



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



9000/06 (Presse 125)

**PROVISIONAL VERSION**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

2727th Council Meeting

### **General Affairs and External Relations**

#### **General Affairs**

Brussels, 15 May 2006

President

**Ms Ursula PLASSNIK**  
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of Austria

\* The 2728th meeting on External Relations is the subject of a separate press release (9001/06 Presse 126).

# **P R E S S**

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9000/06 (Presse 125)

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**EN**

## **Main Results of the Council**

*The Council approved an agreement reached with the European Parliament on the EU's **budgetary framework for the 2007-13 period**, on budgetary discipline and improvement of the annual budgetary procedure.*

*The new agreement, which replaces one dating from May 1999, is based on the consensus reached by the European Council in December (see press release 8012/06 for details).*

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- 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://www.consilium.europa.eu>.
- 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.

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## **PARTICIPANTS**

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

**Belgium:**

Mr Karel DE GUCHT Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Czech Republic:**

Mr Cyril SVOBODA Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Denmark:**

Mr Michael ZILMER-JOHNS State Secretary

**Germany:**

Mr Frank-Walter STEINMEIER Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Estonia:**

Mr Urmas PAET Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Greece:**

Ms Theodora BAKOYANNIS Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Spain:**

Mr Miguel Ángel MORATINOS CUYAUBÉ Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

**France:**

Ms Catherine COLONNA Minister with responsibility for European Affairs

**Ireland:**

Mr Noel TREACY Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach and Foreign Affairs with special responsibility for European Affairs

**Italy:**

Mr Rocco Antonio CANGELOSI Permanent Representative

**Cyprus:**

Mr George IACOVOU Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Latvia:**

Mr Artis PABRIKS Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Lithuania:**

Mr Antanas VALIONIS Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Luxembourg:**

Mr Jean ASSELBORN Deputy Prime Minister, Minister with responsibility for Foreign Affairs and Immigration

**Hungary:**

Mr Ferenc SOMOGYI Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Malta:**

Mr Michael FRENDO Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Netherlands:**

Mr Bernard BOT Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Ms Atzo NICOLAÏ Minister for European Affairs

**Austria:**

Ms Ursula PLASSNIK Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Mr Hans WINKLER State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Poland:**

Mr Stanisław KOMOROWSKI Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Portugal:**

Mr Diogo FREITAS DO AMARAL Ministro de Estado, Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Mr Fernando DE OLIVEIRA NEVES State Secretary for European Affairs

**Slovenia:**

Mr Dimitrij RUPEL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Slovakia:**

Mr József BERÉNYI

State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Finland:**

Mr Erkki TUOMIOJA

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ms Paula LEHTOMÄKI

Minister for Foreign Trade and Development

**Sweden:**

Mr Jan ELIASSON

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**United Kingdom:**

Ms Margaret BECKETT

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

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**Commission:**

Ms Margot WALLSTRÖM

Vice President

.....

The Governments of the Acceding States were represented as follows:

**Bulgaria:**

Mr Ivailo KALFIN

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Romania:**

Ms Anca Daniela BOAGIU

Minister for European Integration

Mr Anton NICULESCU

State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**ITEMS DEBATED**

**PREPARATION OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON 15-16 JUNE**

The Council debated the preparation of the European Council to be held in Brussels on 15 and 16 June, on the basis of an annotated draft agenda prepared by the presidency (9035/06).

The items to be addressed by the European Council are as follows:

- the future of Europe: the constitutional treaty and EU enlargement;
- the EU's policy agenda, including security, energy, sustainable development, education, the environment and migration;
- improvements within the framework of the existing treaties: transparency, subsidiarity and comitology, the efficiency and coherence of external policy.

The Council requested the permanent representatives committee (Coreper) to pursue work on these issues; the presidency will present draft European Council conclusions to be examined by Coreper on 24 May. Ministers will discuss the issues at an informal meeting in Klosterneuburg (Austria) on 27 and 28 May.

The European Council is also expected to issue declarations on certain external policy issues.

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

**GENERAL AFFAIRS**

**EU budget - interinstitutional agreement**

The Council endorsed an agreement reached on 4 April with representatives of the European Parliament on the EU's budgetary framework for the 2007-13 period, together with a number of provisions on budgetary discipline and improvement of the EU's annual budgetary procedure.

The new inter-institutional agreement (IIA) will enter into force on 1 January 2007, replacing an existing agreement dating from May 1999. It is based on the consensus reached by the European Council on 16 December on the EU's budgetary framework for the 2007-13 period. (15915/05).

For further details, see press release 8012/06 (*Presse 97*).

