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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**"I/A" ITEM NOTE**

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from : Political and Security Committee (PSC)

to : Coreper / Council

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Subject : EU Priorities for the 62nd General Assembly of the United Nations

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1. CONUN examined at several occasions the above-mentioned draft document both at working party level and using a written procedure.
2. PSC also examined the draft EU priorities on 1 and 5 June 2007 and reached agreement on the text.
3. Coreper is therefore invited to advise the Council to adopt as an "A" item the EU priorities for the 62nd General Assembly of the United Nations as they appear in the Annex.

## **EU Priorities for the 62nd General Assembly of the United Nations**

### **Introduction**

1. In a world of global challenges and prospects, the security and prosperity of all increasingly depend on an effective multilateral system. The development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order is a central objective of the EU, and strengthening the United Nations is a European priority.

### **Reform of the UN-System**

2. In order to strengthen the United Nations, the EU remains convinced that the reforms of the UN system, which were agreed upon by the international community at the World Summit 2005, need to be fully advanced in a timely manner.
3. The EU recalls its priorities for the 61st UN General Assembly and the Council Conclusions adopted 11 December 2006, where the need to reform the main UN bodies, among them the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Security Council with a view to enhancing the representativeness, transparency and efficiency of the system, is recognized.
4. The EU welcomes the adoption of the GA resolution on the reform of ECOSOC and encourages all Members of the United Nations to make full use of the new opportunities offered by a strengthened ECOSOC to fulfil its redefined functions.

5. In this context, the EU is placing renewed emphasis on securing progress on **management reform** of the UN Secretariat with a view to enhancing its accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, where some encouraging results have been achieved. But it is urgent to continue efforts to improve governance and oversight, such as the establishment of an operational Independent Audit Advisory Committee. The EU attaches equal importance to following up on decisions already taken in respect of the reform of Human Resource Management, the Administration of Justice and procurement systems.

### **Peacekeeping**

6. There is an urgent need to strengthen the operational capacity of the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping. The EU reaffirms its support in this regard and will accord priority to the reform and realignment of UN Peacekeeping structures, while stressing the need to preserve unity of effort and integration of functions. The EU emphasises the need for a peacekeeping doctrine adapted to the complex and challenging conditions in which peacekeepers have to operate and welcomes the progress made in the development of the capstone doctrine document. The EU is committed to enhancing its co-operation with the UN in crisis management.

### **Peacebuilding Architecture**

7. The EU has welcomed the establishment of the **new peacebuilding architecture** and will continue to co-operate closely with the UN system to strengthen the **Peacebuilding Commission** and to further consolidate its role within the UN system, inter alia by supporting the PBC in establishing strategic priorities for stabilizing post-conflict countries, in ensuring maximum impact in the field, in further enhancing cooperation, coherence and coordination among all relevant actors, in integrating a gender perspective into all its work, in considering lessons learned and in intensifying the dialogue with Security Council, General Assembly and ECOSOC.

## Human Rights

8. The promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms including the issue of the death penalty remains one of the EU's priorities for action in all UN Human Rights fora. The EU will therefore continue to work actively with others to support the **General Assembly's 3<sup>rd</sup> Committee** and the Human Rights Council in addressing the most serious breaches of human rights throughout the world, encouraging the implementation of human rights standards, and developing further thematic issues of global importance. The EU remains committed to ensuring that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Committee continues to play an important role in the promotion and protection of human rights. The EU also expects the **UN Human Rights Council (HRC)**, after the completion of its institution-building process in mid-2007, to play an increasing role in the promotion and protection of human rights throughout the world as well as in the UN, and will continue to work actively towards increasing the credibility and effectiveness of the HRC. The EU will also continue to emphasise the vital role played by the **Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights** in promoting and protecting human rights throughout the world, and mainstreaming human rights across the UN system.
9. Furthermore, the EU remains committed to ensuring that human rights are integrated in all aspects of the work of the United Nations.

## System-wide Coherence of the UN's operational activities

10. The UN's process of reforming its operational activities is a long-standing priority for the EU. The EU has welcomed the report by the UN High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence and the engagement of all UN Member States, including pilot countries, and other stakeholders in active discussion of the report's recommendations, which is to be continued at the 62<sup>nd</sup> UNGA. To agree on measures that will strengthen the UN's capacity to deliver "as One" in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment, while taking into account the cross-cutting areas of gender equality, sustainable development and human rights, is a major priority for the EU. The objective is to improve the UN's ability to assist countries in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals with particular emphasis on the MDGs.

## **Rule of Law**

11. The EU attaches great importance to promoting and strengthening the **Rule of Law** at the national and international levels and supports the proposals submitted by the UNSG<sup>1</sup> to this effect. The newly established **Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group** and its Secretariat Unit now need to be strengthened to fulfil its function of system-wide coordination and quality control of rule of law activities, as well as strategic planning in the fields of rule of law and **transitional justice**. The EU calls upon the Secretary-General and Member States to provide all the necessary assistance and support to the Group and the Unit in order to ensure that they can properly fulfil their important functions.
  
12. The EU will continue to promote the idea that peace and justice are complementary and carefully study the outcome of the Nuremberg conference "Building a Future on Peace and Justice" (25-27 June 2007).
  
