



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 13 June 2008

10612/08

**POLGEN 64
PESC 777**

"I/A" ITEM NOTE

from : Presidency
to : Coreper/Council
Subject : Stocktaking report: Measures to increase the effectiveness, coherence and
 visibility of EU external policies

1. As requested by the European Council at its meetings in June 2006 and December 2006 (Presidency Conclusions – Brussels, 14/15 December 2006), the Presidency has taken work forward in improving the efficiency, coherence and visibility of the Union's external policies. In that respect the Presidency submits to delegations a stocktaking report reviewing the situation and progress made at the end of Slovenia's EU Council Presidency and recommendations on future work.
2. Following the Stocktaking Report on the implementation of measures to increase the efficiency, coherence and visibility of EU external policies and future work (doc. 16419/06) noted by the Council at the end of the Finnish Presidency, the German Presidency, Portuguese Presidency and now the Slovenian Presidency have taken forward work in this area.

3. The Foreign Relations Counsellors Working Party discussed the Presidency stocktaking report at its meetings on 9 and 12 June 2008. The Presidency has sought to take proposals made by delegations into account as far as possible in the drafting of the report.
4. Given the above, the Committee of Permanent Representatives is invited to recommend to the Council that it take note of the Stocktaking Report as set out in the Annex.

Stocktaking report

Measures to increase the effectiveness, coherence and visibility of EU external policies

This stocktaking report assesses what has been achieved with regard to the effectiveness, coherence and visibility of EU external policies during the Slovenian Presidency of the Council in the first half of 2008 and aims to facilitate future work. The commitment of all actors is required to ensure continuity in developing the EU's external policies. The Slovenian Presidency calls on forthcoming Presidencies, the Council Secretariat and the Commission to take forward the work as outlined in this report.

1. Strengthening the structures and instruments of the EU's strategic planning in external relations and improving working methods

- Council Presidencies: The first 18-month "Trio Programme", as prepared by the Presidencies of Germany, Portugal and Slovenia, successfully improved coordination and coherence between the Council Presidencies in the implementation of the Presidencies' priorities.
- Informing/consulting the European Parliament: The Presidency made every effort to ensure that dialogue with the European Parliament was held frequently and at the highest possible level. The Presidency welcomed the participation of the representatives of the Council (SG/HR Solana or other representatives) and of the Commission in the EP. The President of the Republic of Slovenia addressed the EP, the Prime Minister of Slovenia visited it on different occasions and addressed the MEPs three times, while the Chairpersons of all Council formations briefed the EP on the Presidency Programme, on the results of the Slovenian Presidency and, whenever possible, on the most important topical issues throughout the Presidency. In addition, EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), as well as senior Presidency and Council officials made regular appearances before the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET).

On various CFSP and ESDP related issues the Presidency (Minister of Foreign Affairs or State Secretary) gave detailed briefings and exchanged views with AFET after each meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council. The Slovenian Minister for Development Cooperation also addressed the DEVE and INTA Committees in the EP. The Presidency assured regular dialogue with the DROI and SEDE sub-committees.

- Coordination between Presidency/Commission: The meeting between the European Commission and the Slovenian Government on 8 January 2008 allowed the Commission to get acquainted with the priorities of Slovenia's EU Presidency and to exchange views with the Slovenian Government on topical developments in the European Union, in order to achieve closer cooperation between Slovenia in its role of the country holding the Council Presidency and the European Commission.
- Preparations for Summit meetings: The strategic planning for the summit meetings with Japan, Latin America and the Caribbean countries, Russia and the USA was based on concept papers, prepared by the Presidency/Council Secretariat and/or the Commission. This upstream coordination between Presidency, Council Secretariat, Commission and Member States helped enhance the coherence of the EU's policies towards the countries concerned.
- Lisbon Treaty: Ratification procedures in the Member States are successfully under way. Eighteen of them have already ratified the Treaty. Along with other Member States, Slovenia is striving to create the best conditions for the smooth progress of the ratification procedures which would enable the entry into force of the Treaty at the beginning of 2009.
- External energy relations: The European Council in March 2008 recalled the importance it attaches to enhancing the energy security of the EU and its Member States. While acknowledging that action on climate change and energy, a completed internal energy market and new technologies all contribute to this objective, it stressed the importance of developing the external dimension of the 2007-2009 Energy Policy for Europe further, in order to enable the EU and its Member States to speak with a common voice on energy issues. The European Council welcomed the progress achieved in this regard, as presented in the state of play report submitted to the Council.

