and helps achieve the EU's long-term objective: a stable, viable, peaceful and multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina, cooperating peacefully with its neighbours and remaining irreversibly on track in its European perspective. The Council welcomes the fact that Operation ALTHEA has proven to be effective since it was launched on 2 December 2004, which constitutes a sound basis for the first six-monthly review of the Operation.

Launch of the EUSEC RD Congo Mission

14. Further to the invitation letter of 26 April 2005 from the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Council decided to launch a European Union Mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the EUSEC RD Congo on 8 June 2005. This Decision was taken in accordance with Joint Action 2005/355/CFSP of 2 May 2005 on the EUSEC RD Congo Mission.
15. In close cooperation and coordination with the other actors in the international community, this Mission aims to provide practical support for the DRC's competent authorities in the field of security in their efforts to integrate the Congolese army, while taking care to promote policies compatible with human rights and international humanitarian law, democratic standards and the principles of good governance, transparency and respect for the rule of law.
16. This Mission, which is the first of its kind, is a tangible example of the action plan in practice providing support through the ESDP for peace and security in Africa and, on a larger scale, is an example of European security strategy in action. This Mission bolsters the EUPOL Kinshasa police mission and boosts the efforts already being made by the Commission and the Member States in the area of security sector reform in the DRC. The European Union and its Member States confirm that they are ready to consider support on a more operational level for the integration of the Congolese army, particularly on the basis of feedback from the EUSEC RD Congo Mission.

Generic Standards of Behaviour for ESDP Operations

17. The Council noted the generic document on standards of behaviour to be adhered to by all categories of personnel, whether military or civilian, involved in ESDP operations. This document is based on provisions already in force and applied to ESDP operations under way, and it could be adapted, in particular, according to the lessons drawn from ESDP operations and in the light of work currently being conducted by the United Nations and in other international organisations. This "living" document will be used in planning forthcoming ESDP operations in order to ensure that the personnel involved in ESDP operations comply with the highest standards of behaviour.
18. The Council considers that these standards of behaviour should also be applied, as appropriate, to personnel involved in other types of EU presence in areas of operations, in order to ensure consistency in the EU's approach. The Council would also encourage its relevant bodies to carry out further work in areas related to standards of behaviour and in the implementation of other specific aspects of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Fight against terrorism

19. The Council endorsed the Report on the implementation of the Conceptual Framework of the ESDP dimension in the fight against terrorism. This is a "living" document that should be updated regularly, in particular so as to ensure coherence and synergy between the actions undertaken in the field of ESDP to support the fight against terrorism. The report makes concrete recommendations to be implemented as soon as possible for each action point in the Conceptual Framework."

MIDDLE EAST

Ministers discussed the following items over lunch:

- Developments in the *Middle East* peace process, in particular the continuing fragility of the situation with the resurgence of tensions in Gaza and at the Israel-Lebanon border; the meeting of the Quartet in Moscow on 9 May 2005 and the mission of Mr Wolfensohn, the Quartet's Special Envoy for Disengagement; the Palestinian legislative elections on 17 July 2005, for which the EU will send a team of observers; and implementation of the commitments made by the parties at Sharm el-Sheikh.
- The situation in *Lebanon*, including the Lebanese Government's decision to accept the deployment of European observers in the run-up to the forthcoming legislative elections. In this connection Ministers reaffirmed their support for the Government's efforts to achieve its objectives, in particular to organise, on schedule, free, democratic elections, conducted without violence or any outside interference and according to a voting method accepted by all parties.

Regarding implementation of Resolution 1559, they noted the Syrian troop withdrawals from Lebanon and the withdrawal of the security services, which has yet to be confirmed. Lastly, they reaffirmed their support for the independent international investigation commission recently established under UN Security Council Resolution 1595 to investigate the assassination of Mr Rafik Hariri.

- The situation in *Iraq*: the Presidency provided details of an international conference on Iraq to be attended by Foreign Ministers, which was planned for the end of June in Brussels. The Conference would provide Iraq with the opportunity to set out its long-term strategy and its priorities and ideas on the constitutional process, reconstruction, the rule of law and public policy and to present its work in these areas. For the international community the overall aim of the Conference would be to mark both its support for the new Iraqi government during the transition period leading up to the constitutional elections in December 2005 and its commitment to Iraq's political, economic and social reconstruction.
- The situation in *Iran*, including the forthcoming Presidential elections on 17 June 2005 and the Guardian Council's announcement on 22 May of the approved presidential candidates.

Ministers also considered the latest developments in the nuclear field. They confirmed their endorsement of the negotiations taking place between Germany, France and the United Kingdom, with the support of the High Representative/Secretary-General, and the Iranians. In this connection, it was reaffirmed that Iran must abide by the commitments made in November 2004 under the Paris Agreement.

