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## IMPORTANT COMING MEETINGS

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- ◆ EU- Croatia Association Council
- ◆ EU- Turkey Association Council

26 may 2005

- ◆ EU- Chile Association Council
- ◆ EU- Mexico Joint Council

### THIRD COUNTRY MEETINGS

27 April 2005

- ◆ EU- Pakistan (Troika)

6-7 May 2005

- ◆ EU- Japan (Troika)

8-9 May 2005

- ◆ EU- China (Troika)

10 may 2005

- ◆ EU-Russia Summit

18 May 2005

- ◆ EU- ECOWAS (Troika)

26 may 2005

- ◆ EU- Central America (Troika)

31 May 2005

◆ **EU- Arab Group (Troika)**

◆ **EU- Israel (Troika)**

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MEETINGS

◆ **Plenary Session**

➤ 9-12 May 2005

◆ **Committee on Foreign Affairs**

➤ 19 April 2005

➤ 26 April 2005

➤ 23 May 2005

➤ 14 June 2005

◆ **Subcommittee on Human Rights**

➤ 25 April 2005

➤ 28 April 2005

➤ 16 June 2005

◆ **Subcommittee on Security and Defence**

➤ 26 April 2005

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◆ **Committee on Development**

➤ 26 April 2005

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◆ **Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

➤ 19 April 2005

➤ 26 April 2005

➤ 26 May 2005

◆ Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

- 21 April 2005
- 25 April 2005
- 28 April 2005
- 24 May 2005
- 26 May 2005

REGIONS:

AFRICA

♦ **Republic of Guinea**

▶ 2652<sup>nd</sup> Council meeting - Consultations under the ACP-EU Agreement (22.04.05)

The Council adopted a Decision concluding consultations with the Republic of Guinea concerning human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law in that country (Article 96 of the ACP EU Agreement)(7367/05, 7440/1/05).

The Decision incorporates a letter to the Guinean Prime Minister conveying the EU's expectations regarding the Guinean government's undertakings concerning principally:

- a review of the electoral arrangements;
- **respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms**;
- authorisation for private electronic media to be set up before the local elections in June 2005;
- continued decentralisation and continuation of measures to enhance macroeconomic management and sectoral reforms.

Following the consultations, and in the light of the progress made so far and the measures still to be implemented, it was decided to adopt the following measures under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement:

- cooperation financed from the unexpended balances of the 6th, 7th and 8th European Development Funds (EDFs) will continue;
- programmes to **strengthen civil society, respect for and reinforcement of democracy, human rights and good governance and the emergence or consolidation of free media** may also be supported;
- contributions to regional projects will be considered on a case by case basis;
- humanitarian operations and trade cooperation will be continued;
- the 9th EDF has been reduced by EUR 65 million in the context of the mid term review.

The EU will continue to monitor the situation in Guinea closely. An enhanced political dialogue will be conducted with a view to consolidating democracy and the rule of law, in particular through the holding of parliamentary elections in 2007, and also respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/84618.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/84618.pdf)

♦ **Togo**

▶ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Togo (22.04.05)

On the eve of a presidential election that is vital for the country's future, the European Union makes an urgent appeal to all parties to enable the election to proceed in a peaceful and proper manner. It voices its concern over the tension that has arisen in the run-up to the election, leading to a deterioration in the political climate in Togo.

The European Union also calls upon all Togolese political forces and institutions to show responsibility and openness to ensure that each citizen can vote freely, against a background of calm and transparency, so that the elections can be credible.

The European Union renews its support for the efforts of ECOWAS in mediating and monitoring the electoral process in the context of the agreement between the majority and the opposition reached on 28 February under the aegis of President Tandja.

The European Union is paying close attention to the electoral process before, during and after the vote, and will determine its future positions in the light of all these aspects.

The European Union reiterates the importance of compliance with the 22 undertakings entered into by the Togolese Government in the context of the consultations under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, as regards the restoration of democracy, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/84643.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/84643.pdf)

## ASIA

### ◆ China

#### ► Fischer warns of US-China confrontation - By Lisbeth Kirk (18.04.05)

German foreign minister Joschka Fischer has warned of a possible confrontation between the US and China.

