



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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"I/A" ITEM NOTE

From : Political and Security Committee
To : Coreper / Council
Subject : EU priorities for the 64th United Nations General Assembly

1. The Working party on UN affairs (CONUN) examined at several occasions the above-mentioned draft document and reached an agreement on the text using a written procedure.
2. The Political and Security Committee (PSC) endorsed the text on 9 June.
3. Coreper is therefore invited to advise the Council to adopt as an "A" item the EU priorities for the 64th General Assembly of the United Nations as they appear in the Annex.

EU PRIORITIES

FOR THE 64th GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

1. The European Union stands at the forefront of the efforts to strengthen the United Nation's capacity to deliver effective international responses to **global challenges**. As the world is facing the global economic and financial crisis, the negative impact of climate change and the need to ensure energy and food security, migration, pandemics, numerous regional and intra-state conflicts and the increase in the complexity of other security risks and threats, including piracy on the high seas, the EU reconfirms its commitment to face those challenges through **effective multilateralism** based on international law, the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and its commitment to the implementation of the goals set forth at the UN World Summit in 2005. In order to deliver on these challenging tasks, a renewed multilateral system with a stronger and more effective world organisation – the United Nations - is required more than ever.
2. Strengthening the United Nations is a long-term European priority. The EU, therefore, intends to further promote the necessary **reforms of the UN system** as agreed upon at the 2005 World Summit. Our active engagement with the whole UN membership will be enhanced to advance this agenda and to pursue the reform of the main UN bodies, among them the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Security Council with a view to enhancing the representativeness, transparency and effectiveness of the system.
3. The EU remains committed to providing the **UN with sufficient resources** to fulfil its unique role and to cope with the many challenges ahead of it. However, greater emphasis must be put on the overall UN reform processes, based on an accountability framework, risk management and results-based budgeting, leading to the increased effectiveness, transparency and impact of UN activities.

4. The EU believes that co-ordinated and timely action is necessary to put **the global economy back on track towards recovery**, while preserving the economic and social progress achieved in many developing countries during recent decades. Significant measures by the UN and its members to support developing countries in coping with the crisis must be an integral part of the solution to the global crisis. The EU remains strongly committed to sustain efforts towards achieving the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** and believes that a strong emphasis is required to mitigate the impact of the global economic crisis on the poorest and most vulnerable.
5. The EU strongly supports the central role of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the forum where an ambitious, fair, global and comprehensive **post-2012 climate agreement** will be negotiated by the end of 2009. The EU has demonstrated its commitment to such a deal by, already in 2007, announcing ambitious mitigation targets. In order to keep the increase of temperature to below +2 degrees C, the EU expects all developed countries to adopt similar binding targets and developing countries (except the least developed countries) to curb the growth of their emissions significantly.
6. The EU is convinced of the need to sustain efforts aimed at achieving progress in the areas of international **disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation** of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.
7. The EU fully supports the UN in the fields of **conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding**. The surge in peacekeeping operations and overstretched UN capacity require the strengthening of UN prevention and peacekeeping capacities enhancing the UNSC's decision making process for peacekeeping operations and strengthening of the link between peacekeeping efforts and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.

8. The EU is committed to the concept of the **responsibility to protect** populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity as agreed at the 2005 UN World Summit. The EU fully supports the UN Secretary General's efforts to implement the Responsibility to Protect within the UN and welcomes his report and the balanced three-pillar strategy he sets out. The EU is determined to make the concept operational and in particular stresses its preventive importance.
9. Promoting **respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and for human rights**, as well as the preservation of peace and the strengthening of international security, in conformity with the UN Charter and international law are of fundamental importance to, and a priority for the Union.
10. The EU will continue to engage actively in an **inter-cultural dialogue** in order to contribute to mutual understanding among nations and counter the risk of radicalisation by addressing extremist ideology and tackling discrimination.
11. The EU, its Member States and the European Commission support the objectives of the **Alliance of Civilisations** initiative and will continue to support its delivery of substantive projects with a cross-cultural band.

