



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



13589/04 (Presse 296)

PRESS RELEASE

2615th Council Meeting

General Affairs and External Relations

External Relations

Brussels, 2 November 2004

President **Bernard BOT**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

* Some external relations items were adopted without debate at the 2614th meeting on General Affairs (13588/04).

P R E S S

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Main Results of the Council

*The Council prepared the **EU-Russia Summit** in the Hague on 11 November 2004.*

*Note: the Council adopted conclusions on **Iraq** and on **Sudan** at its General Affairs session in the context on the preparation of the 4-5 November European Council meeting. These conclusions are to be found in the "General Affairs" Press Release (13588/04).*

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OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

Please see "General Affairs" Press release 13588/04 Presse 295.

¹

- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site <http://ue.eu.int>.
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the abovementioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Karel DE GUCHT
Mr Didier DONFUT

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for European Affairs, attached to the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Czech Republic:

Mr Cyril SVOBODA

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Carsten SØNDERGAARD

State Secretary

Germany:

Mr Joschka FISCHER

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Deputy Chancellor

Estonia:

Ms Kristiina OJULAND

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Greece:

Mr Petros MOLYVIATIS
Mr Yoannis VALINAKIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr Miguel Angel MORATINOS

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

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Ireland:

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Minister for Foreign Affairs

Italy:

Mr Roberto ANTONIONE

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Cyprus:

Mr George IACOVOU

Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Mr Artis PABRIKS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Lithuania:

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Political State Secretary, Prime Minister's Office
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Mr Mário DAVID

State Secretary for European Affairs

Slovenia:

Mr Ivo VAJGL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Slovakia:

Mr Eduard KUKAN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Mr Eikka KOSONEN

Permanent Representative

Sweden:

Ms Laila FREIVALDS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr Denis MacSHANE

Minister of State for Europe

Commission:

Mr Louis MICHEL

Member

General Secretariat of the Council:

Mr Javier SOLANA

Secretary-General/High Representative for the CFSP

ITEMS DEBATED**PREPARATION OF THE EU-RUSSIA SUMMIT**

The Council was briefed by the Presidency, the Commission and High Representative Javier Solana on preparation of the EU-Russia Summit to be held in The Hague on 11 November, and held an exchange of views.

The summit, the fourteenth to be held under the EU–Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, is due to address the building of four "common spaces" for the EU and Russia, namely the common economic space, the common space of freedom, security and justice, the common space of external security and the common space of research and education. International and regional issues, such as the Middle East (including Iran and Iraq), terrorism, Moldova and the South Caucasus, are also likely to be discussed. The Presidency noted that the four "spaces" were part of a single package.

The summit will be hosted by the President of the European Council, Netherlands Prime Minister Jan Balkenende, assisted by Mr Solana and the President of the Commission as well as Netherlands Foreign Minister Bernhard Bot. Russia will be represented by President Vladimir Putin, accompanied by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

NOTE:– ***Iraq - Council conclusions***

At its General Affairs session, in the context on the preparation of the European Council meeting on 4 and 5 November, the Council adopted conclusions on Iraq. These conclusions are to be found in the "General Affairs" Council press release (13588/04).

– ***Sudan - Council conclusions***

At its General Affairs session, in the context on the preparation of the European Council meeting on 4 and 5 November, the Council adopted conclusions on Sudan. These conclusions are to be found in the "General Affairs" Council press release (13588/04).

OTHER BUSINESS

– Somalia

The Council held a brief exchange of views on the situation in Somalia following the election of Mr Abdullahi Yusuf as President on 10 October and the expected formation of a transitional government, on the basis of briefings given by the Italian and Swedish delegations and by High Representative Mr Javier Solana.

Delegations reiterated support for the peace process in Somalia and emphasised the EU's willingness to contribute to the country's stabilisation and reconstruction, notably through support for African Union initiatives.

– African Great Lakes Region

The Council was briefed by the Belgian Minister on efforts to bring peace and security to the African Great Lakes region, with particular focus on the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the light of his recent mission in the region.

– Guinea -Bissau

The Council was briefed by the Portuguese Minister on recent developments in Guinea-Bissau following unrest on 6 October and on efforts led by the international community, including Portuguese-speaking States, with a view to contributing to a stabilisation of the situation.

– Belarus

At the suggestion of the Polish delegation, the Council discussed EU policy with regard to Belarus in the light of irregularities in the parliamentary elections and referendum on 17 October and attacks on opposition leaders and media representatives at a political demonstration in Minsk on 19 October.

It will discuss the matter in greater detail at its meeting on 22 November.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

Please see "General Affairs" Press release 13588/04 Presse 295.
