

Statement on behalf of the European Union at the Informal session of the United Nations Plenary Assembly on the September Summit

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Policy area: [General Affairs and External Relations](#)

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia , the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, as well as Ukraine and for the first time the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

Mr. President,

1. We would like to express our appreciation to you, as well as to your facilitators, for having brought in a most timely manner our common efforts to a degree of maturation that will allow us to focus our attention in the weeks to come on a text that is balanced and at the same time contains the necessary vision to bring us forward. We endorse your approach of sharing with us a revised document by mid July. We are also open to endorse the use of annexes, should that be useful, to clarify major issues on, for instance, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council or ECOSOC reform.

2. Our collective efforts of the past five months, as reflected in the outcome document, must allow us to seize the historic occasion of the 60th anniversary of the signature of the San Francisco Charter and give our universal organization the necessary new impetus to face both old and new threats and challenges and fulfill the mandate of the Charter in our time.

3. The draft outcome document that we have in front of us, provides, in our view, a solid text that will point us in the direction of an ambitious and visionary basis for the deliberations of our Heads of State and Government in September, building on and inspired by the Secretary General's report "In Larger Freedom◆?".

Mr. President,

4. As the EU Heads of State and Government who have met on June 16th and 17th in the European Council, have emphatically reiterated, the EU remains fully engaged in the process that will lead us to the ambitious and balanced outcome at the September Summit we all hope for.

5. The European Council's conclusions on the preparation of the September Summit are attached to the present statement. They underline and reaffirm the EU's priorities and positions on all the important clusters under discussion.

6. As for today, allow me to stress those issues that the EU considers to be the essential building blocks of our common endeavor.

Mr. President,

7. The EU agrees that the common assessment of the threats and challenges that we face today, should find its rightful place in the outcome document. The interdependence of those threats and challenges must be acknowledged in the strongest terms.

8. Problems of an interdependent nature call for complex and coherent responses in a multilateral collective security system. A common approach bears the promise of maximum added value and impact.

9. With this in mind, the EU would like to see the interdependence of challenges and the mutually reinforcing answers reflected throughout the outcome document, while there cannot be any hierarchy between threats.

10. As the global interdependence of threats and challenges recognizes that insecurity impedes development, and that the lack of development as well as

environmental degradation nurture the risk of conflict and that disregard for human rights is incompatible with both human development and security, the answers by the world community must be based on shared responsibility, international solidarity, respect for human rights and rule of law, within the framework of a rules-based multilateral system with the United Nations at its core.

Mr. President,

11. The assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the MDGs will be a central part of the Summit's agenda. In this regard, the EU believes that more rapid progress towards the MDGs – as a whole and individually – should provide the framework for the development section of the outcome document. We remain committed to the full and timely implementation of the MDGs and the international community should commit at the Summit to much more ambitious and concrete action over the next ten years to meet the 2015 targets within the larger framework of our commitments of the major UN Summits and Conferences in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, to sustainable development, gender equality and poverty eradication. We stress the importance of a focus on HIV/AIDS as well as strong language on the importance to access to reproductive health for achieving the MDGs. In addition, we welcome the recognition of the special needs of Africa.

12. The EU is committed to take concrete decisions in order to live up to the challenges in the field of development. Allow me to draw your attention to recent important and encouraging decisions that have been taken in the field of development, in particular in the area of financing for development. The EU's recent commitment on new levels of ODA, notably the collective objective of reaching an ODA of 0.7% of GNI in 2015, which will result in an additional annual €20 billion ODA by 2010, enhanced policy coherence and an increased focus on the needs to Africa, including through at least 50% of additional ODA to Africa, as well as additional proposals on innovative sources of financing and the recent G-8 Finance ministers' agreement on multilateral debt relief should find their way into the outcome document.

13. At present, four out of five countries to exceed the UN target of 0.7 % of GNI are Member States of the EU. The others are committed to a timetable to reach this target. The new EU members are on track to join the EU ODA targets. This clearly demonstrates that it is possible to evolve from an aid recipient status to that of a donor of international aid. We call upon all UN member states in a position to do so to live up to internationally agreed levels of ODA, both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

14. Our common endeavor in development is a shared responsibility, as agreed at Monterrey. Such should be our common understanding, when we reaffirm that more and better aid is needed to implement the MDGs. Some encouraging efforts have been made on the quantitative side, which will need to continue. It is critical that we now see real progress on the qualitative side not only on the part of the donors but also from the recipient countries, if our overriding goal of sustainable development, in its economic, social and environmental aspects, is to be achieved. It will take better donor practices, harmonized procedures as well as good governance, transparency, coherence and, among others, anti-corruption measures to improve the quality of aid. In this regard, we would like to commend the results of the High Level Forum on Harmonization that took place in Paris earlier this year. On the side of the recipient countries, stronger focus on the creation of an enabling environment, sound policies, good governance and the fight against corruption needs to be assured. Donors and recipients should be able to recognize and shoulder their respective part of the common responsibility.

