



EUROPEAN UNION

A 70/10

Speech by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the UN Security Council

New York, 4 May 2010

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak at the Security Council about the growing co-operation between the United Nations and the European Union in the area of peace and security.

The European Union attaches great importance to its partnership with the UN. A core objective of EU foreign policy is the development of an effective multilateral system with a strong UN at the centre. The UN Charter and this Security Council are the primary framework for the rules-based international system that we seek.

The reasons behind the creation of the UN are similar to those that originally drove European integration: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Today, the UN and the EU need to promote the ideals that inspired earlier generations – peace, justice, human rights, the whole notion that power relations among states must be subjected to the rule of law – in a new world.

We share many objectives and we work closely together, at Headquarters and in the field. We are convinced that complex problems require comprehensive, global solutions. We agree we must advance the causes of security, human rights and sustainable development together – otherwise none will succeed.

It is no surprise then that EU Member States jointly constitute the largest contributors to the UN regular and peacekeeping budgets. But this partnership is about much more than money. The EU is a strong supporter of the UN in political and operational terms.

The EU and the UN are working together on the ground in 8 major crisis theatres - in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The EU currently reports to this Security Council on three of its ongoing operations.

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

Maja Kocijancic +32 498 984 425 - +32 2 298 65 70 - Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu

Darren Ennis +32 498 963 293 - +32 2 296 32 93 - Darren.Ennis@ec.europa.eu

COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu

www.eeas.europa.eu

Given the UN's mandate in the area of peace and security and given the expansion of EU external action in recent years, it is logical that we have built a growing partnership in peace and security – which has complemented our long-standing co-operation in development and humanitarian assistance.

For example in the 1990s we worked closely together to try prevent and curtail the tragic and unnecessary wars in the Balkans. Since then, much progress has been made but our joint work there is not yet complete. With respect to Bosnia-Herzegovina steps remain to be taken to secure a well-functioning state. Further work is also needed in other countries of the region for them to succeed on their path of eventual accession to the European Union – which remains our goal. In the Balkans as much as elsewhere, we know that a lasting peace depends not so much on foreign intervention but on the efforts and commitment of local political leaders themselves.

I am speaking at the Security Council at a special moment in the development of the European Union. The Lisbon Treaty is now in force. This is a historic step which matters to Europeans and non-Europeans alike.

The Lisbon Treaty offers the opportunity to strengthen the EU's international impact and strategic vision, through streamlined decision-making and greater policy coherence and consistency. Work is advancing on the creation of the European External Action Service, which will operate under my authority. It will integrate diplomats from the EU institutions and the Member-States. It will also direct the Delegations of the EU around the world, including here at the United Nations.

The European External Action Service will lead to more integrated policy-making and delivery, by bringing together all the instruments of our global engagement – political, economic and crisis management - in support of our strategic goals.

This should also make the EU a better partner for the UN. And I ask for the support of all UN Member-States to support efforts so that EU representatives can act efficiently within the UN – to maximise the EU's contribution to achieving common UN goals.

In my short period in office as High Representative, I have established an important working relationship with the UN Secretary General. We have discussed many issues which also top the agenda of the Security Council. These include piracy and the situation in Somalia, Sudan, the Middle East Peace Process, and the serious concerns about Iran 's nuclear activities and its persistent refusal to abide by several Resolutions of the Security Council.

We have also discussed issues like climate change and the Millennium Development Goals that affect the wider international security landscape. The impact of climate change threatens the future of millions of people. It could worsen existing situations of fragility and insecurity – and it could create new conflict constellations. For the Millennium Development Goals, it is important that we step up our efforts, particularly in those areas where improvements have been modest.

There is a growing consensus internationally on the need to apply a comprehensive approach to crisis management and peace-building. The same goes for the need to take into account the evident links between security, development and human rights.

Along with comprehensive approaches we also need to ensure our efforts are tailor-made, reflecting the precise nature of every challenge. This is true for individual conflicts. But it also applies to over-arching topics such as the role of women in peace and security. This year we mark the 10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 which was a milestone in making the entire international community more aware of and focused on the specific needs and concerns of women in the area of peace and security.

Mr President, allow me to illustrate how the EU is contributing to the UN's work in peace and security with some concrete examples, beginning with conflict prevention.

In many crisis zones, Special Representatives of the Secretary General and the EU work hand in hand. Indeed, mediation and mediation support are now growing elements of EU-UN co-operation.

Sometimes we act directly ourselves; at other times we back the efforts of others. For example, in Darfur, the EU has provided support through the Trust Fund set up by the Secretary General to facilitate the mediation efforts led jointly by the UN and the African Union.

In the area of crisis management, civilian and military, our co-operation has developed significantly over a short period of time. In 2003 we launched Operation Artemis at the request of the UN and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo to protect the people in Bunia, Eastern Congo. This was the first time the EU assisted the UN in the area of peace and security. This operation opened a new chapter in our cooperation. It was followed later on by a backup force to support the UN at the time of the elections.

In some places we have supplemented the UN, for example in Kosovo, after the reconfiguration of UNMIK. In other places we have preceded the UN; for example in Chad, where our force to protect refugees from Darfur was succeeded by MINURCAT.

And in yet others we are reinforcing an on-going UN operation - for example in Afghanistan with EUPOL. Or we are working closely with both UN and regional partners. Take our naval operation Atalanta, combined with the training mission for the security forces in Somalia. The latter is set within a UN framework of support for the Transitional Federal Government.

As part of our comprehensive approach to the piracy problem, the EU Stability Instrument has been supporting the efforts of Kenya and the Seychelles to prosecute piracy suspects. We do this with a programme developed jointly with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

One of our biggest priorities is to assist our African partners in the development of their capabilities on conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding. We have created a specific financial instrument, the African Peace Facility, to underpin this work.

With respect to the whole conflict cycle, special efforts are needed on peacebuilding. Too many conflicts re-emerge or linger and prolong the need for international engagement. In all this, the leading role of the Security Council is evident.

But I also want to mention our joint efforts in the Peace Building Commission. It is essential to bring together all resources to help countries succeed on the path of post-conflict recovery. The EU has expertise in these areas and it is the biggest donor to all four countries on the agenda of the Peace Building Commission. Five years after its creation, this is a good moment to take stock and see what can be improved.

In the areas of long-term stabilisation and development we are working closely with the whole UN family. In Haiti, after the devastating earthquake, our joint actions are a good example of how we can maximise EU-UN synergies. The EU responded rapidly to UN calls for assistance ranging from humanitarian aid to military assets. We now need to pull together with clear plans for long-term reconstruction.

The fight against impunity for the most serious crimes remains a key factor in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. That is why the EU is a staunch supporter of the International Criminal Court. Promoting the universality of the Court and bolstering the enforcement of the Court's decisions are among the key topics for the upcoming Review conference in Kampala.

Mr President,

Perhaps I could finish by underlining three things:

First that the EU is strongly committed to an active partnership with the UN: promoting peace, protecting the vulnerable and helping people to live in safety and dignity.

Second, that this partnership has grown rapidly in recent years and has demonstrated its added value on the ground. There is a good deal we have achieved together. But there is even more work to be done.

And third, that with the Lisbon Treaty's the EU's potential will increase. We should become more capable; better able to bring politics and economics together. And better at combining different forms of intervention within a political strategy. As a result, I hope we shall be a stronger partner for the UN.

Thank you very much.

.....