BARCELONA PROCESS

The Council took note of the state of preparations for the Seventh Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference to be held in Luxembourg on 30 and 31 May 2005 and held a brief exchange of views.

The Ministerial Conference will be an opportunity to evaluate the progress achieved so far in the EuroMed Partnership and to discuss guidelines for the future, with a view to the extraordinary summit to be held in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 2005 to mark the tenth anniversary of EuroMed.

A review of the partnership will be undertaken in order to define guidelines for the future as regards:

- governance, democracy and stability;
- economic reform and sustainable development;
- exchanges in the socio-cultural and education fields;
- justice, security and freedom, including the questions of migration and social integration.

The Council also approved, on 17 May 2005 by the written procedure, draft EU guidelines for the Seventh Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference.

UZBEKISTAN - Council conclusions

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council is profoundly concerned by the latest developments in eastern Uzbekistan. The Council deeply regrets the appalling loss of life and expresses its sympathy to the people, who have suffered as a consequence of violence. The Council will continue to monitor closely the evolution of events. The Council is also worried about the resulting movement of population on the Kyrgyz border and urges Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to ensure full compliance with international conventions on internally displaced persons and refugees.
2. The Council strongly condemns the reported excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force by the Uzbek security forces, and calls upon the Uzbek authorities to act with restraint in order to avoid further loss of life. The Council encourages all sides to work towards a peaceful and sustainable solution to the present situation.
3. In this context, the Council urgently calls upon the Uzbek authorities to respect their international commitments to democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The Council recalls in particular the commitments and the existing mechanisms in the framework of the EU-Uzbekistan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and in the OSCE.
4. The Council deeply regrets the failure so far of the Uzbek authorities to respond adequately to the UN's call for an independent international inquiry into these events to take place and urges the Uzbek authorities to reconsider their position. Depending on the response, the Council will consider further steps. The Council also calls upon the Uzbek authorities to grant immediate and unimpeded access to humanitarian agencies and other relevant international organizations to the area.
5. It will be important that the root causes of instability are addressed. The Council urges the Uzbek authorities to carry out domestic reforms, which are essential for the social and economic development and the achievement of democracy and stability in the country. The Council will continue to coordinate with the OSCE and other relevant international actors, such as the Russian Federation and the United States, in order to support such reforms effectively.
6. The Council stands ready to use instruments available within the framework of the EU-Uzbekistan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement to assist the affected population in its immediate humanitarian needs."

BURUNDI

The Council held an exchange of views on the situation in Burundi. It referred in particular to the declaration by the Presidency on 20 May 2005 in the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the text of which is set forth below:

Declaration on Burundi by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, Brussels, 20 May 2005

"In line with its continued support for the Arusha peace process, the European Union welcomes the signing of a joint communiqué between the transitional Burundese Government and Palipehuto-FNL in Dar es Salaam on 15 May 2005. The EU considers that an immediate cessation of hostilities is an important first step towards comprehensive and inclusive peace in Burundi.

The European Union expresses its gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Tanzania for its effective mediation of, and continued commitment to, the Burundi peace process.

The European Union strongly urges all Burundese parties to support the outcome of the negotiations with FNL and to continue working towards a permanent ceasefire and an inclusive peace process, successful transition and national reconciliation.

The European Union welcomes both parties' pledge to avoid their negotiations interfering with the election process endorsed by the Regional Initiative in Kampala on 22 April 2005, and appeals to them to observe the deadlines set.

Recalling the Gatumba massacre in August 2004, the European Union reiterates its wish to see those responsible for this crime and other atrocities against the civil population brought to justice. The European Union considers that putting an end to the climate of impunity in Burundi and throughout the Great Lakes Region is an indispensable prerequisite for a return to lasting peace and prosperity in the region.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process."

SUDAN - Council conclusions

The Council, including the Ministers for Defence, held in-depth discussions on the situation in Sudan and adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) opened a new chapter in Sudanese politics. It is the primary responsibility of the signatories to that Agreement to implement it in good faith. In this phase the EU will maintain its commitment to restoring peace and development and will assume its responsibilities accordingly in the Assessment and Evaluation Commission.
2. The Council notes the progress made in implementing the Comprehensive Agreement. It considers that the constitutional review now under way should act as a catalyst for bringing on board political forces, including opposition parties and groups, in both northern and southern Sudan, which were not parties to the Naivasha negotiations, and it appeals to the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement to facilitate their participation in this crucial process.
3. The Council stresses the importance of the Comprehensive Agreement in accommodating the aspirations of various marginalised regions and in gradually establishing a fully democratic system in Sudan. The Council endorses all efforts to achieve south-south reconciliation and the gradual establishment of the institutions necessary for a modern administration.
4. The Council reaffirms that the peace process in Sudan is an integrated process and expresses its concern at the slow progress that has been made. Implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the launch of an inclusive democratic process, together with developments in the crisis in Darfur, are decisive factors for the future of EU-Sudan relations. The speed and scale of disbursement of the EU assistance pledged at the Oslo Conference will hinge very largely on those factors.

