



European Union
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in South Africa



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UN World Summit 2005: President Barroso challenges others to match the EU's commitments on Development goals (12/09/2005)

On the eve of the UN World Summit, the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso challenged wealthy nations to match the European Union's drive to help countries fulfil the Millennium Development Goals. "The 2005 UN World Summit is a unique opportunity to show Europe's determination to keep our promises to the developing world and to bring others with us." On the UN reforms, he said: "The UN is as essential today as it was 60 years ago, but we need to ensure that it is equipped to face up to modern challenges. The new Peacebuilding Commission will help us all achieve sustainable peace in addressing more effectively the needs of countries emerging from conflict - and the EU, with its strong track record in conflict prevention and post conflict reconstruction, aims to be an active participant".

See: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1126&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

See also: **Millennium Development Goals: 5 years later, the need to accelerate (12/09/2005)**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/314&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>



Joint press conference by José Manuel Barroso, President of the EC, Commissioner Louis Michel (Development and Humanitarian Aid) and Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner (External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy) on the United Nations Summit.

EU-UN relations (12/09/2005)

The European commitment towards multilateralism is clearly at the centre of the EU external policies. In 2003 the Commission adopted a Communication on "EU-UN relations: The choice of multilateralism", which focused on a comprehensive strengthening and mainstreaming of EU-UN relations. Effective multilateralism is also one of the central pillars of the European Security Strategy, adopted in December 2003. The past years have seen a steady increase of interaction and co-operation between the EU and the UN at all levels. The EU has had a key role in the elaboration and implementation of new UN instruments such as the Kyoto Protocol and the International Criminal Court, and has taken an active part in making a success of international conferences such as the Financing for Development (Monterey 2002) and the World Summit for Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002).

See: <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/312&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>



Put your questions directly to Commissioner Louis Michel (Development and Humanitarian Aid) before he attends the United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in mid-September. What is the EU doing about development and humanitarian aid? What do you think of it? Are we doing enough? How can you, and the EU, help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals? The internet chat takes place on 12 September between 18.00 and 20.00 CET, or send your questions in advance todev-webchatmichel@cec.eu.int



See: <http://www.europe-cares.org/>



Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner's speaking notes from today's press conference on UN Summit (12/09/2005)

The three main themes of this summit are development, security and human rights. They are inextricably linked. You cannot truly have any of these things without the others.

And you cannot achieve any of them without effective multilateral co operation. That is why the proposed reforms at the UN are so important. We are talking about how to make the world safer, fairer, and more secure.

The UN was founded with the aim of avoiding armed conflict between states.

The EU is a natural partner for the UN. Our organisation was born of the same experience of war and is founded on the same conviction that acting together we achieve more than acting alone. Together we are the most substantial contributor to the UN budget, its funds and programmes,

The EU is the UN's biggest financial backer. EU member states provide 38% of the UN regular budget and together with the EC account for around 50% of the voluntary contributions to UN funds and programmes.

We are also, as a community, a major peacebuilder in our own right.

Take a look at the list of examples we have given you of our work in peacebuilding. It is a very long list. And it is not exhaustive. From our near neighbourhood, the Balkans, to Africa, Asia and Latin America, the European Community deploys the full spectrum of policies and instruments, from humanitarian relief to reconstruction, trade, institution building, support for democracy and human rights, from military peacekeeping missions to election observation missions.

We therefore have a strong contribution to make to the new Peacebuilding Commission.

This new UN body has a vital role to play.

The strongest indicator of potential for future conflict is continuing evidence of past conflict. We have to tackle the root causes of existing grievances that could spark future conflict.

When a peace agreement is signed, the hard work is only just beginning. To stabilise post conflict states, we need a co-ordinated and effective multilateral response to accompany the whole continuum from relief and peacemaking efforts at the end of a conflict, to immediate reconstruction, and then sustainable long term development, institution building, help in establishing the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The Peacebuilding Commission will have an advisory, planning and co ordinating role, that will cover all these aspects. It will fill a real gap in the UN system and make the UN a more credible actor in peace and security .

The EU will give active support to make sure it becomes operational as soon as possible.

The UN's primary task is still to avoid war. But in the 21st century we must also build a more secure world for individuals: human security means reducing the threats of poverty and disease, but also environmental degradation, human rights abuses and so on.

The present Human Rights Commission is no longer up to the job, and reforming the UN's human rights architecture is crucial.

If we are serious about rooting out human rights abuses, torture, and oppression of minorities; if we really want to empower women, and protect children in armed conflict we need to do better. Candidates for the new Human Rights Council should have to demonstrate that they carry out their own Human Rights obligations. This has not been the case with the existing UN Commission.

This new Council should help to mainstream HR into the whole UN system including the Security Council. It should maintain a constant peer review, and perform an alarm function to alert the Security Council if there is a sudden and substantial deterioration anywhere in the world and propose measures to address the situation.

The EU will be pushing for it to be put in place as soon as possible after the Summit.

I'd just like to say a few words about the Environment.

On our own continent we have witnessed this summer the consequences of climate change in fires and floods.

But climate change is only one reason to take the decision at this summit to give the UN a new, strong and well financed environmental body. Ensuring environmental sustainability is essential in our war on poverty.

And, fair use of natural resources is another key to peace and stability. To take one example: can you hope to solve the troubles of the Middle East without addressing the question of water? The link between environment and security including the link between illicit exploitation of resources and conflict, deserves more attention. It is the kind of issue we hope could be tackled by the new UN Environmental Organisation (UNEO).

Finally, management reform. Latest events (and of course I am thinking of the Volker report on the Oil for Food programme) should not lead anyone to think that managerial reform of the UN is solely a US crusade. It is the shared concern of all those who want a more efficient and co ordinated UN. All administrations need to go through internal reform from time to time, and we support the UN in this process.