The aspiring world power should be held in check by a "policy of containment", the minister said in an interview with Handelsblatt.

"The dependence is so big, that by confrontation there would no longer be a winner", he said.

The big challenge, according to Joschka Fischer, is to integrate emerging world powers such as China and India into the international state system, in order to prevent any armed clashes.

Chinese relations were also on the agenda when EU foreign ministers met informally on Friday (15 April) in Luxembourg.

The ministers considered lifting a 15-year old embargo on arms sales to China, but admitted that the move is unlikely to happen for another year due to a lack of agreement in the EU.

"It is quite obvious, that there is no consensus", Luxembourg's foreign minister and chairman of the meeting, Jean Asselborn, said, according to FAZ.

The delay comes as a blow to Chinese diplomats, who were told that the EU would lift the ban at an EU-China summit in The Hague last December.

In the meantime, however, China passed a law allowing it to use force against Taiwan if the island makes a bid for independence.

**A large number of countries also denounced China's lack of progress on human rights at the Luxembourg meeting.**

**The US is strongly opposed to lifting the embargo, fearing US weapons technology would fall into Chinese hands.**

**US defence officials last week indicated that Israel's involvement in the development of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the biggest warplane program in history, would be curbed due to Israel's arms trade with China.**

<http://www.euobserver.com/?sid=9&aid=18874>

#### ► French PM backs arms sales to China - By Elitsa Vucheva (22.04.05)

**French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin voiced support for lifting the EU arms embargo on China, adding that Beijing's recent anti-secession law, which threatens Taiwan, should not stand in the way of the move.**

Mr Raffarin made the remarks on Thursday (21 April), the first leg of a three day visit to China.

He reiterated the French position, while European leaders appear to be increasingly divided on the matter.

"France continues to ask for a lifting of the embargo, and does not see what could lead the European Council [the member states] to change position on that question", Mr Raffarin was quoted as saying by Le Figaro.

The EU was due to reach a compromise on lifting the ban by June this year.

But China's adoption of the anti-secession law on 14 March, sanctioning the use of force against Taiwan, has forced some European leaders to review their position.

**The embargo was originally imposed after pro-democracy demonstrators were massacred in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989.**

For Mr Raffarin, "the anti-secession law is absolutely compatible with the principle of one China and two systems, defended by France". The embargo is "anachronous and unfairly discriminatory", the prime minister added.

Mr Raffarin also said he is closely following the China/EU dialogue on human rights.

Complementing the French Prime Minister's statements, **his Chinese counterpart Wen Jiabao said that "one should not establish a mechanic link between human rights and lifting the arms embargo", according to Le Figaro.**

Turning to another hot potato, the rise of Chinese textile exports, Mr Raffarin said China is well aware of its international responsibilities.

Mr Wen added that Beijing "respects the WTO's rules" and "has taken measures following on its own initiative".

Both Prime Ministers attended a ceremony inking a 2.4 billion euro deal for 30 Airbus aircraft after the meeting.

<http://www.euobserver.com/?sid=24&aid=18913>

## THEMATIC :

### FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE

#### ◆ Conseil des affaires générales et relations extérieures

##### ▶ Cadre financier 2007 - 2013 (22.04.05)

La Présidence présentera le 25 avril une version révisée de son cadre de négociation ("Negotiating Box") visant à faciliter la préparation des perspectives financières prévues pour le budget de l'UE durant la période 2007-13. Le Conseil aura un échange de vues.

**L'objectif de la Présidence est de permettre au Conseil européen de parvenir à un accord politique lors de sa réunion des 16 et 17 juin prochains.** Pour ce faire, elle ajustera et complétera le cadre de négociation - outil utilisé avec succès lors de la négociation de perspectives financières précédentes - de manière à refléter l'évolution des travaux.

La première version du cadre de négociation a déjà fait l'objet d'une présentation lors du Conseil Affaires Générales du 16 mars dernier et a été examiné depuis lors par le Comité des représentants permanents (Coreper).