15. The EU wishes to emphasize the importance of sustainable development and the protection of the natural resource base for development and poverty eradication. Environmental sustainability is essential if we are to meet MDGs on poverty, health or gender equality. In this context, the integration of environmental issues into development strategies is needed, as are further efforts on inter alia biodiversity, desertification, water and energy. As regards climate change, progress for further action post-2012, the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, is essential. The EU also calls on States that have not yet done so to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

16. Trade is a powerful driving force of economic growth and development. The EU remains firmly committed to the timely conclusion of the WTO Doha round of negotiations in fully realizing its development potential. We also underline the importance of market access and in particular urge others to provide duty-free and quota-free market access for all exports originating in LDCs. We agree that there is a need for capacity building and investment in trade related infrastructure, and we therefore welcome proposals to provide additional and better support for trade capacity building, including the setting up of a new mechanism to that end.

Mr. President,

17. The threats to security may be perceived differently in different parts of the world. They include not just international war and conflicts, but civil violence, organized crime, terrorism, WMD, poverty, deadly infectious disease and environmental degradation. The EU regards the adoption of principles governing the use of force as one of its priorities in the preparation of the Summit.

18. We must also clearly and unequivocally condemn terrorism. In our efforts to prevent and to stop terrorism, we must ensure that all counter-terrorism measures are in full conformity with human rights and fundamental freedoms. We welcome the principle that terrorist violence against civilians and non combatants is not justified under any circumstances and urge all states to unite behind the political signal proposed by the Secretary General. The EU calls on Member States to conclude a comprehensive convention on terrorism during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. We urge all Member States to rally around the current coordinator's text. The Summit should also stress the need to strengthen the verification, monitoring and enforcement role of the Security Council on counter-terrorism.

19. The EU welcomes the support given in the draft outcome document to the United Nations comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy proposed by the Secretary General. That strategy, including the five basic pillars mentioned by the Secretary General requires the strengthening of the operative capacities of the organization and should be given increased visibility. To dissuade disaffected groups from choosing terrorism as a tactic to achieve their goals, to deny

terrorists the means to carry out their attacks, to deter states from supporting terrorists, to develop state capacity to prevent terrorism, and to protect human rights in the struggle against terrorism are complementary and mutually reinforcing steps in the right direction. We also acknowledge that more attention should be paid to the victims of terrorism and we look forward to further work in the United Nations in this regard. Part and parcel of this strategy must also be the signing and ratifying of all the 13 UN anti-terrorism conventions without delay or reservation. All these concerns should be clearly addressed at the level of Heads of State and Government.

Mr. President,

20. With regard to disarmament and non proliferation of WMD, the EU deplors the fact that, despite the EU's efforts, the NPT Review Conference was not able to achieve a document by consensus, dealing with basic questions. We continue to regard the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. At times when the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other WMD and their means of delivery is universally identified as one of the deadliest scenarios, the European Union wishes that the Summit can make substantive proposals to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. This includes strong support to the additional protocol as the new verification standard, underlining the need for a stronger role of the Security Council as final arbiter of compliance and reaffirming commitments to the existing instruments, including their universal ratification and implementation. It is now essential to look forward and to give a clear signal on the occasion of the September Summit which will be the first opportunity for us to stress our support for the continued maintenance of the integrity and authority of the NPT in all its aspects.

21. In this context, we also refer to our Strategy Against Proliferation of WMD, which includes, among others, the destruction of chemical weapons as stipulated in the Convention on Chemical Weapons and the implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

Mr. President,

22. The EU feels encouraged by an ever larger consensus within the international community on the urgent need to address post-conflict situations in an integrated and coherent manner. At the Summit, our political leaders should take bold and clear decisions on the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission and define a concrete timetable for its setup, so that the Peacebuilding Commission will become operational by the end of 2005.

23. The EU has been, is and will be a strong advocate for the centrality and the mainstreaming of human rights issues throughout the UN system. The guarantee of human security and the protection of human rights and the rule of law go hand in hand, on a national, international and institutional level.

24. The EU calls for a strengthening of the OHCHR and of the role of the High Commissioner, taking guidance from the plan of action that the High Commissioner published recently. It is incumbent upon us to provide the OHCHR with resources that are commensurate to its tasks. This necessitates a significant increase in the proportion that the OHCHR receives financial resources from the regular budget.