5. UN Security Council Resolutions 1590, 1591 and 1593 are key bases for the commitment of the international community, and the EU urges all parties in Sudan to cooperate fully with the United Nations and with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in implementing them. The EU fully supports the ICC's action and will keep close track of progress through the reports to the UN Security Council. The EU fully supports the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and calls on the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement to take all necessary steps to assist in its rapid deployment.
6. The Council stresses its firm resolve to ban all deliveries of arms and military equipment to the Government of Sudan and points out that the EU's arms embargo, imposed by its Decision of 15 March 1994 and amended in response to UN Security Council Resolution 1591, which applies to the entire Sudanese territory, remains in force.

The Council remains prepared to consider taking further appropriate measures against those responsible for infringements from any of the parties to the conflict; such measures will depend on how the situation develops and could include targeted sanctions.

The Council remains deeply concerned at the continuing violence against the civilian population in Darfur, despite a lull in the military confrontation. The Council is also concerned at the upsurge of banditry and the murderous attacks on humanitarian agencies. It strongly condemns such acts, some of which can be prosecuted by the ICC, and requests all parties to the conflict scrupulously to observe the N'Djamena ceasefire and the Abuja Humanitarian and Security Protocols. The Council also strongly condemns the taking hostage of a Ceasefire Commission observer team by the Sudan Liberation Army.

7. There is no military solution to the conflict. The Council urges the warring parties in Darfur to commit themselves wholeheartedly to efforts to resolve the conflict peacefully, in particular by sending top-level representatives to the next session of AU-sponsored negotiations in Abuja. The Council calls for a rapid resumption of those negotiations, which it is supporting through the EU representative in the mediation team. It stands ready to take other appropriate steps that might contribute to the negotiating process, in agreement and in cooperation with the AU.

8. The EU considers that strengthening the EU-AU partnership is the best way to help improve security in Darfur. The Council has noted the AU Peace and Security Committee's decision of 28 April 2005 to increase the military and civilian strength of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). The Council calls on the AU quickly to take the measures identified during the joint assessment mission in March 2005 in order to render the currently deployed mission fully operational and so prepare the ground for the expansion of AMIS in the near future. The EU will lend all possible support to military, police and civilian efforts, in response to AU requests, by presenting a comprehensive and substantial offer to the AMIS donor conference on 26 May 2005 in Addis Ababa. The relevant Council bodies have already begun looking into the various forms that such support could take, with particular regard to planning, logistics, equipment, strategic and tactical airlift, development of the AU's observation capabilities and training. The Council here highlights the need, to ensure complementarity and transparency, to consult with other prominent members of the international community involved in supporting the AU mission in Sudan, including the United Nations, NATO, the United States and Canada.
9. The Council is concerned at the tensions in eastern Sudan, which have already resulted in clashes between demonstrators and police in Port Sudan and Kassala. Moreover, the Council would encourage the Government of Sudan to begin talks at once with all opposition groups in the east of the country, in order to defuse tensions in that area.
10. The Council is also concerned at the tensions that have arisen between Khartoum, N'Djamena and Asmara, which entail a risk of regionalisation of the Darfur crisis and escalating tension in the east of the country. The Council urges the Governments concerned to seek a swift settlement of their differences through dialogue and cooperation.
11. The Council welcomes the Resolution on Sudan adopted at the 61st session of the Commission on Human Rights and urges the Government of Sudan to implement all the measures mentioned in that Resolution, and in particular to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur to be appointed. In accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), the Council would encourage the Government of Sudan to involve civil society and women in all stages of the peace process."

FOLLOW-UP TO THE ACTION PLAN ON THE TSUNAMI IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

The Council took stock of the implementation of the Action Plan adopted on 31 January 2005, on the basis of a note from the Presidency (8961/05).

The High Representative highlighted the main elements of his report, particularly in relation to the mobilisation and use of military resources and consular cooperation. For its part, the Commission again drew attention to the suggestions contained in the communications it submitted in April on reinforcing the Union's capacity to respond to catastrophes and on improvements to be made to the Community civil protection mechanism.