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/fr/gena/84614.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/fr/gena/84614.pdf)

#### ◆ 2652<sup>nd</sup> Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting

##### ▶ JHA Financial Programmes (22.04.05)

The Commission submitted to the Council its new proposals **promoting liberty, security and justice under the next financial framework for the period from 2007 to 2013.**



The Council will return to this point at one of its forthcoming meetings.

The Commission's approach towards achieving this objective is based on three framework programmes which will replace the plethora of instruments which the Commission is currently administering in this area. In order to implement fully the concept of European citizenship, **the Commission proposes establishing the framework programme on fundamental rights and justice.** The incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into the Constitutional Treaty means that the Union is legally obliged to ensure not only respect for fundamental rights, but also the active promotion of such rights. **The right to physical integrity should also be guaranteed by combating violence.** For the purposes of public health protection, information on drugs and the prevention of narcotics consumption also play an important role. The programme will enable actions to be developed which would be less effective at national level, (e.g. judicial cooperation in both civil and criminal matters), allow private individuals and undertakings to assert their civil and commercial interests in other Member States and guarantee that crime and criminals will never go unpunished.

The framework programme on solidarity and migration management will support national measures aiming in particular to:

- improve the effectiveness of controls at the EU's external borders, while ensuring that bona fide travellers can cross the borders without hindrance;
- finance civic orientation courses, provide cross cultural training and manuals for newcomers and (local) governments and facilitate the integration process;
- **ensure appropriate reception conditions for persons seeking international protection in the EU and a fair and efficient examination of their applications for asylum;**
- advise asylum applicants whose applications have been refused and illegal immigrants so that they can return with dignity to their country of origin.

The proposed framework programme on security and protection of freedoms pursues the following main objectives:

- to **promote and develop prevention of crime** (whether organised or not) **and measures to combat this phenomenon, in particular terrorism, trafficking in human beings and crimes against children, drugs trafficking, arms trafficking, corruption and fraud;**
- to **protect citizens, their freedoms and society against terrorist attacks, and to protect the EU by promoting and developing the prevention of, preparation for and management of the consequences of terrorist attacks.**

The budget proposed by the Commission for the area of justice, security and freedom is EUR 8,3 billion in 2004 prices (or EUR 9,5 billion if inflation projections are taken into account).

This represents an increase of 228% between 2006 (the final year of budgetary programming) and 2013.

[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/84618.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/84618.pdf)

## JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

### ◆ Global security

- ▶ **Global security policy will "roll back freedom", says report** (21.04.05)

Civil liberties groups from across the world have joined together to launch a new International Campaign Against Mass Surveillance with the publication of a report warning of the danger to fundamental freedoms of current anti-terror policies. The report says that governments are using the "war on terror" to institute an unprecedented global system of surveillance of individuals.

The report says that government policies on the mandatory registration of biometric data on travel documents, retention of data by telecoms companies and tracking of air travel and cross-border movements goes beyond what is necessary for the detection of crime or terrorism.

The campaign is being led by the organisations Statewatch (UK), the American Civil Liberties Union, the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (Canada) and has the backing of 100 civil liberties groups and NGOs worldwide.

<http://www.euractiv.com/Article?tcaturi=tcm:29-138397-16&type=News>

#### ◆ Corruption

- ▶ Commission wants EU to do more against corruption (22.04.05)

EU Justice and Home Affairs ministers adopted last week in Luxembourg for the first time a resolution against corruption. Attached to the Council resolution is a formal declaration by the Commission, stating that the Commission should have the utmost flexibility in developing a monitoring mechanism. In light of the international anti-corruption Conventions of the UN, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for economic cooperation and development (OECD), the EU needs to underpin the key elements of these agreements with its own enforcement rules. Already in its 2003 Communication the Commission has asked for a strong political commitment against corruption from the EU top level with a view to ensuring utmost credibility among public officials and society at large. Arising from the invitation of the Council in the 2004 "The Hague Programme", Commission services are preparing a Communication on developing a strategic concept against organised crime including new measures to prevent and combat corruption, which the Commission is likely to adopt by the end of next May.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice\\_home/news/intro/news\\_intro\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/news/intro/news_intro_en.htm)