At its Spring 2009 meeting, it will undertake a more comprehensive assessment of progress on implementation and further actions needed in the light of the next Strategic Energy Review, which will be presented in November 2008.

2. Strengthening effectiveness and visibility of external policy instruments

- Climate change and security: The Spring European Council welcomed the joint High Representative/Commission report on the impact of climate change on international security. The report identifies a number of threats and vulnerabilities linked to climate change and calls inter alia for continued leadership of the EU on the multilateral stage, integration of climate change into development and security instruments and for the intensification of cooperation with third countries and regions. A follow-up report will be presented by December 2008.

- ESDP: In the first semester of 2008, the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO was further strengthened and cooperation with the EU's main partners was enhanced, including with Mediterranean Partners.

Communication and information strategies have been used on a regular basis, with the aim of enhancing the visibility and effectiveness of EU operations. Work started on the establishment of a framework for evaluation, lessons learned and best practices concerning civilian ESDP missions. The use of Civilian Response Teams (CRTs) was enhanced by sending a team of CRT experts to the Palestinian territories.

The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, EULEX Kosovo, was established in February 2008. The EUPM in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has continued to support the reform of the BiH law enforcement agencies. EUFOR ALTHEA has continued to contribute to the stability of the security situation in BiH. The activities of the EUSR Border Support Team in Georgia have been prolonged. Closely related to the mandate for the EUSR for the Republic of Moldova, the EUBAM in the Republic of Moldova continued to support enhancement of cooperation at the border between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

EUJUST LEX for Iraq continued to strengthen the rule of law and provide training. EUPOL COPPS in Palestinian territories continued to assist the Palestinian Civilian Police in establishing sustainable and effective policing. EUBAM Rafah suspended its operations. EUFOR Chad/RCA was launched in January 2008 in accordance with the UNSCR 1778.

The EU SSR Guinea-Bissau mission was planned and launched. Through EUSEC RD CONGO and EUPOL RD CONGO further support was provided to the Congolese authorities in the area of security sector reform. EUPOL AFGHANISTAN has worked on the reform of the Afghan National Police. In line with the European Security Strategy which stated that better coordination between the EU's external action and Justice and Home Affairs policies is crucial in the fight both against terrorism and organised crime, progress was made on possible cooperation mechanisms between civilian ESDP Missions and Europol as regards the mutual exchange of information.

- Effectiveness of civilian crisis management: Work was continued on further improving the effectiveness of civilian crisis management in particular with respect to mission support and to strengthen command and control structures. On the basis of an implementation plan for the new Civilian Headline Goal 2010, the EU has launched a capability planning process to assess required civilian ESDP capabilities and survey their availability. The development of the Civilian Capability Management Tool, which started under the CHG 2008, was carried forward. Work continued on the development of military capabilities in the framework of the Headline Goal 2010, focusing on recommendations from the Progress catalogue 07 in conjunction with the Capability Development Plan. The first prioritisation of military capability shortfalls had been approved. Furthermore, work to enhance the EU Military Staff's ability to conduct planning at the strategic level for EU-led operations was continued.
- Humanitarian Aid: The Presidency brokered consensus among Member States and the Commission on an appropriate forum allowing to strengthen policy discussions on humanitarian issues within the Council. To this end, the mandate of the existing Working Party on Food Aid was extended so as to include the issue of humanitarian aid, as of 1 January 2009.

- Food prices: The Commission adopted a communication on the response to the current hikes of food prices. The communication identifies a variety of causes for the crisis and highlights that development policy should provide a long term structural response, and that efforts to conclude the Doha round, the Common Agriculture Policy health checks as well as measures such as the promotion of sustainability for bio-fuels and an open and vigilant GMO policy will participate in providing appropriate solutions.

The development segment of GAERC adopted the conclusions "**The EU - a global partner for development: Speeding up progress towards the Millennium Development Goals**", in which the EU committed itself to take short-, mid-, and long-term action in response to the crisis caused by the rising food prices.

