



*Présidence luxembourgeoise
du Conseil de l'Union européenne*

“Second South Summit”

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on behalf of the European Union

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Mr President,

I am very honoured to address this distinguished audience at this historical summit. I would like to thank H.E. the Deputy-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar for his kind invitation.

The European Union, that I have the privilege to represent here today, is a reliable and long-standing partner of the developing countries. We are anxious to continuously strengthen this partnership through dialogue and cooperation in the respect of identities, cultures, and the specificities of everyone.

This is why I am particularly happy to have the opportunity to intervene at a summit like this one, which brings together political leaders of the countries commonly called “of the South”, in order to combine their strengths in this landmark year for the international community as a whole, and the field of development cooperation in particular. The South-South cooperation has made remarkable progress and contributes significantly to modifying the landscape of international relations.

On behalf of the European Union, I wish to reiterate our firm support to your efforts, and to plead for a substantial South-South-North partnership. The aims of poverty alleviation and sustainable development, including in their economical, social and environmental aspects, are our common objectives.

We are now less than a hundred days away from the United Nations summit, which will be held during the month of September, and is required to come to a conclusion about security challenges, but also and foremost to evaluate the progress achieved by development cooperation since the adoption in 2000 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). We share the Secretary-General’s idea that development, security and human rights are interdependent and are strengthened reciprocally, however the European Union would like to underline once again and without ambiguity that, for us, development is an end in itself, and not only a means to ensure security.

The European Union considers the United Nations summit as an occasion to reemphasize our support to the UN as an instrument for international relations based on the rule of law.

We will reaffirm our strong support to efficient multilateralism and to the reform process of the United Nations. In this context we stress that the report submitted by the Secretary-General on 21st march 2005 is balanced and constitutes an excellent working basis, together with the contribution by the President of the General Assembly, for the Declaration that will be adopted next September in New York.

The European Union considers that it is essential to arrive at a balanced and ambitious result which makes it possible to reform the UN in order to respond in a more concrete and effective manner to the threats and multidimensional challenges identified in the Secretary-General's report.

In this context, the European Union stresses its commitment to continue a substantial dialogue with all the Member States of the UN for the preparation of the Summit.

As regards the Millennium Development Goals set five years ago, we are far from reaching them. This is particularly true for Africa. Indeed, the first of the eight Millennium Development Goals consists in reducing by half, until 2015, the extreme poverty and hunger. However in sub-Saharan Africa, food insecurity prevails in a number of countries, 46% of the population still survives with less than one dollar per day, maternal and infant mortality remains very high and HIV/AIDS kills several thousands of people per day.

Other figures, on education, gender equality or sustainable development, are hardly more encouraging, and one could multiply the examples.

In this respect, the European Union would like to underline first of all that the developing countries have to be primarily responsible for their own development and take it into their hands, in particular through overarching and coherent national poverty reduction strategies.

But that does not mean however that the rest of the world should forget its responsibilities. A broad and urgent collective effort towards a substantial increase in Official Development Aid is necessary if we want to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The European Union, as the main donor at world level, as well as a major trading partner, is actively involved in the fulfilment of these goals.

I am therefore happy to be able to present to you the new collective commitments of the European Union, following the agreement which could be found under the Luxembourg Presidency at the Council which brought together the 25 Ministers for development cooperation in Brussels on May 24th.

Between now and 2010, the European Union and its Member States will carry collectively their level of Official Development Aid (ODA) to 0.56% of their Gross National Income (GNI), which means an additional annual amount of 20 billion € devoted to development. The European Union and its Member States also committed themselves to reaching an ODA threshold of 0.7% of their GNI until 2015, which is the deadline for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The agreement that we reached on these commitments constitutes a major contribution towards achieving the MDGs. I consider that they represent an essential opening, an extremely important step forward with regards to international solidarity. We show that international solidarity is not a vain word.