### EXTERNAL RELATIONS

#### ◆ Sexual exploitation

- ▶ Explanation of position by the EU after the adoption of the report of the special committee on Peacekeeping operations (18.04.05)

(...)Mr. Chairman,

The European Union welcomes the adoption by the 4th Committee of the report of the resumed session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34). By convening at such short notice, the members of the Special Committee confirmed **their sense of urgency to tackle the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse expeditiously**. The European Union would like take this opportunity to express its gratitude to H.E. Prince Zeid of Jordan for his excellent report, which served as a basis for our discussions.

While the European Union believes that good progress has been made in the limited time available, we believe **that more needs to be achieved on some key recommendations, including those related to the creation of an investigative capacity and to the reinforcement of the individual criminal accountability**. Given the strength of the political will expressed at our February meeting, the EU urges all partners engaged in this common endeavor, to carry out their commitment by swiftly and fully implementing all recommendations adopted in this report. To this end, the necessary means and mechanisms need to be made available. The group of experts which is to examine the legal aspects of outstanding recommendations should present its conclusions expeditiously. These findings will be crucial in completing the process.

**The adoption of this report alone will not put an end to exploitation and abuse**. However, the immediate and prompt reaction by the mission leadership in recent events in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda prove that a process of increased awareness and responsiveness has been initiated. Member States must also show their commitment to take their responsibilities.

Last week's meeting was a first step of a process that must be concluded as soon as possible but no later than 1 June 2007. The issue at hand is one that requires an immediate and comprehensive response. The European Union is and will remain strongly committed to this process and will not spare any efforts to continue to engage fruitfully with the Secretariat and other member states with the objective of putting an end to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Thank you Mr. President.

<http://www.eu2005.lu/en/actualites/discours/2005/04/2001un/index.html>

## ◆ Press Freedom

- ▶ Statement on behalf of the EU at the 27th session of the Committee on information (18.04.05)

(...) As we prepare for World Press Freedom day on 3 May, the European Union would like to reiterate its commitment to a free press and its important role in a free society. It is a cause of profound concern that in many countries freedom of the press does not exist, and that the dissemination of information remains controlled and limited. We would like to underline once again **that the freedom of opinion and expression is a right set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**. This right includes the "freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".

We strongly condemn the use of violence to hinder the activities of journalists, and also condemn attempts to control or influence the media by distorting or suppressing information or opinions. We believe that the freedom of the press is essential for democratic and open societies. The establishment of a free press is also one of the indicators of a successful transition from conflict to a post-conflict society. Indeed it is a crucial tool in preventing the resurgence of conflict (...)

<http://www.eu2005.lu/en/actualites/discours/2005/04/19kohn/index.html>

## ◆ Human Rights

- ▶ Latvia's Russians call on EU for help with human rights - By Andrew Rettman (19.04.05)

Latvia's only Russian-speaking MEP, Tatjana Zdanoka (Greens), is pushing for EU action on the rights of non-Latvian speakers in her home country.

Some 450,000 ethnic Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians currently live in Latvia but are being denied citizenship unless they pass a test on the Latvian language and take an oath of loyalty to the state.

The group, which represents almost 20 per cent of the country's population, cannot vote, cannot hold most types of public posts and requires a visa to visit other EU countries, except for Estonia, Lithuania and Denmark.

Many non-citizens who were born in Latvia refuse to take the test on the grounds that it is degrading, while others are too old and infirm to complete the examination.

On top of this, Ms Zdanoka believes the current government is abusing citizenship red tape to keep Russian-speaking activists out of power, as well as backsliding on promises made to the EU in the pre-enlargement phase.

"The goal is to create a privileged status for ethnic Latvians in society. It is ethnic profiling - already 94 per cent of all officials are pure Latvians", the MEP told EUobserver.

