



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 4 December 2001**

**14894/01**

**LIMITE**

**NIS 105  
PESC 520  
COEST 37**

**NOTE**

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from : Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia  
on : 4 December 2001  
to : Political and Security Committee

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Subject : EU Policy options on Central Asia

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1. The present paper follows from suggestions by High Representative Javier Solana for a re-evaluation of EU policy towards the Central Asian countries.
2. Following fresh discussions within COEST, the Political and Security Committee is invited to endorse this revised paper.

**IMMEDIATE OPTIONS FOR EU POLICY ON CENTRAL ASIA**

1. The following list is intended to cover options for the coming six months only.

**Presidency (present and incoming) and HR:**

2. Complete re-evaluation of EU policy on relations with Central Asia, taking account of the specific concerns of each country, as well as developments in EU policy on the wider region, including Afghanistan.
3. Pursue more frequent and intense political dialogue with the countries of Central Asia, through:
  - Possible Troika, Presidency or HR visits, as appropriate in the light of events.
  - Special attention to forthcoming Cooperation Councils with Central Asian countries.
  - Meetings in the margins of multilateral fora.
  - Contacts between EU MS HoMs and their host national authorities.
4. Use political dialogue to pass the following messages:
  - Encourage strongest possible support for the coalition against terrorism.
  - Encourage states in the region to facilitate transit of humanitarian aid.
  - Urge constructive support for future post-Taliban regime in Afghanistan.
  - Advocate increased cooperation between the five Central Asian states on key issues of common concern.
  - Maintain attention to questions of democracy, media freedom and respect for human rights.
  - Express EU readiness to assist Central Asia.
  - Call for acceleration to the current, halting pace of political and economic reforms
  - Continue to draw attention to the need to tackle underline problems of poverty, social and political exclusion, which foster extremism.
5. Step up political dialogue on Central Asia in contacts with USA and Russia, as well as China, Turkey and Iran.
6. Gather information on actions of USA, Russia, China, Turkey, Japan, ROK, Saudi Arabia, Iran.

7. Ensure full coordination with the UN and OSCE, and within these between EU Member States.
8. Give immediate, tangible support to ongoing OSCE work on Central Asia, notably through:
  - Close liaison with Portugal as incoming CiO.
  - Following "priorities for cooperation to counter drugs, organised crime and terrorism in Central Asia" identified at Tashkent conference on enhancing regional security and stability.
  - Pressure for action by all countries in the region to follow-up the Tashkent declaration.
  - Substantial EU contribution in OSCE conference in Bishkek of 13-14 December 2001.
  - Exertion of all possible influence to ensure participation of Uzbekistan at Bishkek.
  - EU contribution to Bishkek follow-up, including possible EU Joint Action, eg. in the field of border management.
9. Within the OSCE envelope, present proposals for a regional approach to terrorism, inter alia on the basis of the HoMs reports for the five countries, received by COREU.
10. Compile an inventory of action in the region by Commission and EU MS.

**Commission:**

11. Speed up implementation of the Action Plan on drugs between the EU and Central Asian Republics, in cooperation with the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UN ODCCP).
12. Monitor the humanitarian and development situation in the region.
13. Resume Tacis assistance to Tajikistan.
14. Open discussions on negotiation of a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Tajikistan.
15. Explore possibilities for increased cooperation and synergy with IMF, World Bank, EBRD, ADB, OECD.

**EU Member States:**

16. Inform Presidency and Commission of action in Central Asia, and coordinate closely with both.

17. Step up bilateral contacts with the countries of Central Asia, and report to partners on any bilateral visits or meetings covering the region.

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