1. REFORM OF UN FINANCING, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

12. With the **UN regular budget** for the upcoming biennium 2010-2011, the EU remains worried about the envisaged double-digit growth and will strive to limit unjustified additional increases of this budget. The EU will also continue making every effort to economize further the costs associated with the Capital Master Plan for financing the renovation of the UN Secretariat

buildings. The EU is concerned about the continued use of add-ons, the piecemeal approach to the budget process and the deteriorating conditions of work of the 5th Committee. The EU would welcome a dialogue with the Secretariat and other Member States on how to address these questions. The EU is also determined to engage constructively in the negotiations on a new methodology of the **scale of assessments** for the next period 2010-2012, which should better reflect the principle of “capacity to pay”.

13. The EU will play an active role in promoting sound and efficient financial management and adherence to budgetary discipline. The EU has welcomed progress achieved during the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly on **management reform** and underlines its commitment to continue working further towards tangible results in specific reform areas such as human resources management, governance and oversight, and results-based management. Further progress on management reform is crucial in order to enhance accountability, efficiency and transparency in the Organisation. The EU will also continue the finalisation of the Administration of Justice reform.
14. The EU will strive to support **the rule of law** at international and national level, including by supporting the activities of the Rule of Law Resource and Coordination Group and of the Rule of Law Unit of the UN Secretariat. The EU supports financing of the Unit from the UN Regular Budget.
15. Strong leadership and continued support for UN System Wide Coherence including efforts to streamline operational activities and to improve the overall coherence of the UN system is required. The EU will continue to play an active role in strengthening the **UN’s capacity to deliver “as One”** in the area of development and building on experience to date is ready to fully engage in ensuring that the significant consensus reached in the Resolution A/RES/62/277 is fully implemented. The System Wide Coherence must not be seen as a cost-cutting exercise. On the contrary, it represents an opportunity for donors to coordinate their efforts towards a more efficient multilateral donorship.

16. The EU reiterates its call for the **mainstreaming of gender equality issues** into all aspects of the UN's activities through appropriate financing, accountability and clear benchmarks. Strengthening the capabilities of the UN system in this area is essential and the EU will continue pushing for a consolidated gender entity with a strong mandate and funding in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.
17. The EU strongly supports the **three main pillars of the UN** – Security, Development and Human Rights - that are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

2. INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

2.1. Conflict Prevention, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

18. The EU underlines the importance of strengthening the **preventive diplomacy** capacity of the UN, including enhanced mediation capacity. In this respect, it supports the ongoing strengthening of the Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat. The EU also welcomes the coordination of conflict prevention efforts and steps to ensure that early warning information and analysis is shared among all relevant parts of the UN.
19. The EU supports the ongoing **review of UN peacekeeping**. It implies in particular the reinforcement of the UN Secretariat's capacity to plan and manage effectively operations, a more systematic elaboration of peacekeeping mandates to take better account of troop, logistical, financial and other requirements and intensification of contacts with troop-contributing countries. The gaps in the police field should also be addressed.