- Development Cooperation: With the aim of increasing coherence in the field of development cooperation, substantive efforts were devoted to the identification of development-related issues in all indicative agendas of the Council meetings and to issuing a new Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) Rolling Work Programme for 2008-2009. In order to speed up progress towards the Millennium Developments Goals (MDGs), the Council adopted Conclusions on a package of measures providing more and better aid, as well as addressing new challenges (climate change, food prices). The package includes recommendations on aid effectiveness, financing for development, aid for trade and PCD. In PCD, special attention was given to the fields of climate change/biofuels, migration and research. The Council endorsed Conclusions on PCD, which established the basis for future efforts in this field. Showing the EU commitment to a strong collective response to the global development challenge and in particular to attaining all the MDGs, the Council offered to its cooperation partners the EU MDG Agenda for Action.
- Security and Development: The Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council, in close cooperation with the Member States, have initiated work to take forward the implementation of the Council Conclusions on Security and Development as well as the Council Conclusions on Situations of Fragility. Initial actions identified in the Conclusions have increasingly been put into practice. The nexus between Security and Development is also being taken duly into account in the framework of the implementation of the EU-Africa Partnership.

- Human Rights: In order to further improve the coherence and consistency of the EU's Human Rights policy, the Council continued with its efforts to improve the mainstreaming of human rights across the CFSP, including ESDP, and also to better mainstream human rights in the EU's development policy. Concrete steps that have been taken include the adoption of a revised Checklist for integration of the issue of protection of children affected by armed conflicts into the ESDP, including the publication of a handbook for ESDP personnel, and by the adoption of Council Conclusions on children in external action. An important task was also to enhance consistency between dialogues and thematic guidelines on human rights.

Human rights have been increasingly mainstreamed into political dialogues. The first round of the dialogue between EU and African Union took place. The human rights dimension as part of the EU Central Asian Strategy has been further implemented by initiating the process of establishing human rights dialogues with all Central Asian countries.

Another important element that strengthened the visibility and the coherence of the EU's human rights policy has been a consistent line in our reactions to the worst cases of violations of human rights, namely in the form of Presidency Declarations on behalf of the EU, or Presidency Statements. Special focus was given to strengthening the efficiency of the UN mechanisms of human rights, in particular the Human Rights Council, the review of mandates and new mechanism of Universal Periodic Review.

Finally, the EU continued to emphasise the importance of gender mainstreaming.

- Children affected by armed conflict (CAAC): Special focus in the revised “Checklist for the Integration of the Protection of Children Affected by Armed Conflicts into ESDP Missions and Operations” was given to better training, reporting, command and control, the possible appointment of a special CAAC adviser, awareness-raising and developing more child-friendly DDR. The Centre for European Perspective (CEP), in cooperation with the European Commission and the European Peace-building Liaison Office (EPLO) organised a conference that discussed how enhanced cooperation at all levels between the different EU institutions as well as between the institutions and NGOs can lead to more impact on the ground for children affected by armed conflict.

- Migration: Cooperation with third countries remains a vital part of a comprehensive migration policy. The European Council on 16 June 2008 therefore welcomed the work being taken forward in this regard, especially the launching of Pilot Mobility Partnerships with Cape Verde and the Republic of Moldova, and endorsed the Council Conclusions on Enhancing the Global Approach to Migration in which the importance of continuing the dialogue, partnership and cooperation with third countries on migration issues in a comprehensive and regionally balanced manner is underlined. Important work was also developed on strengthening the application of the Global approach to Migration to Eastern and south-Eastern regions neighbouring the EU including the call for intensified work on the priority actions adopted by the Council in June 2007, on the initiative aiming at the establishing the Black Sea Regional Cooperation Platform and on setting up the basis for the implementation of the Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, as set up by the Africa-EU strategy and its Action Plan.

Mobility Partnerships is a new instrument to better manage migration flows. It encompasses aspects of security, development and social policy and serves as an instrument for increased coordination and cooperation between the Commission, Member States and third country in implementing the Global Approach to Migration with a view to ensuring maximum synergy between activities.

3. Enhancing co-operation between Member States, the Commission and the Council Secretariat and extending practical co-operation between the embassies of Member States, Commission delegations and the Council Secretariat in third countries

- Commission delegations and Council: Use of the expertise of Heads of Delegations in the work of the Council preparatory bodies was continued, and cooperation between the Commission delegations, the High Representative and the EUSRs increased. Work has been carried forward in view of achieving the objective of a functionally integrated EU delegation to the African Union.