I would like to welcome here the spirit of solidarity which prevailed among all the members of the European Union during our discussions. Indeed, even if special modalities were retained for the new Member States, they were ready to carry their share of responsibility. The same applies to some Member States which experience a difficult economic situation.

This agreement also shows that Europe does not only make promises, but that it respects them. I would like to remind you that in 2002 in Monterrey, at the International Conference on the Financing of Development, the European Union had committed itself to devoting 0.39% of its GNI towards Official Development Aid in 2006. The current reports show that

we are on the right track to achieve this goal. Currently, four of the five countries which exceed the goal of 0.7% of GNI set by the United Nations with regards to Official Development Aid are Member States of the European Union, and I welcome the fact that my country, Luxembourg, is among them.

I also wish stress that the European Union considers the development of Africa as a priority and that it will intensify its efforts to help the African countries reach the MDGs. We decided to increase our financial aid for sub-Saharan Africa: at least 50% of the increase in Official Development Aid will be earmarked for it. In this context, we consider as very encouraging the institutional progress achieved in Africa.

Furthermore the European Union is pleased with the conclusion of the negotiations on the revision of the Cotonou Agreement and with the agreement found with the 76 States of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) on February 23rd. This revised agreement, while maintaining the *acquis* of the Cotonou Agreement, represents an improvement of the partnership between the ACP States and the Community and its Member States, in all its components. I am delighted that this revised agreement will be signed in Luxembourg at the end of next week.

The European Union also decided to continue its examination of the most promising options for innovative financing mechanisms for development, in order to increase the resources available in a sustainable and foreseeable way. Certain Member States intend in particular to withhold a levy of solidarity on plane tickets.

The European Union remains determined to find, in collaboration with the international financial institutions, an agreement on the scope and the modalities of an additional reduction of the multilateral debt in order to guarantee, according to an approach on a case by case basis, that the burden of the debt will be bearable in the long run. How could we not welcome consequently, the agreement reached last weekend between the G-8 Ministers of Finance cancelling the debt of the poorest countries (for an amount of 40 billion dollars).

While carrying out efforts on the quantitative aspect of the financing of development, the European Union also points out the need to improve in parallel the quality and the effectiveness of ODA, as well as the need to strengthen capacity and to ensure the viability of

an increased ODA for the partner countries. The European Union welcomes the Paris declaration on the effectiveness of aid and recalls the full commitment of the Member States and of the Commission to ensure, without delay, the implementation and the follow-up, including the setting of verifiable objectives – targets –, of the specific commitments that it adopted at the high level Forum in Paris.

The European Union also stresses the importance of taking the social dimension of the globalisation into account within the various policies and in the international cooperation.

Mr President,

Other elements, which are directly connected with development, can have a leverage effect in the fight against poverty thanks to a joint action and thanks to strong commitments.

The European Union will continue to take into account of the aims of development cooperation in all the policies that it implements and which are likely to affect the developing countries. The European Union will make a particular effort in order to promote and strengthen policy coherence in favour of development within the framework of the global partnership for development that is intended in the Millennium Objective n°8.

Trade is one of these policies. With a view to the 6th ministerial conference of the WTO in Hong Kong in December 2005, the European Union stresses that it is necessary that this conference fixes the broad outline of an agreement for the Doha Round on development to come to a conclusion. We must achieve ambitious results. These results have to take into account the economic challenges that Europe has to face. They have especially to offer the developing countries the possibility to fully integrate the world economy. The individual needs of the weak and vulnerable developing countries will have to be entirely taken into account in the results of the negotiations.

The fight against HIV/AIDS will also be crucial in the fight against poverty. The epidemic of AIDS has undergone a development which makes it a global crisis of exceptional size, to which an exceptional solution must be supplied.