20. The **protection of civilians and safety and security of all UN personnel** and of other international staff should be an integral part of the peacekeeping operations' mandates and the UN should strengthen its capacity to deliver in this area. The fight against the scourges of violence against women and children must be given the utmost attention. In this regard, the EU underlines the need to implement the UNSCR 1325, 1820 and 1612, and it fully supports a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual abuse and exploitation by UN peacekeepers. It is also important to take into account the role of women as key actors and agents of change.
21. The EU welcomes the positive development in the field of **cooperation with other international and regional arrangements and organisations** and encourages the UN to further strengthen these partnerships and operational linkages that have a positive impact on the optimal use of limited resources. In this context, the EU welcomes the significant progress made in EU-UN cooperation in crisis management following the adoption of the Joint Declaration of 2003 and of the Joint Statement of 2007. The EU and its Member States continue to be actively involved in both UN-led and UN-mandated peacekeeping operations. In this context, the EU underlines the exemplary cooperation with the UN as demonstrated by the smooth transition from the EUFOR Tchad/RCA to MINURCAT in March 2009 in accordance with UNSCRs 1778, 1834 and 1861. Other actual contribution includes an EU naval operation ATALANTA to help deter, prevent and repress acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia, which was launched in support of the UNSCRs 1814, 1816, 1838 and 1846 in December 2008. The EU remains committed to further deepening of dialogue and practical cooperation at various levels between the EU institutions and the UN Secretariat and bodies. The UN needs other partners as well. The EU, therefore, encourages further strengthening of the strategic partnership between the AU and the UN. The EU also encourages the UN and NATO to further develop their cooperation in line with the declaration signed by the two Secretaries General in September 2008.

22. The UN should put special emphasis on supporting credible political peace process and immediate post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, notably in the areas of police, rule of law, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and **security sector reform** (SSR). In this context, the EU reiterates the need to identify the existing SSR capacity in DPKO as a unit. The EU also supports the UN in capacity building in the field of training, and in developing better multilateral capacity to ensure the effective deployment of civilian experts. The EU will advocate follow-up actions on the UN Secretary General's report on post-conflict peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict.
23. The EU regards the **Peacebuilding Commission** (PBC) as an important element of the UN security architecture. The EU will sustain its significant role in the PBC's activities. Attention should be focused on the rapid realisation of projects in the field, based on national ownership and using new tools, attracting new non-traditional donors and the better coordination of the different UN bodies. The EU will engage actively in a review of the peacebuilding activities that will take place in 2010.
24. **The Peacebuilding Fund** (PBF), as a complementary instrument, can contribute to peacebuilding efforts through providing rapid funds to kick-start action in a key area. The EU will continue to contribute to the Fund as well as support ongoing efforts to make it more efficient, including through the adoption of the revised terms of reference.
25. The EU will continue to work actively to strengthen the system and coordination of international **humanitarian response** and the UN's role as the coordinator of humanitarian assistance along the lines of the "EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and its Action Plan". The EU will continue to promote enhanced compliance with **international humanitarian law** in a visible and consistent manner in all relevant UN bodies. The EU reiterates that humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law provide a basis for humanitarian assistance.

2.2. International justice

26. Ending impunity for the most serious international crimes must remain on the agenda. Sustainable peace will not be achieved without justice. The EU remains committed to supporting the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** as well as to promoting the universality and integrity of the Rome Statute.
27. The legacy and integrity of the work of the **ICTY, ICTR and SCSL** following the completion of their activities must be preserved. The EU fully supports their completion strategies and the establishment of mechanisms to deal with the residual functions. The EU also expresses its hope that the **Special Tribunal for Lebanon** will successfully bring to justice those responsible for the attack of 14 February 2005 resulting in the death of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and in the death or injury of other persons.

2.3. Fight against terrorism, organised crime and other transnational threats

28. The United Nations has an important role to play in the global **fight against international terrorism**. The EU supports existing UN arrangements and believes that further work to better co-ordination of its numerous counter-terrorism activities would make the UN a more effective tool against the ever-changing nature of international terrorism. The EU is convinced that deeper international consensus on the normative framework is necessary. The EU recognizes the need to further enhance the provision of technical assistance for the ratification of international legal instruments related to terrorism as well as to strengthen the capacity of national criminal justice systems to implement these instruments into national legislation and to apply them. The EU will continue to emphasise the need for a prompt conclusion of the negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. The EU will continue to work towards ensuring that all counter-terrorism efforts are consistent with international law, including human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law.

