



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**

**Rostov-on Don, 1 June 2010
PCE 110/10**

**Remarks by Herman Van Rompuy,
President of the European Council,
at the EU-Russia Summit**

Good afternoon - Dobri Dien

This summit has been held in a defining time both for the EU and Russia.

In the EU we have the new treaty and new institutional actors. We are manoeuvring our way through the economic and financial crisis, with the aim of coming out stronger than before. Our response to the recent public debt crisis has shown the world that the European Union is capable of acting decisively. We will continue to do so.

The EU has to work hard on financial consolidation and competitiveness, and on strengthening our economic structures and growth in the framework of EU 2020 economic strategy. This is vital for our position on the world stage.

Russia is also at crossroads. President Medvedev's ambition to base Russia's modernisation in the 21st century on democratic values, by building a modern diversified and dynamic economy, and by encouraging the active involvement of civil society, is a significant development for Russia.

We want to be Russia's partner in modernisation. That is why I am glad that we are launching the Partnership for Modernisation, and that we have agreed on its scope and priorities. I believe this will promote reform and give renewed momentum to our relationship, develop our cooperation on trade, economy and energy security. It will also contribute to the global economic recovery.

However, for the partnership to bear fruit, the Russian modernisation needs to become a reality, and it needs to follow a certain path and to avoid protectionism. In the light of this, I welcome the renewed momentum in Russia to join the WTO.

In this context, we also talked about the long term goal of visa free travel. In my view, contacts between Russian and European business, students, professors and others would enormously strengthen the forces of modernisation. We therefore remain committed to making concrete progress, as soon as possible, on the ground.

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

Dirk De Backer - Spokesperson of the President - ■ +32 (0)2 281 9768 - +32 (0)497 59 99 19
Jesús Carmona - Deputy Spokesperson of the President ■ +32 (0)2 281 9548 / 6319 - +32 (0)475 65 32 15
e-mail: press.president@consilium.europa.eu
internet: <http://www.european-council.europa.eu/the-president/>

On the **G20 summit** in Toronto. I'm happy to see that there is a broad consensus with Russia on a lot of issues. However, as regards the reform of the financial system in particular, this is a top priority for the EU and we as the EU expect the summit in Toronto to discuss ways to reduce systemic risk, and to agree on the principle that the financial institutions should contribute to the costs of any future financial crisis. In Toronto we have to achieve concrete results. We need the same stepwise approach in the climate conference in Cancun in December.

We have also signed an **agreement on protection of classified information**, which represents a significant step forward in our relations. This will facilitate cooperation in a wide range of areas, including crisis management.

We also reconfirmed our interest to continue to explore possibilities for **cooperation in the field of crisis management, justice and home affairs**. We want to build further on our successful cooperation in Chad and in the fight against piracy on the coast of Somalia.

On **human rights**, I expressed our appreciation for recent legislative developments in Russia – the ratification of Protocol 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the expansion of jury trials nationwide, and the confirmation of the moratorium on the death penalty.

However, the situation for human rights defenders and journalists in Russia is of great concern to the European public at large. Another matter of concern - which I noted was shared by President Medvedev - is the climate of impunity, in particular in Chechnya and other areas of the North Caucasus.

We had the chance to discuss a number of international issues. We also welcome the new START-agreement on reductions of nuclear weapons with the US. On **Iran**, EU and Russia fully agree: the nuclear program of Iran remains a source of concern. The purpose of the restrictive measures is to bring Iran back to the negotiating table.

We are very happy that the Russian Federation has played a constructive role in the shaping of the draft United Nations Security Council Resolution on Iran.

We also discussed yesterday's tragic **incident in the Middle East** and issued a joint statement by High Representative Ashton and Foreign Minister Lavrov, this statement enjoys my full support also on behalf of the EU. We regret the loss of lives during the Israeli military operation against the flotilla sailing to Gaza. We demand a full and impartial inquiry, and call for an immediate opening of crossings for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and people to and from Gaza.

Finally, the EU and Russia share a common interest in improving the security, stability and prosperity in our common neighbourhood.

History and geography have made us different but also neighbours. We are dependent on each other and on the well being of our neighbours. This has become a common spirit of our continent

In this respect, we would like to see a more constructive role played by Russia, including the implementation all its earlier commitments, especially with regard to Georgia.

To conclude: Russia is a real strategic partner to the EU. With you we have a most intensive and dynamic dialogue. With Russia we do not need a "reset". We want a "fast forward".

Spasiba (thank you).