Efforts to limit new infections have to be continued and intensified. The epidemic will not be stopped if we do not concentrate our efforts on prevention. However if we do not treat infected persons, the human, social and economic consequences will be catastrophic and will endanger the majority of our development efforts. An integrated approach is necessary, including prevention, treatment, care and research. Particular attention has to be given to young people and to women in this context.

The European Union welcomes the approval by the Council of General Affairs of the European Action Plan to Fight Against HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis through external action. This programme constitutes the basis of a renewed and concerted action of the European Union in all the partner countries, as well as at world level, by means of common activities aiming in particular to promote an integrated approach for the fight against the three diseases, to increase the capacities of the partner countries, to increase the resources and the means available and to support research and the development of new prevention instruments and treatment for the three diseases.

In this context, the European Union will also support the full implementation of the Cairo/CIPD+10 action plan, by ensuring that sexual health and the sexual and reproductive rights constitute an essential element of the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

We will also have to urgently address the human resource crisis, which is an essential condition to genuine ownership and to a real sustainability of the efforts that we undertake collectively. The European Union will continue its capacity building efforts.

The European Union stresses the importance of a substantial contribution to the replenishment of the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis for 2006 and 2007, on the occasion of the conference which will be held in London in September 2005.

Beyond the issue of HIV/AIDS, the EU also wishes that a number of particularly important questions for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals will be looked into and duly included in the conclusions of the Summit of September, such as employment and economic growth as an essential means of coming out of poverty, the promotion of gender equality, as well as the links existing between environmental viability, security and poverty.

Mr. President,

Questions on development, security and human rights are linked in an indivisible manner. For over six months now the international community has been embarked on an ambitious exercise of the highest priority, both within the UN and in the regions and capitals of the world: we need a common understanding of challenges and threats that plague our planet and our populations, we need to adequately define remedies and to apply to our universal organization, the United Nations, the indispensable reforms for a more efficient response.

In this context, it is imperative that we tackle the security problems of all States. We are aware that, quoting again from the Secretary General of the United Nations, “no State, however powerful, can protect itself on its own” and that “no country, weak or strong, can realize prosperity in a vacuum”. This fact requires a common and forceful response. The EU feels strengthened in its determination to promote an efficient multilateralism based on the rule of law and on the United Nations.

In order to ensure a life in security, the EU believes that special attention needs to be given to prevention of conflicts, the fight against terrorism, the adoption of principles for the use of force, disarmament, non proliferation of WMD and their vectors, strengthened UN capacity in peacekeeping. We also support with determination the efforts for regulation in areas of SALW, ammunition and explosives that kill hundreds of people every year.

We welcome the agreement last April on the text of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

More specifically, with regards to disarmament and non proliferation of WMD, the EU deplores that the recent NPT Review Conference did not produce a consensus document discussing substance issues. We stay committed to the consolidation of the NPT.

Mr. President,

I would also like to reaffirm our strong commitment to the fundamental objectives that are **human rights, rule of law and democracy** and the close links between these objectives and development.

Human rights violations and the non-respect of the rule of law are among the main factors that threaten peace and security and slow the development process. The EU considers that rule of law is the foundation for peace, security and development, both at national and international level. This is even more relevant with regards to a country that emerges from armed conflict. In this regard, the EU supports the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission whose mandate will be to find integrated answers to multiple challenges posed to a community, a country, between the end of armed conflict and the resumption of traditional development activities.

I would like to stress in particular, on behalf of the EU, our commitment for human rights. We share this principled attitude with other Member States and groups of Member States within the UN.

Human rights, civil and political, and also economic, social and cultural, constitute a fundamental pillar of the UN, which we have the mission to promote and protect. In this regard, the EU emphasizes the necessity to reinforce the human rights system in general, notably by integrating the human rights dimension across the UN system, including in the deliberations of the Security Council.

The EU is convinced that only the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms will enable to empower women and men equally and thus create a basic infrastructure to realize sustainable human development.