Work on the different aspects of the Action Plan will continue over the coming weeks in the Council's preparatory bodies, particularly in the context of the introduction of an EU rapid-response capacity. The Council agreed to keep this issue on its agenda and to return to it regularly.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

– MILLENNIUM GOALS - Council conclusions

The Council discussed the financing of the actions implemented with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals established by the international community in 2000. It adopted the following conclusions on the position to be taken by the EU at the United Nations summit to be held in New York from 14 to 16 September 2005.

"The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council,

WELCOMING the report of the United Nations Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", which constitutes a prime contribution to the preparation of the United Nations Summit in September 2005 on the follow-up to the 2000 Millennium Declaration and major United Nations conferences and summits, and specifically the recommendations in the area of development based on a shared vision and on mutual responsibility;

RECALLING the European Council's conclusions of 16 December 2004, confirming the full commitment of the EU to the Millennium Development Goals and policy coherence;

RECALLING the European Council's conclusions of 23 March 2005 reaffirming that the Union is firmly resolved to play a major role within the United Nations in general and in preparations for the summit in particular and to reinforce the Union's support for the African continent;

RECALLING the important contribution of the European Union, as the world's biggest donor and major trading partner, to realizing the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and

RECALLING its strong commitment to work in partnership with all developing countries as exemplified in the Cotonou Agreement with the ACP States;

WELCOMING the Commission Communications on Speeding Up progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness, Policy Coherence for Development, and the EU report on Millennium Development Goals 2000-2004; EU contribution to the review of the MDGs at the UN 2005 High-level Event;

REAFFIRMING that the UN Summit in September 2005 should result in the agreement on common responses to the main development, security and human rights challenges as identified in the internationally agreed development targets, and in an reinvigorated political willingness of all parties to implement these common responses, the following positions and specific commitments in the field of development are taken:

1. The EU is strongly committed to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs. The EU underlines the link between achieving the MDGs and implementing the outcomes of the UN international conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and other related fields. We furthermore recognize that there has been progress towards meeting the MDGs, but that this progress varies greatly by goal and by region, so that considerable improvement in mutual performance will be needed to achieve them by 2015. In that context, the EU reaffirms the high relevance of each of the MDGs, and the high importance to achieve the MDGs in each country.
2. The EU recalls the primary responsibility of developing countries for their development and the crucial importance of national ownership for development and supports comprehensive and coherent national poverty reduction strategies bold enough to meet the MDGs target by 2015.
3. The EU wants to see a number of issues of high importance and relevance for the attainment of the MDGs to be properly reflected in the outcome of the September Summit, such as endorsing employment, equitable and sustainable economic growth as well as sustainable consumption and production patterns as key routes out of poverty, the promotion of gender equality, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and broad-based participation in decision making, the importance of an intensified multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS as laid down in the European Programme for Action to confront HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis through external action, and the need to address links between environmental sustainability, security and poverty eradication. The EU further recognizes that the MDGs cannot be attained without progress in achieving the Cairo goal of universal sexual and reproductive health and rights. In accordance with the Council Conclusions from November 2004, the EU will therefore work to ensure that this linkage is properly reflected in the outcome of the September 2005 High-level Event. In this context, the EU strongly supports that a subsequent technical process examines how best to incorporate related targets and monitoring indicators under MDG 5.

FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Volume of official development aid (ODA)

4. Increased ODA is urgently needed to achieve the MDGs. In the context of reaching the existing commitment to attain the internationally agreed ODA target of 0,7% ODA/GNI, the EU notes with satisfaction that its Member States are on track to achieve the 0,39% target in 2006 for ODA volumes contained in the Barcelona commitments. At present, four out of the five countries, which exceed the UN target for ODA of 0,7%, of GNI, are Member States of the European Union. Five others have committed to a timetable to reach this target. While reaffirming its determination to reach these targets, the EU agrees to a new collective EU target of 0,56 % ODA/GNI by 2010, that would result in an additional annual EUR 20bn ODA by that time.
- i) Member States which have not yet reached a level of 0,51% ODA/GNI undertake to reach, within their respective budget allocation processes, that level by 2010, while those that are already above that level undertake to sustain their efforts;
 - ii) Member States which have joined the EU after 2002 and that have not reached a level of 0,17% ODA/GNI will strive to increase their ODA to reach, within their respective budget allocation processes, that level by 2010, while those that are already above that level undertake to sustain their efforts;
 - iii) Member States undertake to achieve the 0,7% ODA/GNI target by 2015 whilst those which have achieved that target commit themselves to remain above that target; Member States which joined the EU after 2002 will strive to increase by 2015 their ODA/GNI to 0,33%.

Innovative sources of financing

5. The Council will continue to consider the most promising options for innovative sources of financing for development, in order to increase the resources available in a sustainable and predictable way. It notes the intention of some Member States to introduce a solidarity levy on airline tickets.