13. The **inventory of rule of law activities** to be submitted by the Secretary-General<sup>2</sup> will provide an important basis for further discussions. The EU will work to ensure the item receives due attention during the 62nd session and becomes firmly rooted in the GA's (Sixth Committee) agenda through the selection of meaningful and manageable sub-topics for consideration in the following years.

## **International Justice**

14. The EU underlines its commitment to ending impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community and gives its entire support to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its activities and attaches great importance to the UN support to the ICC by the adoption of the UNGA's annual resolution in favour, notably, of the universality of the Rome Statute.

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<sup>1</sup> in his report "Uniting our Strength: Enhancing United Nations Support for the rule of law (doc. A/61/636-S/2006/980) of 14 December 2006 ,

<sup>2</sup> as requested by GA resolution 61/39 of 4 December 2006

## **Responsibility to Protect**

15. The EU welcomes references made to the relevant paragraphs of the Outcome Document on the principle of responsibility to protect in Security Council Resolutions 1674 (2006) and 1706 (2006) and stresses the need for the General Assembly and the Security Council to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law.

## **Development and the Fight against Poverty**

16. To achieve progress towards reaching the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADG) including the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs) remains a major priority of the EU for the 62<sup>nd</sup> UNGA. The EU would welcome an open and comprehensive dialogue with UN partners on this subject. In particular, the EU considers it crucial to meet the special needs of Africa, as foreseen in the 2005 Summit Outcome.
17. The EU will continue to promote public-private partnerships as an important tool to achieve the MDGs and will again table the resolution "**Towards Global Partnerships**".
18. The **Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review** will be one of the key processes for UN development policy. The EU regards it as particularly significant in view of the recommendations of the High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence.
19. Another essential task for the 62<sup>nd</sup> UNGA in the field of economic development will be the preparatory process for the **International Conference on Financing for Development** (scheduled to be held in Doha in December 2008), and the High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, which will take place in October 2007.
20. The EU will also seek to strengthen coordination of **humanitarian assistance** through both country specific and thematic resolutions.

## **Environment / Climate Change and Global Warming**

21. The challenges of **climate change** are of serious concern to all and need to be tackled effectively and urgently. There is a growing awareness and knowledge of the long-term consequences, including the consequences for global economic development and the potential threat to international security, and there is also a need for decisive and immediate action.
22. International collective action will be critical in driving an effective, efficient and equitable response on the scale required to face climate change challenges. The EU has repeatedly called for action, convinced of the necessity for the General Assembly to deal with this issue in an integrated manner, while recognizing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the main decision-making body. The EU welcomes the high priority accorded by the Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly-designate to climate change and the opportunities this presents for more intensive GA discussions. This is particularly important for UNGA 62 against the background of the UNFCCC negotiations in Bali in December 2007.
23. The EU emphasises the importance of strengthening international environmental governance. We believe that UNGA consultations on the institutional framework of the UN's environmental activities need to progress in order to enable the organisation to adequately react to the challenges ahead and to make progress towards the establishment of a UNEO.

## **Fight against Terrorism**

24. The EU is committed to strengthening the role and effectiveness of the UN as the world's premier body and source of legitimacy in the fight against terrorism and believes that the comprehensive implementation of the UN Global Strategy on Counter-Terrorism, adopted by consensus one year ago, represents a major step in achieving this objective. The Strategy builds upon the work undertaken by the UNSC and inserts it into an updated and coherent framework supported by universal consensus. For this reason the EU is actively cooperating with the SG Counter-terrorism implementation task force. The EU will engage actively in the review discussion scheduled for the 62<sup>nd</sup> UNGA with a view to ensuring that the fragile consensus achieved as a minimum is kept intact or strengthened. Furthermore, that the review does not turn into a re-negotiation of the strategy and that the focus is on how to enhance implementation by member states as well as through the facilitation by the task force. In this light the EU will discuss how to avoid overlap between the work on the strategy and the work in the 6<sup>th</sup> Committee on Counter Terrorism..
25. In our view, the UN must continue to address the threat of terrorism to global peace and security, consistent with internationally accepted human rights and rule of law standards, complementing and building on existing UN counter-terrorism agreements, and contribute to a deeper international consensus on the normative framework. Therefore, the completion of the **UN Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism (CCIT)** remains a priority for the EU.



## **Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation**

26. The EU is committed to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation and to the strengthening of the relevant international treaty system. The EU will continue to support initiatives in this field across a broad range of issues in the fora of the UN disarmament machinery and work together with other States for a successful session of the 1<sup>st</sup> Committee. The EU will pursue the process leading to the elaboration of a legally binding international Arms Trade Treaty. Furthermore, the EU will contribute to a successful outcome of the NPT- Review process. The EU also welcomes the realignment of the Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) and hopes that it will bring positive results soon.

## **Regional Organisations**

27. The EU supports the progress already achieved in the development of the cooperation between the UN and regional organisations as a way to strengthen effective multilateralism

## **UN Budget**

28. The EU will work with UN partners to adopt a regular budget for 2008-9, at a level that will continue to support the UN's ongoing priority activities, including the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADG), the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, as well as the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits. The EU remains committed to ensuring the availability of resources for the UN, while adhering to our longstanding principle of budgetary discipline to ensure efficient and effective management of resources and taking into account the budgetary constraints of the member states.