29. Furthermore, the EU remains fully committed and ready to contribute to the implementation of the **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**. The implementation of the Strategy needs to involve all the stakeholders at all levels, including civil society and the private sector, especially in the fight against radicalisation processes and terrorism financing. On this account the EU has been a staunch supporter of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The EU supports enhanced funding of the CTITF from the regular UN budget and an increase of personnel of the Task Force wherever possible through redeployment of resources.
30. The EU supports a holistic and integrated approach in the **fight against organised crime**, trafficking in drugs and human beings, as well as corruption, and stands ready to support all UN efforts in these matters. The EU considers that these phenomena remain economic and social issues but constitute also a growing threat, which can undermine sustainable development, political stability and democratic institutions. They constitute a growing concern for international peace and security.

2.4. Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation

31. The EU places strong emphasis on achieving the successful outcome of the **2010 NPT Review Conference** that should examine the means of strengthening the non-proliferation regime, pursuing disarmament and ensuring the responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The EU will continue to support, including by financial means, international efforts aimed at establishing a multilateral nuclear fuel bank under the IAEA auspices.

32. The strengthening of the non-proliferation regime needs to be upheld by the entry into force of the **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty** (CTBT) and the launching of negotiations without preconditions of a **Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty** including verification provisions in the Conference on Disarmament. The EU will continue to provide financial support to the activities undertaken by the OPCW, Preparatory Committee of the CTBTO, UNSCR 1540 Committee and the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missiles. The EU welcomes the commitment expressed by the USA and the Russian Federation to replace the START with a new Treaty before it expires in December 2009.
33. The EU supports the implementation of the **UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons** and will continue to contribute to the actions against the illicit trade and trafficking of these weapons. The EU appreciates the activation of the UN Groups of Governmental experts on various Protocols of the Convention on **Certain Conventional Weapons** (CCW) and strongly supports the process to negotiate a legally-binding instrument with regard to cluster munitions that addresses related humanitarian concerns in all their aspects. The EU firmly supports the UN process towards a comprehensive, legally binding **Arms Trade Treaty** (ATT) to establish common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. The EU has taken concrete steps to promote this UN process through a series of regional seminars and is convinced that an ATT will make a tangible contribution towards global security and stability.
34. The EU will continue to develop a **Code of Conduct for Outer Space activities** in order to create transparency and confidence-building measures in this field.
35. The EU supports efforts to ensure the compliance of **Iran and DPRK** with their obligations stemming from the relevant UNSCRs.

3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Development and impact of economic crisis

36. The EU will pay attention to the systemic approach to response to **the global challenges and the economic and financial crisis**, which pose a mutually reinforcing threat to development. It believes that the crisis provides an opportunity to push for reforms and to move towards a low-carbon and resources-efficient economy, giving additional impetus to sustainable development. The EU is concerned about the consequences of recent succession of crises (food, energy, financial and economic) for development and for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The EU will work together with partner countries towards effective global action, with special focus on reducing the impact of crises on development and the environment, including in the context of food security, particularly on the poorest and the most vulnerable countries.
37. The EU recalls its concern about the world **food crisis** and reiterates its firm commitment to assist developing countries that are particularly affected. In responding to the crisis, the EU established a new facility to support agriculture in developing countries. The EU is ready to work together with the UN System to develop a coherent global strategy and action plan covering both humanitarian and development objectives in food security.

3.2. Economic and social development

38. The EU remains fully committed to the fight against poverty and to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals and targets, including the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs). Further efforts are also required to deliver progress on sustainable development and related Johannesburg targets. The EU will engage constructively in UNGA 64 in order to advance the attainment of these goals and targets, including through an inclusive preparatory process that would lead to the MDG Review Summit in 2010.