Debt

6. The EU remains committed to finding solutions, in cooperation with international financial institutions, to unsustainable debt burdens, and is committed to full implementation of the enhanced HIPC initiative. It will be vital to agree on the scope and modalities for further multilateral debt relief in order to secure long-term debt sustainability on a case-by-case approach.
7. The EU will continue and enhance efforts to restore and maintain debt sustainability, based on a case-by-case approach, including (a) exploring possibilities for mechanisms for temporary suspension of debt servicing for developing countries affected by exogenous shocks, (b) specific measures for post-conflict countries with external arrears which, therefore, have not yet met the criteria of the HIPC initiative.

Aid effectiveness

8. While making efforts on the quantitative side of financing for development, the EU stresses the need to improve in parallel the quality and effectiveness of ODA as well as better donor practices and the need to enhance the capacity and economic sustainability of increased ODA for our partner countries.
9. In preparation for the Paris High Level Forum the Council adopted, on 22 November 2004, a comprehensive EU response with the report on "Advancing coordination, harmonisation and alignment". The EU will ensure implementation of the concrete recommendations contained therein, including a more effective framework for development assistance at the EU level and division of labour and complementarity at country level in the context of joint, multiannual programming based on the partner country's poverty reduction strategies.
10. The EU is fully committed to a timely implementation and monitoring of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness including setting monitorable targets for 2010 and of the EU specific commitments adopted at the Paris Forum.
11. In order to better respond to the need for stable resources and in view of the expected increases in ODA flows, the EU will develop new, more predictable and less volatile aid mechanisms. Such mechanisms could consist in the provision of a minimum level of budgetary aid secured in a medium-term perspective and linked to policy performance in the partner countries in particular in relation to the commitment towards achieving the MDGs in national poverty-reduction strategies.

Exogenous shocks

12. In order to mitigate the impact of exogenous shocks, including price vulnerability, on developing countries economies, the EU will support the operationalisation of market-based insurance schemes and explore possibilities for temporary suspension of debt-servicing on a case-by-case basis. Further, the EU will strengthen and improve access to existing financing mechanisms such as those provided for in the Cotonou Agreement (FLEX) to give short-term cover against the impact of such shocks on countries' revenue.

Other commitments

13. In addition, the Council will continue to work in the other areas covered by the Barcelona commitments by:
 - addressing the challenge of untying of aid by adopting as soon as possible, on the basis of the Commission's proposal, a regulation on the access to EC external assistance; the EU will support ongoing debates at international level on further untying of aid beyond existing OECD/DAC recommendations;
 - examining, on the basis of the report of the Task Force on Global Public Goods, the possibilities to establish by 2006 an Action Plan at EU level on the provision of priority International Public Goods (IPGs) and agreeing to examine the financing modalities of IPGs;
 - promoting a joint European position on enhancing the voice of developing and transition countries and further improving the quality of existing EU coordination in IFIs.

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

14. Looking ahead to the 6th WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong in December 2005, the EU is strongly committed to ensuring a development friendly, sustainable and ambitious outcome of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) that maximises development gains and thus contributes to the achievement of the MDGs. An ambitious outcome would provide new market access opportunities for goods and services from developing countries and new and improved trade rules which would contribute to a more efficient and equitable world trading system. The special needs of weak and vulnerable developing countries should be fully reflected in the outcome of the negotiations including through special and differential treatment provisions. Building on its experience with "Everything But Arms", the EU will invite developed Members, and developing country Members in a position to do so, to provide duty-free and quota-free market access for products originating from least-developed countries.
15. The EU is aware that not all developing countries may be able to take full advantage of the new opportunities which will be created by the DDA. Some may face adjustment costs when integrating into the multilateral trading system. In this spirit the EU commits to further improving and better coordinating trade-related assistance programmes and – in view of possible trade integration costs faced by developing countries – providing additional support for trade adjustment and integration into the global economy. It therefore agrees that the different options set out in the Communication for improved and increased aid, including that of an international mechanism for trade adjustment and capacity building, be pursued further within the EU and with the international community.
16. The EU will ensure that the GSP reform process secures high levels of preferential access for beneficiary countries in order to support development. In addition, it will work towards simplification and relaxation of the rules of origin applied to preferential regimes to better take account of the needs and constraints of developing countries.
17. The EU will continue to provide support to developing countries to enable them to seize trading opportunities, in particular by assisting them in integrating trade into their national development strategies and securing the necessary domestic reforms.

POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

18. The EU recognises the importance of non-development policies for assisting developing countries in achieving the MDGs. Building on the existing Treaty obligation for the Community, the EU shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in all policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries. The EU will make a specific effort to promote and enhance Policy Coherence for Development in the context of the Global Partnership for Development under MDG 8 and in support of partner countries' own policies and in compliance with international obligations.
19. The EU is committed to the implementation of the objectives contained in the Commission's communication on policy coherence for development dealing with the areas of trade, environment, security, agriculture, fisheries, social dimension of globalisation, employment and decent work, migration, research and innovation, information society, transport and energy, as well as climate change as listed in the Annex to these Council conclusions. The Council invites the Commission and the Member States to pursue its work on policy coherence for development on the basis of the commitments contained in the Annex to these conclusions. The EU confirms its engagement to effectively deliver on these commitments against the background of the given MDG framework between now and 2015.
20. The Council will assess existing internal procedures, mechanisms and instruments to strengthen the effective integration of development concerns in its decision making procedures on non-development policies. In accordance with the December 2004 Council conclusions, the Council invites the Commission to further reinforce its existing instruments, notably its impact assessment tool and consultations with developing countries during policy formulation, and consider new ones when necessary in support of a strengthened policy coherence for development. The Council calls on EU Member States and the Commission to strengthen policy coherence for development procedures, instruments and mechanism and secure adequate resources in their respective administrations, looking at the best practices developed by some Member States.

FOCUS ON AFRICA

21. The EU considers the development of Africa a priority and will strengthen its efforts to support African countries to reach the MDGs. The EU will also strengthen its cooperation with the UN and other international partners to that end.
22. The EU will increase its financial assistance for sub-Saharan Africa and will provide collectively at least 50% of the agreed increase of ODA resources to the continent while fully respecting individual Member States' priorities in development assistance. All measures taken as regards policy coherence and quality of aid will be applicable to sub-Saharan Africa as a priority.
23. In this framework, the Council welcomes the focus on specific actions beyond existing programmes presented by the Commission in areas representing key multipliers for development in view of reaching the MDGs (governance, interconnectivity and access to services).
24. The Council is greatly encouraged by institutional developments within Africa and is firmly committed to strengthening the EU-Africa dialogue and the strategic partnership with Africa to which the EU committed itself at the Cairo Summit of 2000.
25. The EU will increase its support to the capacity-building of the African Union. It will support the implementation of reforms that the Africa Peer Review Mechanism will trigger, and invites the Commission to provide concrete proposals in this respect in order to ensure optimal EU coordination. The EU will increase its support to the African Union and other subregional Organisations in the field of peace and security, within the framework of the European action plan for peace and security in Africa and through the Peace Facility, bearing in mind the Council conclusions of 17 November 2003.
26. The EU, in partnership with other donors, proposes to establish a Europe-Africa partnership on infrastructure, based on the AU/NEPAD strategies, including to support the establishment of sustainable trans-African networks essential for the interconnectivity of the continent.

27. Focusing on trade and regional integration as instruments for development, the Council remains committed to ensuring that the EPA process firmly focuses on accelerating development including the strengthening of supply-side capacity and competitiveness, in particular by focusing on the following areas:

- economic governance;
- trade-related assistance and capacity-building, including the development of home markets;
- targeted support measures in key areas such as cotton, sugar and textiles;
- identification of resources to support adjustment measures;
- an ambitious trade facilitation agenda;
- addressing agriculture as a key element in the negotiations and supporting the development of regional agricultural markets based on adequate market regulation;
- supporting African partners to become more active players in the framework of multilateral trade, and enhance South-South trade.

With a view to future discussion at the GAERC, the Council invites the Commission to present a report before 15 September on the state of play of the EPA negotiations outlining both trade and development aspects and identifying areas where development cooperation can further support the EPA process.

28. In order to address issues of inequality and marginalisation, and to promote social cohesion, the EU will strengthen its support to access to basic services (water and sanitation, health, education, sustainable energy, etc.) and its support to combat environmental degradation. The progress in poverty reduction, governance, equity and sustainable development will be duly taken into account in the allocation criteria based on needs and performance. At the same time the EU will improve its assistance to post-conflict countries and fragile States.

29. The EU, together with other donors, will contribute to ensure adequate and predictable funding to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB.

30. The Council invites the Commission, in consultation with the SG/HR, to put forward proposals, each within their respective spheres of competence, by autumn, for a comprehensive and long-term EU Strategy for Africa, to be adopted by the European Council in December 2005.

STRENGTHENING THE UN

31. The EU welcomes the Secretary-General's intention to further improve the coordination of the United Nations system, including the grouping of the various agencies, funds and programs into more tightly managed entities. The EU also recognizes the need for more predictable financing of the UN's development efforts based on adequate burden-sharing. The role of ECOSOC to integrate, coordinate and review implementation of and progress towards the commitments taken at major UN conferences should also be further elaborated and pursued.
32. The EU supports a more effective governance of the global environment through a more integrated structure in order to reinforce environmental standard setting, scientific discussion and monitoring of treaty compliance.

MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP

33. The Council invites the Commission to monitor and regularly report on the implementation of these EU commitments on MDGs, including annual reports on the follow-up of EU commitments on financing and on the effectiveness of aid, and a biennial report on policy coherence for development."

– ***INFECTIOUS DISEASES - Council conclusions****

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"RECALLING the objectives set out in the UN 2000 Millennium Declaration and RECONFIRMING, in particular, the commitments made with respect to confront HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis as expressed in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

RECONFIRMING further the Declaration of Commitments on HIV/AIDS adopted by the UNGASS on HIV/AIDS, signalling the emergence of a response needed to be successful in the fight against HIV/AIDS;

RECALLING the targets defined at the African Summit on Roll Back Malaria in April 2000 in Abuja and the targets endorsed by the World Health Assembly in May 2000 to confront tuberculosis;

REAFFIRMING the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994, and key actions for the further implementation of the Cairo Programme for Action adopted by the 21st Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS) in July 1999 and the commitments confirmed at ICPD + 10;

RECALLING the European Council conclusions of 16 and 17 December 2004, which reiterated the importance of implementation of the Cairo/ICPD Agenda and the fight against HIV/AIDS for achieving the MDGs, and RECOGNISING the benefits of supporting the full integration of HIV prevention efforts with reproductive health services;

REAFFIRMING the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted at the 23rd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in June 2000, and the declaration adopted at the 49th session of the Commission on the status of women, and STRESSING the importance of a gender-sensitive response to the three diseases;

REAFFIRMING the Dublin Declaration on Partnership to fight HIV/AIDS in Europe and Central Asia, adopted at the Conference "Breaking the Barriers - Partnership to fight HIV/AIDS in Europe and Central Asia" (Dublin, 23 and 24 February 2004) and the Vilnius Declaration on Measures to Strengthen Responses to HIV/AIDS in the European Union and in Neighbouring Countries, adopted at the International Interministerial Meeting on Combating HIV/AIDS (Vilnius, 16 and 17 September 2004);

WELCOMING the Abuja High-Level Forum on the Health MDGs (December 2004), and the recommendations of the Oslo Meeting "Overcoming the Crisis" (February 2005), which emphasised the importance of national human resource plans backed by coordinated and supported regional and global platforms for action;

WELCOMING the "Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV/AIDS", adopted in July 2004 by several UN organisations, bilateral donors and NGOs, as a useful reference for addressing needs of such children;

RECALLING the second progress report on the EC Programme for Action (2001-2006) and its analysis of areas where progress has been made and issues that require new or reinforced efforts by the EU, the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a coherent European policy framework for external action to confront HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and the Council conclusions of November 2004;

WELCOMING the Three Ones principles for the response to HIV/AIDS with its emphasis on one action framework, one coordinating authority and one monitoring and evaluation system, RECOGNISING the need for further harmonisation around country-led strategies to confront the three diseases, and RECOGNISING the value of extending the Three Ones principles beyond HIV/AIDS;

RECALLING the Council conclusions on the report of the ad hoc Working Party on Harmonisation, which endorsed the report in its conclusions that HIV/AIDS is a good example of close cooperation among EU Member States and the EC;

RECALLING the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, ownership, harmonisation, alignment, results and mutual accountability adopted at the High-level Forum in Paris (28 February to 2 March 2005) and RECONFIRMING the EU commitments on this occasion;

RECALLING the informal meeting of Development Cooperation Ministers, where Ministers stressed the importance of an integrated approach to HIV/AIDS, with a balanced policy mix between prevention, treatment, care and research, as well as the importance of capacity-building in those areas, including access to treatment; and RECOGNISING that such an integrated approach should be used for the three diseases;

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. WELCOMES the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a European Programme for Action (PfA) to confront HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis through external action as the basis for a continued, concerted and strong EU response and action to confront HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in all partner countries as well as at global level;
2. CALLS on the EU and its Member States to mainstream and integrate their response to HIV/AIDS and, where appropriate, to malaria and tuberculosis into all relevant sectors at country level;
3. CALLS on the EU and its Member States to recognise the need for health to be treated as an exceptional case in public-sector reform programmes and to step up their efforts to confront HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, using all relevant policies and instruments, including through enhanced cooperation as proposed in the PfA, and INVITES the Commission and the Member States to establish a roadmap for joint actions;
4. URGES the Commission and the Member States to enhance their cooperation and coordination in the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and in the full implementation of the Cairo/ICPD +10 agenda ensuring that sexual and reproductive health and rights are an essential component of HIV and AIDS prevention and that AIDS prevention and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) activities are integrated where appropriate;
5. ENDORSES the principles for country strategies to confront the three diseases established in the PfA which emphasise country ownership and leadership and the need for governments to involve civil society, including people living with the diseases, in the design, implementation and monitoring of such strategies;

