

Brussels, 14 September 2006

Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies

On behalf of Richard Wright, Director of DG RELEX and COM Representative to the Political and Security Committee, I would like to welcome you today to launch the screening process on Chapter 31 dedicated to the Common Foreign Security Policy. I hope that this session will provide you with the essential tools to prepare your country's administration to adopt the EU acquis.

Both the timetable and the substance of the program today are a challenge, so I will keep my remarks very short. I will try to outline the role and contribution expected from COM by Member States and candidate countries.

CFSP is a rapidly evolving policy: 10 years since the first meeting of the Political and Security Committee-(PSC's role : art 25 TUE) . The HR/SG now personifies the EU foreign policy;. The EU is engaged in several CFSP/ESDP missions abroad with the support and contribution of some candidate countries, you know very well.

Geographical and thematic working groups of the Council are bringing together the diplomatic know-how and experience of MS and COM. COM is fully

associated (art 27 TUE) to the decision making of CFSP, in particular, because as a guardian of the treaties, it has to ensure the consistency of its external activities as a whole in the context of its external relations, security, economic and development policies (art 3 TUE). COM and Council are jointly responsible for ensuring consistency and shall cooperate to that end. In addition, in some areas EC competences directly complement CFSP objectives (export controls, dual use, fight against terrorism etc).

Beyond the institutional checks and balances set by the Treaty of the European Union (art 18, 21, 26), one can see the **elements of a CFSP doctrine**, emerging from:

- the fundamental rights (Art 6) ;
- the tasks agreed by the European Council such as the "Petersberg tasks" (art 17)
- a number of Strategies: the European Security Strategy, the strategy in the fight against terrorism, the WMD strategy, the Consensus for Development, last but not least, the doctrine of effective multilateralism, where Member States which are members of the UN Security Council (Art 19) have a responsibility;
- the consistency and regularity of GAERC conclusions which are supporting the efforts of each Presidency to have the "EU speaking with one voice and acting accordingly";

- the principles and guidelines for CFSP defined by European Council (art 13).

COM is contributing to the definition of the EU position by its Communications to the Council and the European Parliament, such as the one on Conflict Prevention or those for Irak and Afghanistan. The Commission role in CFSP comes both from its political role in the management of international agreements with third countries and its operational experience in delivery of assistance to support emergency relief, political stabilisation and post-conflict reconstruction. It manages the CFSP budget, except for military/defence operations or cases where the Council unanimously decides otherwise (art 28). We expect the future financial Stability Instrument to allow the EU to meet the challenges of conflict prevention and resolution.

With the European Council conclusions agreed in Gothenburg, conflict prevention incorporates elements of the development and security agendas and therefore cuts across the Community/CFSP borderline. Fields of direct Commission responsibility include development co-operation and external assistance, trade policy instruments, humanitarian aid, social and environmental policies, cooperation with international partners and NGOs as well as instruments in the field of crisis management and full association to the new instruments of European Security and Defence. COM is quite active in crisis

management, especially after the tsunami: (ECHO, MIC, RRM, plus other lines: demining, and human rights including EIDHR, and in particular Election Observation Missions)

The Commission and the Council define the relations of the EU with a given country or region in a single framework , generally an Association or Partnership agreement, which clearly refer to the so-called essential elements – human rights, good governance, etc-.

As you will hear later this morning, the EU rely on political dialogue with the partner country to define and agree Country Strategy Papers (prepared by the Commission both in Brussels and locally in coordination with MS Embassies). The launching of the European Neighbourhood Policy has further anchored and deepened the relationship of the EU vis à vis its neighbours offering “everything but institutions”, now engaged in the process of implementing agreed Action Plans.

The EU strategies are discussed at length within the relevant working groups of the Council and in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament. They must ensure coherence both in all EU external activities and between these external activities and the other areas of EU (internal) action.

As mentioned earlier, the EU doctrine of effective multilateralism has developed itself from a pragmatic cooperation in crisis management with the UN, and its specialised organisations such as the AEIA (EU support to non-proliferation programmes) and with NATO (exchange of classified information, reciprocal cells, Berlin Plus agreements).

The EU participation in the annual UN General assembly and its Committees is based on an intensive EU coordination, convergence of positions and role distribution between Member States; New York is certainly the place where the EU voice can be heard and its credibility put to the test.

The recent crises in the Middle East and in Africa have proven that the EU can be and is a reliable actor and partner in the search for a safer world between democratic nations.

Thank you.