39. The EU's collective ODA increased in 2008, reaching more than EUR 49 billion and 0,40% of GNI, and continued efforts are needed. In spite of the global economic and financial crisis, the EU strongly reaffirms its commitment to achieve its ODA targets. It further reaffirms its commitment to channel at least 50% of collective aid increases to Africa and to meet collectively the target of 0,15% to 0,20% of GNP to the least developed countries. The EU calls on all donors to ensure that **ODA commitments** are maintained in times when partners need our support most. Moreover, the EU encourages emerging economies to assume their share of global responsibility. Furthermore, the EU emphasizes the importance of improved aid effectiveness in contributing to the achievement of the MDGs. The EU will promote continuing dialogue on improving the quality and delivery of aid. At the same time, actions at global level must go hand in hand with domestic governance reforms in developing countries. The EU will continue to support partner countries' efforts in the areas of democratic governance, institution building, and sound macroeconomic, fiscal and public financial management.

3.3. Climate change and the environment

40. **Climate change** is one of the most pressing challenges of our time. It can no longer be seen exclusively as an environmental challenge, and can only be effectively tackled at the global level. The EU is committed to reaching a global and comprehensive climate agreement and supports the High-Level Event by the Secretary-General on the eve of the opening of the 64th Session of the UNGA on 22 September 2009 as a way to bring momentum and build consensus toward the UNFCCC conference to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009. Significant domestic and external sources of finance, both private and public, will be required for financing mitigation and adaptation actions, particularly in the most vulnerable developing countries. The EU will take on its fair share of financing such actions.

41. The EU will continue to pay particular attention to a more **integrated approach to climate change**, involving other relevant policy dimensions in the debate as well, taking into account the special needs of least developed countries and small island developing states who will suffer the most from climate change. Bearing in mind security implications of climate change, the EU will advocate that this important aspect be included in the international response addressing this challenge.
42. In addition, there is a wider challenge of environmental degradation, which urgently requires a more efficient system of the **International Environmental Governance (IEG)**. The EU is, therefore, ready to engage in outreach activities to see if there is a general support to resume the discussions on IEG after the conclusion of work of the Ministerial Group in February 2010. In view of the interdependence of environmental challenges, such as climate change, growing water scarcity, deforestation and pressures on biodiversity, an integrated and coordinated international approach is required.
43. The EU will play an active role in the support of the activities being envisaged for the observance of 2010 as **the International Year of Biodiversity**, under the auspices of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. At the same time, the EU will remain committed to the attainment of the threefold objective of the Convention and the 2010 biodiversity target as well as to developing a successor to the 2010 target to ensure that momentum continues on this important issue.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS

44. Last year, the world commemorated the 60th anniversary of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**. Since its adoption, much has been achieved in this priority area of UN work but there is still a lot that needs to be done. The EU will, therefore, continue to actively promote the integration of human rights in all aspects of the work of the UN.

45. General **EU priorities in the field of human rights** are effective promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of members of vulnerable groups, abolition of the death penalty, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, free media, rights of the child, protection of human rights defenders, cooperation with civil society and non-governmental organisations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms.
46. Through its active engagement in the **Human Rights Council**, the EU will continue to encourage all UN member states to honour their obligations under international human rights law. The EU will continue to pay particular attention to all special procedures, including country-specific and thematic mandates, and will pursue their preservation and strengthening. An efficient and proper conduct of the Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is an important instrument for advancing human rights in all UN member states. However, the UPR should not be considered as an exclusive instrument addressing human rights situations.
47. The **Third Committee of the UN General Assembly** and the General Assembly itself, remain relevant universal fora to address both thematic issues of global importance and country specific issues, including reports of special rapporteurs and representatives.
48. **Innovative ways** have to be sought after to address more timely severe and acute human rights situations in different parts of the world. Reflecting on the review of the work of the Human Rights Council needs to be commenced in due time with a view of the 2011 deadline set for this exercise.
49. The EU will also continue its efforts to safeguard the effectiveness and independence of the **Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights** in promoting and protecting human rights.
50. Further, the EU will pursue the consolidation of a human rights-based approach to development programming and mainstreaming of gender issues into all aspects of UN activities.