- Green Diplomacy Network (GDN): The GDN provides a platform for sharing information between environment correspondents in EU Ministries of Foreign Affairs and coordinating formal demarches. A successful demarche was carried in the wake of the meeting of the UN Convention on Biodiversity in Bonn in May 2008. Also, at Brdo in January, it was agreed that the list of third countries with a GDN informal local network for information exchange and enhanced in-country coordination should be open.
- Schengen co-operation: Measures were agreed to increase cooperation and harmonize the practice for issuing visas among the "Schengen States". The main goals remain the prevention of "visa shopping" and the adjustment of existing practices to the Schengen acquis, especially in the implementation of visa facilitation agreements concluded between the EC and third countries.
- Common visa application centres: With a view to facilitating the issue of uniform short-stay visas for citizens of third countries and in order to further streamline the visa procedures of the Member States, Slovenia set up its second common visa application centre in Ljubljana in May 2008 at the premises of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The establishment of the centre was welcomed by the Commission and Member States. Hungary, the Netherlands, Austria and France have expressed their intention to participate in the centre in order to further facilitate visa procedures within the Schengen territory where the number of visa applications is quite low. Participating Member States will consequently avoid the high costs of visa procedures when collecting biometric data of visa applicants in future.
- Further consular cooperation: In accordance with the provisions of Decision 95/553/EC, a review was carried out and Member States agreed that consular cooperation has a solid basis and that no significant changes are needed. Further to the Commission Communication pointing out that the European Travel Document (ETD) has to be modified to include the new official languages of the EU, Member States agreed on the necessary measures and new ETDs were introduced. With a view to strengthening consular co-operation in the event of a larger-scale consular crisis, the concept of lead State was put into practice in February 2008 in Chad for the first time.

Furthermore, other practical measures to improve exchange of information (e.g. telephone conferences in a consular crisis situation, the extension and renewal of the Secretariat Forum, coordination on travel advice, etc.) are used between the Member States. Moreover, close cooperation is being carried out in the field of crisis capacity response (e.g. complementation and establishment of the operational guidelines for the lead State concept and minimum standards for contingency planning).

The Member States also cooperate closely on other consular issues, in particular the improvement of conditions of EU citizens imprisoned in third countries, legalisation of documents, the initiative on common European consular training, etc. In the situations of mass sport events (e.g. the European Football Championship, the World Ice Hockey Championship, the preparation for the Olympic Games), Member States exchanged useful contact information and cooperated together with the Commission on information campaigns (common information leaflet).

Some of the ideas on consular cooperation from the Commission Green Paper of December 2006 were taken forward in the Commission Action Plan of December 2007 and the Commission Recommendation of January 2008.

4. Improving the effectiveness of internal co-ordination and the consistency of EU positions in international organisations

- Council of Europe (CoE): Efforts have been made to enhance the cooperation between the EU and the Council of Europe, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union which was signed in May 2007. Regular EU coordination meetings took place in Strasbourg in order to coordinate EU positions actively within the Council of Europe's bodies.
- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE): Efforts have been made to deepen relations between the EU and the OSCE through the adoption of joint declarations in troika meetings and the active coordination of EU statements. Monthly meetings of the EU troika in Vienna with countries benefiting from Stabilisation and Association Agreements have taken place, as well as regular troika meetings with Armenia.

- United Nations (UN): In the United Nations, the European Union speaks with one voice on issues such as development and human rights. The Slovenian Presidency has put considerable efforts into coordinating the positions of Member States and it has succeeded in the majority of cases. Many successes can be mentioned where consistent EU policy bore fruit, for instance the united EU positions on climate change, the UN budget and human rights issues in general. The EU is an important partner in international negotiations. Active engagement of the EU in the Peace-Building Commission (PBC) has been possible since 19 December 2007. This represents important progress, enabling the EU to act as one and speak with one voice, thus effectively presenting the full scope of the EU's means to assist third countries in terms of peace-building, including issues of aid and development as well as the political, strategic and diplomatic efforts that are needed to catalyse improvements on the ground.