**Ms Zdanoka added that Latvia is violating European racial discrimination laws.**

The MEP has called on the European Parliament to send a fact-finding mission to the country and to recommend that the Commission initiates Treaty violation procedures under Articles 211 and 226.

But the Latvian government is standing firm on the subject.

"In my opinion the oath is not bad. To be a citizen implies more than being simply born somewhere, it requires certain obligations and duties," Riga's ambassador to the EU, Eduards Stiprais, responded.

"The government has the final say in the naturalisation of individual persons, not the courts," he added.

Other sources pointed out that another 450,000 non-ethnic Latvians have already obtained citizenship and that another 1,000 to 2,000 applications are being processed by the Institute of Naturalisation every month.

"Most of the young people will naturalise and exercise their full political rights, but there will remain a hardcore of older Russian speakers and hardliners who will refuse and who will keep on calling for the EU to dictate automatic citizenship moves to Latvia," a western European diplomat explained.

He added that there is a small risk that the hardcore fringe could organise protests around sensitive subjects such as Russian language education in the next few years.

But the high-level source also remarked that the Institute of Naturalisation is one of the least politicised and most professionally-run administrations in Latvia.

He added that **the European Commission is highly unlikely to take any action on the subject because it would be tantamount to admitting that the previous college had got it wrong when assessing Latvia's conformity with the *acquis communautaire*.**

"The EU's position has been for a very long time that Latvia has remained fully within the Copenhagen Criteria. The Russian government, which has a certain kinship with the case, maintains the same position," the source indicated.

The diplomat conceded that certain high-ranking Latvian statesmen view the Russian-speaking minority with mistrust as having anti-independent tendencies and unhealthy links with Moscow.

He added that some right-wing Latvian politicians also fear that a huge new bloc of naturalised voters would lean toward leftist parties and undermine their position in parliament.

But on the other hand, the Russian-speaking group has a well-organised leadership with a strong ideology and does maintain "political ties" with Moscow, he cautioned.

<http://www.euobserver.com/?sid=9&aid=18885>

## ◆ Millennium Development Goals

### ▶ EU-ACP: Millennium Development Goals are achievable, says Kofi Annan (19.04.05)

The 9th EU-ACP Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), which opened this Monday in Bamako, Mali, was told in a written message sent by **UN Secretary General Kofi Annan that poverty reduction and the achievement of the seven Millennium Development Goals could be achieved if developed countries support the developing countries.** Mr Annan said he was counting on the parliamentarians from the North and South to put pressure on their governments to keep their promises on development aid.

The Millennium Development Goals are one of the most important debates on this week's agenda for the 77 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and their 77 counterparts from African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). In its **2000 Millennium Declaration, the United Nations set eight goals for development, called the Millennium Development Goals, which set an ambitious agenda for improving the condition of the world's poorer countries by 2015.** The EU-ACP session will conclude this Thursday with the adoption of the Bamako Declaration, which will call for more commitment from the international community to fulfilling these goals.

The situation in Sudan is another key point on the agenda; a joint JPA delegation was in Darfur at the end of March. Other debates will focus on the situation of the African Great Lakes region, in particular a report on post-conflict rehabilitation, the budgetisation of the European Development Fund (EDF)

and -with Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson - the latest developments in the area of economic partnership with West Africa. Resolutions will be adopted this Thursday on Sudan, the Great Lakes Region, the EDF, post-conflict situations and primary education (in the context of the Millennium Development Goals).

Holding the Joint Parliamentary Assembly in an ACP state gives MEPs the opportunity to discuss the essential problems of developing countries on the spot with local actors. At the Women's Forum held on Saturday, members of parliament and representatives of civil society were able to discuss the problem of female genital mutilation. This has particular resonance for Mali given that more than **90% of women in Mali are victims of genital mutilation**.

Another issue is the fall in world cotton prices. This has had catastrophic consequences for Mali, which is Africa's largest cotton producer. Parliamentarians will also hear about other concerns in Mali, including the threat of desertification.