**Proceedings in the Council's different configurations**

The Council took note of a presidency report on proceedings in the Council's different configurations (9033/06).

**EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

**Uzbekistan - Council conclusions**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council remains profoundly concerned about the situation in Uzbekistan. It regrets that since its previous conclusions, on 3 October 2005, there have been worrying developments in the field of Human Rights in general, and in particular in the follow-up of the events in Andijan in May 2005.

2. The Council shares the conclusions of international organisations and actors such as the OSCE / ODIHR on the events in Andijan and their follow-up. In this context, the Council notes the 'Report from the OSCE / ODIHR Trial Monitoring in Uzbekistan', issued on 21 April 2006 and the response by the Uzbek authorities. The Council calls on Uzbekistan to co-operate fully with the OSCE and with the UN, especially regarding the call for a credible and transparent independent international enquiry, so as to abide by its engagements in these organisations.
3. The Council continues to follow the general situation in Uzbekistan closely and deplores the increasingly serious harassment of human rights defenders; the persecution, prosecution and detention of leading opposition figures and the expulsion of UNHCR in April 2006, as well as of numerous NGOs.
4. The Council, under these circumstances, underlines that all the measures agreed by the European Union on 3 October 2005 remain in place. The Council will review these measures by October 2006, taking into account the evolution of events.
5. The Council recalls that the European Union is available for a serious dialogue on all these issues, as well as other relevant issues concerning the stability of the region. The Council tasks the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Mr Ján Kubiš, to continue to engage with the Uzbek authorities. The Council hopes that the Uzbek authorities will see the value in positive engagement and demonstrate a willingness to respect human rights, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms. In this context, the prolongation of the OSCE mandate would be seen as a positive step towards a constructive dialogue. The European Union wishes to continue its engagement with the people of Uzbekistan, primarily on poverty reduction and the development of civil society."

### **Bulgaria - Processed agricultural products**

The Council agreed on the position to be taken by the Community in the EU-Bulgaria association council on the improvement of the trade arrangements for processed agricultural products.

### **Agreements with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan - EU enlargement**

The Council adopted decisions approving the conclusion of protocols to the partnership and cooperation agreements between the EU and Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in order to take account of the accession of the EU's ten new member states in May 2004.

**TAXATION**

**VAT - Spain, Lithuania - Taxable amount of a supply of goods or services**

The Council adopted decisions authorising Spain and Lithuania to provide that the taxable amount of a supply of goods or services or of an intra-Community acquisition of goods shall be the same as the open market value in certain specific cases (8172/06, 8170/06).

The Council also adopted a decision authorising Lithuania to designate the recipient of the supply of goods or services as the person liable to pay VAT in certain specific cases until 31 December 2009 (8171/06).

These special measures, which derogate from the general rules on turnover taxes defined in directive 77/388/EEC, will apply until the entry into force of a directive rationalising derogations from that directive or until the end of 2009, whichever is earliest.

**INTERNAL MARKET**

**Motor vehicles - Wheels for cars and trailers, front-lighting systems**

The Council adopted decisions establishing the position of the Community on two draft regulations of the United Nations economic commission for Europe (UN/ECE):

- on wheels for passenger cars and their trailers (14451/05), and
- on the approval of adaptive front-lighting systems for motor vehicles, in order to fit them with headlamps that can have their beam pattern adapted to better suit the type of road (14454/05).

The main purpose of the UN/ECE regulations is to establish harmonised technical prescriptions, thereby avoiding the creation of technical barriers to trade in motor vehicles between the contracting parties, while ensuring a high level of safety and environmental protection.

The decisions will enable the Commission to vote in favour of the draft regulations at a forthcoming meeting of the UN/ECE forum for harmonisation of vehicle regulations.

**RESEARCH**

**Cooperation with Switzerland**

The Council adopted a decision approving the conclusion of an agreement on scientific and technological cooperation with the Swiss Confederation.

The agreement was signed on 16 January 2004 and provisionally applied from 1 January 2004 (*press release 5132/04*).

**FISHERIES**

**Indian Ocean tuna commission**

The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to negotiate amendments to the agreement establishing the Indian Ocean tuna commission.

The French and Italian delegations abstained from the decision.

**TRANSPARENCY**

**Public access to documents**

The Council adopted the reply to confirmatory application 21/c/01/06 made by Mr Yaman Akdeniz (*8576/06*).

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Economic and Social Committee**

The Council adopted decisions appointing:

- Dr Ludolf von Wartenberg a member of the European Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Bernhard Welschke (8534/06);
- Ms Jovita Motiejūnienė a member of the European Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Rolandas Domeika (8526/06),

for the remainder of their term of office, namely until 20 September 2006.

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