In this logic the EU supports the creation of a Human Rights Council as a standing body and that reflects the universality of human rights and their centrality in the UN system, as well as the concern to put human rights on equal footing with questions of development and security. The strengthening of the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights goes hand in hand with the elevation of human rights to the same institutional level than the questions of security and development.

Mr. President,

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.

In our view, this proposal should be considered from a broad perspective. The basic principle of state sovereignty is and should remain undisputed. 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,

The logic of our progression towards the September 2005 Summit at the United Nations in New York is the right one: through the identification of challenges and threats and the definition of means and required instruments to face them, we see the indispensable **institutional and administrative reforms** that will enable us to put our universal organization to the level of our ambitions. These reforms are not means in themselves; they have to flow from the objectively assessed needs and from our determination to make multilateralism more efficient and to improve the overall performance of the UN system.

In this spirit, the EU is notably actively engaged in the exercise that should lead to a revitalization of the General Assembly. The EU strongly supports the establishment of a mechanism engaging NGOs, civil society and the private sector in the GA's work.

In order to improve the global results of the United Nations system it is necessary and the EU is aware of that, to proceed to a general reform of the Security Council in all its aspects, with the aim to reinforce its legitimacy and effectiveness. The EU is of the view that the discussion of Security Council reform should not overshadow the other important issues under discussion in view of UN reform as a whole.

Furthermore, the EU calls for a significant reform of ECOSOC to make it a more effective multilateral instrument that meets the challenges in the economic, social, environmental, humanitarian and human rights fields and that can follow up to and review effectively the implementation of the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit, notably in the area of development.

The EU also encourages and supports the reforms launched by the Secretary-General and proposes to implement under his responsibility the administrative and management reforms. Serious efforts should be undertaken in areas where in the past deficiencies regarding management and transparency have appeared.

Finally, allow me to insist on the urgent problem of environmental degradation and poverty in the world. We have to adopt an active and pragmatic attitude in our efforts to reform international environmental governance.

Sustainable development, including environmental questions and concerns, has to be further incorporated into the national and international programmes and development strategies. The European Union supports the urgent call of the Secretary-General for a more integrated international environmental governance structure, based on the existing institutions. To this end, and given the environmental challenges which we are facing in matters of development, the European Union proposes that the September summit should begin a process, within the framework of the reform of the UN, which will lead to negotiations on the establishment of an UN agency for the environment.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you again for the occasion which was given to me today to recall the important partnership between the countries of the South and the European Union. The issues of the North-South relations are complex just like those of the developing

countries. The diversity of the countries, of the histories, of the cultures, as well as the development levels certainly call for a serious differentiation effort.

This being said, what matters is that we should constantly be able, and particularly less than three months of a Summit as important as that of next September in New York, to recognise our common interests, to exceed our regional views and to define together the ways and means to advance towards the welfare of our countries, of our societies and of our people. A greater sharing of our wealth is essential to reduce and eliminate poverty.

The European Union took decisions of an exceptional scope. Progress as regards debt is also encouraging. The problems of the environment, the reduction of the inequalities, the conclusion of a round of the trade negotiations, more democratic structures at world level, the good governance and the fight against corruption, count among the other most important challenges which mark out the way towards more balanced and just North-South relations.

The interdependence between development, security, human rights, rule of law and democracy is henceforth recognised. The appropriate answers to the challenges and threats in these fields will require efforts by everybody. The EU is ready to accomplish its part of the contract and has shown this in more than one way. We are sure that it is through the dialogue with our partners throughout the world that we should define and continue defining the right answers.

2005 thus gives the occasion to place the international relations, and especially the relations between the industrialised countries and the developing countries on a new and more democratic basis. If political will exists in all the developed countries and in all the developing countries, decisive progress is possible in order to massively and durably reduce poverty on our planet. Resources and means exist to achieve this. Let us take up the opportunity to engage durably in this year 2005 on the way towards the creation of a world that is a little more stable, a little less unfair and shows much more solidarity.