

Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs*

Brussels, 5-6 November 2001

Presidency Conclusions

1. The Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs held in Brussels on 5 and 6 November 2001 showed in the new international context the attachment of all the partners to the Barcelona Process as a vital and preferred framework for dialogue and cooperation between the European Union and the countries of the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

2. The Ministers reiterated their utter condemnation of the terrorist attacks committed in the United States on 11 September 2001. In this connection they expressed their total condemnation of terrorism everywhere in the world and their solidarity with the peoples who are the victims thereof. They regard these acts as an attack against the entire international community, against all its members, all religions and all cultures together. The Ministers formally rejected as both dangerous and unfounded any equating of terrorism with the Arab and Muslim world. In this connection the importance of the Barcelona Process as a relevant and recognised instrument for promoting a dialogue of equals between cultures and civilisations was emphasised by all. The Ministers agreed to work on deepening the existing dialogue between cultures and civilisations, focusing on youth, education and the media.

* Versão on line.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/conf/bxl/conc_en.htm

3. The Ministers examined together the present international situation, including its economic effects, which represents both a challenge and an opportunity. They reaffirmed their determination to play their full part in a coordinated manner in the coalition against terrorism under the aegis of the United Nations. They considered that terrorism constitutes a threat and a scourge which they condemn in every shape and form and against which they declared themselves firmly resolved to fight in unison. Terrorism as a global phenomenon must be combated in a spirit of solidarity. The need to address the underlying causes of terrorism was emphasised.

4. The Ministers welcomed the adoption of Resolution 1373 (2001) of the United Nations Security Council aimed at eliminating all forms of support for terrorists and pledged rapidly to take the measures needed to implement it. Furthermore, they undertook to do everything possible, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to press ahead with the signing, ratification and implementation by their Member States of all the United Nations Conventions, in particular that of December 1999 for the suppression of the financing of terrorism. They also pledged to work together in all the relevant international fora to expand this global framework. The Ministers encouraged efforts to speed up the negotiations in the United Nations with the aim of drafting a general Convention against terrorism which should lead to a universal reference framework for the numerous international legal instruments.

5. Pointing out that the integration of all countries into a fair global system of prosperity and development should help to strengthen the stability of the international community, the Euro-Mediterranean partners reiterated their attachment to the objectives spelt out in the three chapters of the Barcelona Declaration and to a balanced treatment of those three chapters. In this context they noted with interest the conclusions of the Mediterranean Forum which took place in Agadir (Morocco) on 25 and 26 October 2001.

Contribution of the Partnership to Stability in the Mediterranean Region

6. The Ministers discussed the latest developments in the Middle East. They expressed their deep concern at the continually worsening situation which involves serious risks for regional stability. They deplore the loss of human lives and the suffering inflicted on the civilian populations by the violence.

7. Wanting to go beyond declarations, the Ministers strongly urge all the parties concerned to resume immediately, without any prerequisites or conditions, negotiations

with a view to applying the recommendations contained in the MITCHELL Report and the TENET Plan and to satisfying the legitimate rights and expectations of the peoples of the region for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, which must be achieved on the basis of a faithful application of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, of the principles of the Madrid Conference – including the principle of the exchange of land for peace – and of the agreements concluded in Oslo and thereafter, agreements which had previously made it possible to register tangible results on the ground and substantial progress in the earlier negotiations.

8. The Ministers stressed that negotiations should lead:

- in the case of for the Palestinians, to the establishment of an independent, viable and democratic state and an end to the occupation of their territories;
- in the case of for the Israelis, to live in peace and safety within internationally recognised borders.

The quest for peace must include all aspects, and in particular a just solution to the matter of refugees.

9. The Presidency noted the generally favourable reception of the idea put forward by Ministers of a third party monitoring mechanism agreed by both sides that would help them to overcome their differences and the obstacles they are encountering in their efforts to achieve reconciliation.

10. In conclusion of the debate, the Presidency calls upon the Israeli authorities to complete immediately withdrawal of their forces from the zones areas solely under exclusive Palestinian administration (referred to as areas A zones). It ask calls upon the Palestinian Authority to arrest and bring to justice those responsible for acts of violence against Israel. It urges both sides to bring an end to violence.

11. The Ministers also said they were very conscious of the fact that the search for a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region assumes that discussions will be restarted at the earliest opportunity on the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese tracks, the resolution of which should be based on the principles set out earlier.

Political and Security Chapter

12. The Ministers noted the efforts made since the Marseilles Conference to pursue and deepen, without waiting for the adoption of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and

Stability, the political dialogue with the aim of deepening the Partnership. The dialogue covered the specific areas of common interest such as the fight against terrorism, migration and human exchanges, conflict prevention and human rights. They also noted the exchanges of information that have taken place on regional developments relating to security. With regard to the Charter, the Ministers repeated the particular importance they attach to this project, which should play a very useful role in accompanying the confidence-building and reinforcing stability in the region, notably with a view to the post-peace process. They confirmed the mandate given in Marseilles to the Senior Officials to continue and complete their work on the adoption of the Charter for Peace and Stability as soon as the situation allows.

13. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the holding, on 22 October, of a further meeting of Senior Officials on migration and human exchanges preceded by two meetings of experts on 13 June. They instructed the Senior Officials to continue and deepen the dialogue on this sensitive topic which should, moreover, also form an integral part of a regional programme in the third chapter to be agreed by the 27 partners.

14. The Ministers welcomed the continuation of the political dialogue, especially with regard to human rights, by means of national and regional presentations making it possible to improve awareness and hence mutual understanding of partners' reference systems. They regarded this exercise as a first stage and undertook to deepen the dialogue on this sensitive subject with a view to increasing its effectiveness.

15. The Ministers confirmed the instructions to the Senior Officials to identify Partnership measures gradually, while consolidating those already in force, with the aim of strengthening good-neighbourly relations on a regional or sub-regional basis. They recommended to the Senior Officials to continue their efforts to extend the dialogue to other topics, such as regional trends as regards security, disarmament and the process of consolidating the rule of law, and any other topic that might prove useful in the new international context. The Ministers welcomed in particular the progress made within the Partnership with regard to a system for preventing, alleviating the effects of and managing disasters. They invited the Senior Officials to examine ways of better structuring their political dialogue in a spirit of Partnership.

16. The Ministers asked the Senior Officials to continue their dialogue on terrorism matters by organising a third ad hoc meeting which should be held as quickly as possible.
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