25. The EU favors to establish the Human Rights Council as a main freestanding Charter body of the UN, linked to the General Assembly, reflecting, at the institutional level, the centrality and universality of human rights, and the EU's concern to put human rights on the same footing as issues of development and of peace and security. Pending a decision the General Assembly might take on the establishment of such a body, the HRC should be established as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, thus creating a link with a universal body. A Human Rights Council, whose membership is elected at a two thirds majority of the General Assembly on the basis of equitable geographic representation, will gain in status and legitimacy. An equitable peer review mechanism could be established. The Human Rights Council should address urgent human rights violations in an effective manner and promote the mainstreaming of human rights, while maintaining the main tasks of the CHR.

26. We do not need to reinvent the wheel. Central features of the CHR, such as the special procedures and the very positive participation of NGOs as well as national human rights institutions in the proceedings of the CHR, are to be maintained and further strengthened.

27. The EU strongly supports the emphasis put on the fight against impunity in the outcome document and reaffirms its firm support for the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Mr. President,

28. The EU endorses the concept of the responsibility to protect. The United Nations come under harsh criticism each time the international community was not able to prevent or to stop genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes or other massive and gross violations of human rights.

29. We agree that the responsibility to protect the civilian populations lies first and foremost with each individual state. However, if it fails to do so, the international community has the responsibility to use diplomatic, humanitarian and other means, including sanctions and the use of force if need be, to help protect civilian populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We recognize our shared responsibility to take collective action through the Security Council.

Mr. President,

30. The EU recognizes the need to reform the main organs of the UN, notably the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Security Council, with the objective to strengthen representativeness, transparency and efficiency of the system

31. From the start of our discussions back in January, the EU considered institutional and administrative reform as the logical consequence flowing from objectively assessed needs and our determination to strengthen the United Nations in order to allow for a more effective response to identified threats and challenges.

32. The tasks at hand are of a magnitude and complexity that does not allow for micromanagement through intergovernmental processes. We need to entrust the Secretary General and his services with the appropriate means, authority and flexibility to implement the mandates defined by the international community. The efficient handling of multiple, simultaneous, highly complex and sometimes very dangerous situations at the four corners of the world call for a high degree of professionalism, adequate human and financial resources and well informed decision making. But empowerment and a higher degree of organizational flexibility must come with increased transparency and accountability. The EU commends the Secretary General for the measures already taken and planned in terms of administrative reform. These are steps in the right direction which must be implemented quickly and completed with a view to a restructured, strengthened and more accountable Secretariat of the United Nations. The EU will closely follow efforts in this area.

33. The EU would also like to stress once more the importance of associating to the highest degree possible national parliaments, the civil society, including the NGOs and the private sector to our work in the UN, building on the Cardoso report. The EU is also looking forward to interactive hearings with the NGOs/civil society later this week.

34. The EU stresses the importance of a strengthened coherence and cooperation on global, regional and national levels, between the UN and regional organizations and arrangements as important contributions to the stability and prosperity of their members, as well as of the broader international system. In that regard, and in the spirit of subsidiarity, the UN and regional organizations and arrangements should make full use of their comparative advantages.

35. The EU stresses the importance to pursue vigorously the reform of UN funds, programs and specialized agencies and to ensure system-wide coherence. We need to continue with the efforts that will ensure that the UN, at the country level, operates as a team with a common program and a strong resident coordinator in support of countries' poverty reduction strategies as well as enhanced cooperation with IFIs. We also need to strengthen the UN humanitarian system's capacity to respond effectively and equitably to humanitarian crises. The EU is ready to cooperate with the UN in this context.

36. With regard to international environmental governance the EU reiterates its support to the Secretary General's proposal of a new structure, based on existing institutions. The EU favors the establishment of a UN agency for the environment, based on UNEP with a revised and strengthened mandate.

37. For the longer term the EU is interested by the vision expressed in the Secretary General's Report for tightly managed entities in the field of development, humanitarian assistance and environment.

Mr. President,

38. It is our responsibility to make the right choices, to find the best solutions to reinvent – 60 years after its creation – our United Nations to adapt them more closely to the challenges of our time. This responsibility, we cannot elude, we must accept it actively and productively in preparing strong political messages, concrete decisions and a sustainable follow-up which will strengthen the United Nations system as a whole to the greater benefit of all our peoples. As the drafters of the San Francisco Charter did it sixty years ago, we have to demonstrate by our commitment and our willingness to engage with others that we are worthy of this historic mission. The European Union, for its part, is certainly ready and willing to play its part in this essential common endeavor.

Thank you for your attention.

* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process