6. UNDERLINES, within the overall processes for harmonisation and alignment, the need for the proposed joint actions between the Commission and the Member States at country level with a view to:
- strengthening the political and policy dialogue with partner countries on key issues, including in the context of poverty reduction strategy (PRS) process;
 - providing resources to confront the three diseases, including through support to PRS with a strong focus on achieving the MDGs and through highly cost-effective interventions likely to yield rapid results;
 - building capacity in partner countries for all areas of the integrated response to the three diseases (prevention, treatment, care and research), particularly through the development of health systems, including procurement policies and practices for pharmaceutical products and commodities, as well as on joint monitoring and reporting, and
 - sharing expertise and resources for technical assistance between EU donors;
7. UNDERLINES likewise the need for the proposed joint actions between the Commission and the Member States at global level, in particular,
- to strengthen regulatory capacity in partner countries, including through regional cooperation;
 - to cooperate with the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in finding solutions to the human resource crisis with respect to health providers in many African countries; and
 - to support the research and development of new tools and interventions to confront the three diseases, in partnership with the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and public-private partnerships (PPPs) focusing on the development of priority tools;

as well as the key role of the EU at global level in terms of:

- promoting an integrated approach to the fight against the three diseases, including through reliable access to safe, high-quality and affordable pharmaceuticals, SRH commodities and other health commodities and
 - ensuring a strong EU voice on key international agreements – including gender equality, children’s rights, SRHR, education and intellectual property rights and public health;
8. URGES the Commission and the Member States to implement the actions at country and global level in partnership with other donors, UN organisations such as WHO, UNAIDS, UNFPA and UNICEF and with global initiatives, including the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), Roll Back Malaria and Stop TB, and public-private partnerships;
9. UNDERLINES the importance of EC action at country level, in particular
- to provide resources for confronting HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis through appropriate mechanisms;
 - to contribute to capacity-building on pharmaceutical policy, taking into account its link with strategies on prevention and access to treatment and;
 - to promote human security, e.g. through a thorough analysis of the impact of the three diseases on human security to develop an adequate EU response, through improved training and preparedness for participants in emergency operations, conflict resolution, peace-keeping, and post-conflict operations and through measures to promote increased safety in schools;
10. EXPRESSES the readiness of the EU and its Member States to support innovative responses to the human resources crisis and INVITES the Commission to present by 2006 a policy document proposing an EU strategy to address the human resources crisis for health providers within the broader health context;

11. WELCOMES the Commission's intention to adopt a specific strategy to confront HIV/AIDS within the EU and in its neighbouring countries;
12. In order to fill the financial gap and scale up interventions regarding the three diseases, URGES the Member States and the Commission to ensure, together with other donors, long-term, adequate funding of the proposed actions by allocating substantially increased, predictable resources from existing financial sources, as well as through the use of innovative financing mechanisms where appropriate; and, specifically, INVITES the Commission to make available adequate resources to implement the PfA;
13. ENCOURAGES Member States and the Commission to continue to demonstrate their commitment and leadership in supporting the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria and to contribute, together with other donors, to ensure its full financing through the ongoing replenishment process;
14. INVITES the Commission and Member States to monitor and report jointly and in a comprehensive manner on the implementation, outputs and impact of the PfA in 2008 and 2010, as specified in the communication;
15. INVITES the EU and its Member States to prepare a strong EU contribution to the UNGASS on HIV/AIDS in June 2005 and to the High-level UN summit in September 2005 to review the implementation of the MDGs."

– **2000 DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT**

The Council was briefed by the Commission on the communication it is preparing, following consultations, with a view to revising the 2000 Development Policy Statement from the Council and Commission.

This exercise will aim to determine whether Community development policy - as defined by the 2000 Statement - should retain as its central objective the fight against poverty or whether the policy should be revised to take more account of the acceleration of globalisation, the new priorities of the enlarged EU and developments within the international community.

The review of the statement will seek to clarify the Community's role, to analyse the way in which EU policies dovetail with those of the Member States and partner countries and with the initiatives of civil society, and to examine the resources available to the Community.

The Commission plans to adopt its communication at the end of June; the adoption of the new statement is scheduled for the Council meeting on 21 and 22 November 2005.

OTHER BUSINESS– *Guinea-Bissau*

The Council took note of a Portuguese statement and stressed that the European Union, in conjunction with the rest of the international community, would continue to support the transition process so as to ensure that free and transparent presidential elections can be held on 19 June 2005.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

Please see "General Affairs" press release 8816/05 Presse 111.