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade2?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+PRESS+NR-20050419-1+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&L=EN&LEVEL=2&NAV=X&LSTDOC=N#SECTION3>

- ▶ **EC & World Bank agree to support Africa's push to achieving Millenium Development Goals** (22.04.05)

The Commission and World Bank said they will work more closely to support African countries' development priorities, particularly in the critical areas of infrastructure, trade and regional integration. Representatives from the two institutions also stressed that improved governance and strengthened capacity were crucial to successful outcomes in each of these areas. The European Union and World Bank together account for more than half of the new resources committed each year for Africa's development. The agreement stemmed from a meeting of Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid and Gobind Nankani, Vice President for the Africa Region at the World Bank. The discussion, taking place within the IMF/World Bank Spring Meetings, builds on a strong working partnership between the two institutions, and followed consultations in January laying the groundwork for enhanced collaboration in Africa.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/newsdigest/00wn.htm#mdg](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/newsdigest/00wn.htm#mdg)

## ◆ United Nations

- ▶ **Statement on behalf of the EU at the informal thematic consultations of the General Assembly of the UN on Cluster III: Freedom to live in dignity** (19.04.05)

(...)Mr. President,

With regard to the cluster "Freedom to live in dignity", the **EU welcomes the prominent place reserved to human rights, the rule of law and democracy**. From the outset, we would like to reaffirm our strong commitment to these fundamental objectives that need to be advanced together. We would like to **stress the inter-linkages between human rights, the rule of law, democracy and security and development. Not one of these important fields of UN activity stands second to the others**. In that regard, we fully share the Secretary-General's analysis that "we will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights". (...)

As a matter of fact, **the violations of human rights and disrespect for the rule of law are among the main factors threatening peace and security as well as slowing down development processes**.

Mr. President,

The rule of law is the underlying principle at the basis of the UN. It is the indispensable basis of our interaction at the international level.

The rule of law forms the bedrock for peace, security and development, both at national and international levels. For instance, the rule of law will contribute to an environment of trust, predictability and security in which economic development can thrive and will function as an incentive for foreign direct investment. Equally, through transparent and just procedures and institutions, the rule of law will provide ways and means to address injustice before it risks developing into a situation of tension and conflict. But institutions and procedures, however important, are not enough by themselves. **A just legal system must build upon international human rights, norms and standards. The rule of law and human rights are interdependent and mutually supporting.**

In post-conflict situations, the rapid reaffirmation and strengthening of the rule of law, in parallel with humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and reconstruction, is essential to restore the backbone of community life. Activities to promote transitional justice have proven critical in many situations to prevent relapse into violence.

In the coming days we will be called upon to comment on the proposed **establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission**. While defining its mandate we should keep in mind the prominence of the rule of law in post conflict processes.

The need to address the issue of rule of law in post conflict situations is becoming commonly accepted. However, **the international community also has a responsibility to prevent conflicts.** (...)

**The fight against impunity, the rendering of justice and the promotion of reconciliation are vital dimensions of the rule of law.** The EU stresses its support to the International Criminal Court and other existing international or mixed war crimes tribunals, and joins the Secretary-General in calling on Member States to ratify the Rome Statute and to cooperate with the Court and the tribunals. Not later than on March 16, 2005, the Council of the 25 European Foreign Ministers, in preparation for this year's session of the Commission on Human Rights, reaffirmed its constant support for the ICC.

The EU also welcomes the trend of an increased number of cases being brought before the International Court of Justice with a view to settling issues peacefully. (...) We emphasize the need to continue, where necessary, to strengthen the existing body of international norms and rules. (...) In particular, the EU calls upon all Member States to sign and ratify the convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which was adopted last week by the General Assembly, and will be open for signature at the beginning of the treaty event on 14 September 2005.

The EU also supports as a matter of principle the Secretary-General's intention to create a dedicated **Rule of Law Assistance Unit to assist national efforts to establish the rule of law.** We look forward to receiving further details in this regard. Such a unit has the potential to significantly enhance the coherence and effectiveness of the UN's efforts to promote the rule of law in conflict and post-conflict societies. The EU fully supports the Secretary-General's intention which enables the UN to better cope with the increasing demands regarding the strengthening of justice and the rule of law.

Mr. President,

The EU would like to **reaffirm its strong commitment to human rights.** We share this principled attitude with member states and groups of member states in the UN.

Human rights, civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, are one of the fundamental pillars of the UN system which the UN has a mission to promote and to protect. In this regard, **the EU stresses the need to strengthen the overall human rights system, most notably by mainstreaming human rights throughout the UN system, including in the deliberations of the Security Council.**

The EU believes that **only through the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms is it possible to empower women and men in an equal manner and, therefore, create the basic infrastructure to achieve sustainable human development.**

At the country level, the EU expresses its support for the Secretary-General's "Action 2" programme and acknowledges the need for more resources and staff.

As stated above, **the EU underlines the need for ensuring the respect for human rights in conflict prevention activities as well as in post-conflict situations.** In this context, we would like to emphasize the importance of **human rights education** as a powerful tool for conflict prevention.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights plays a central role within the human rights machinery. **The EU supports the call for the strengthening of the Office of the High Commissioner, including through increased financial resources.** We call for increased funding for the OHCHR from the regular UN budget. (...)

**Institutional reform in the field of human rights must strengthen the United Nations' human rights machinery as a whole.** In that regard, we welcome the proposal for the **creation of a standing Human Rights Council, reflecting the centrality of human rights in the UN system.** We emphasize again that human rights are universal in nature and that all countries have a responsibility to respect, implement and promote human rights without any exception.

In his statement before the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva on April 7, 2005, the Secretary-General explained the rationale behind his proposal to establish a Human Rights Council at the same institutional level as the Security Council and ECOSOC. As recommended by the Secretary-General, the HCHR should participate more actively in the deliberations of the Security Council and the proposed Peacebuilding Commission. We would like to commend the Secretary-General for his proposal, as he puts into focus the interaction in substance of the dimensions of security, development and human rights. The useful indications on the mandate, the criteria for membership and the functioning will facilitate the forthcoming deliberations on this issue.

The EU would like to thank the Secretary-General for his explanatory note on the Human Rights Council. We will examine in detail the Secretary-General's interesting proposals and we will comment in more detail during our upcoming discussions on Cluster IV.

Mr. President,

The EU supports efforts to promote democratic institutions, practices, processes of democratization and good governance worldwide and underlines the importance of the proposals in the Secretary-General's report aimed at strengthening democracy, good governance and the rule of law. **The EU supports efforts to promote transparency, accountability, participation and access to justice around the world. Progress in these areas, plus the strengthening of democratic institutions and practices, leads to the development of a culture of democracy.** Furthermore, **good governance, democracy and human rights need to be addressed as fundamental horizontal concerns to promote sustainable development.**

(...) The EU endorses the concept of **"Responsibility to protect"**. **Grave and massive violations of human rights and acts of genocide call for strong response and action on the part of the international community.** (...) It should also be recognized **that state sovereignty implies not only rights, but also responsibilities.** One of these responsibilities is the responsibility of each state to **protect its own citizens** - that comes first. However, if a state is unable or unwilling to do so, and if a situation of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity or massive human rights violations occurs or threatens to occur, the international community will have a responsibility to help protect these civilians and thereby also help to maintain international peace and security; first and foremost through diplomatic, humanitarian and other measures, such as support to capacity building and other development activities. But if such measures would have no immediate effect or would come too late, enforcement measures through the Security Council or approved by the Security Council should be possible, if needed and as a measure of last resort (...)

Mr. President,

In conclusion, allow me to thank the Secretary-General once again for his thoughtful and inspiring work, which so rightly builds on the interaction between development, security and human rights, rule of law and democracy and their mutually reinforcing nature. The clear recognition of their

interdependence and mutually reinforcing nature should guide us in our future discussions. We look forward to working constructively with partners to take this forward for the benefit of all our peoples.  
<http://www.eu2005.lu/en/actualites/discours/2005/04/20UNcluster3/index.html>