

Nyt fra E u r o p a r å d e t

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Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005)

Conclusions of the Chair

The Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe took place on 16-17 May in Warsaw. Participants stressed that the Summit venue symbolised both the massive destruction of the last world war 60 years ago and the reunification process, which over the last 15 years has put an end to the arbitrary and artificial division our continent had to suffer. The words "peace", "unity" and "solidarity" were therefore key words for this gathering.

The Heads of State and Government of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe celebrated the success achieved, twelve years after the Vienna Summit, in fulfilling the political mandate assigned to the Council of Europe to bring together all European nations on the basis of their shared commitment to democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. They also registered the significant progress made in the strategic objective to "build Europe without dividing lines" set a few years later by the Strasbourg Summit and the Budapest Declaration adopted on the Council of Europe's 50th anniversary.

Many participants deeply regretted that Belarus was still not ready to join the Council of Europe. They expressed their expectation that the Belarus people would soon be able to benefit from common European standards and fundamental rights. They recalled the historic contribution of the Belarussian nation to European heritage.

Against this background, the Heads of State and Government addressed the challenges Europe – and the world – have to face today. They laid down the guidelines for the future action of the Council of Europe in a context of profound changes throughout the continent, and for its interaction with its main partners on the European and global scene (in particular the European Union and the OSCE). The common responsibility they have for the future of Europe, their confirmed commitment to the strategic goal of building one Europe without dividing lines and their desire to meet the aspirations of all Europeans were the guiding lines for the Summit's decisions.

The key message of the Summit is Europe's unprecedented unity, based on the fundamental values embodied in the Statute of the Council of Europe: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Further progress in the building of a Europe without dividing lines will continue on that basis. All the Council of Europe activities will contribute to this fundamental objective, including those carried out in the fields of social cohesion and cultural cooperation which are important enabling factors.

In this connection, special attention was given to the long-term effectiveness of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Heads of State and Government fully committed their countries to rapidly and effectively implement the comprehensive set of measures adopted in May 2004, including the ratification of Protocol 14 to the Convention by May 2006. They also set up a Group of Wise Persons to elaborate a global strategy for the lasting effectiveness of the system.

Beyond the Court, a strong commitment was also made at the Summit to strengthen the other Council of Europe institutions and mechanisms in the field of human rights. In addition, the Heads of State and Government took a number of decisions designed to reinforce democracy, good governance and the rule of law in the member states, including through the establishment of a Council of Europe Forum for the Future of Democracy.

The Heads of State and Government also agreed to further develop the Council of Europe contribution to international action against modern threats or challenges such as terrorism, corruption and organised crime, trafficking in human beings, cybercrime or bioethics. They recognised the need to promote a democratic culture and to foster intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, both among European people and between Europe and its neighbouring regions, building on the Council of Europe's work in the fields of social cohesion and cultural cooperation.

At the Summit, particular emphasis was placed on inter-institutional cooperation on both the European and global scene. Modern threats and challenges are global, and solutions must therefore be concerted in order to be effective. The Summit welcomed the joint declaration for enhanced cooperation and interaction recently adopted by the Council of Europe and the OSCE. It also adopted a clear roadmap for strengthened partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Union.

The Heads of State and Government entrusted Jean-Claude Juncker, as Prime Minister of a founding member state of both the Council of Europe and the European Union and one of the most experienced political leaders in Europe, with the task of drawing up – in his personal capacity - a report on the relationship between the Council of Europe and the European Union. Mr Juncker's reflection will be based on the Summit decisions and aim primarily at strengthening the human dimension of the European construction.

At the close of the Summit, the Heads of State and Government adopted the Warsaw Declaration which paves the way for reinforced pan-European cooperation and solidarity. They also adopted an Action Plan addressing four main objectives:

- Promoting common fundamental values: human rights, rule of law and democracy;
- Strengthening the security of European citizens;
- Building a more human and inclusive Europe;
- Fostering cooperation with other international and European organisations and institutions.

A clear mandate was given to the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General to implement the Action Plan in a transparent and efficient manner.

Three Council of Europe conventions, adopted a few days earlier by the Committee of Ministers, were opened for signature at the Summit:

- the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism;
- the revised Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime;
- the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

They were signed by 18, 12 and 14 member states respectively. One member state also signed Protocol 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights and 3 member states ratified it.

Participants thanked the Polish authorities for their hospitality and expressed satisfaction at the significant progress made under the leadership of the Polish Chair. At the close of the Summit, Poland handed over the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers to Portugal, who presented its priorities for the next six months.

Three major conventions by the Council of Europe opened for signature

Strasbourg, 16.05.2005 – Three major Council of Europe conventions concerning the fight against terrorism and trafficking in human beings have been opened today for signature by member states at the Summit of Heads of State and Government taking place in Warsaw (16 and 17 May). The conventions, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 3 May, have been signed today by the following states:

Council of Europe Convention on the prevention of terrorism (Konvention nr. 196)

Austria, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Kort beskrivelse: The Council of Europe has adopted this new convention to increase the effectiveness of existing international texts on the fight against terrorism. It aims to strengthen member states' efforts to prevent terrorism and sets out two ways to achieve this objective:

- by establishing as criminal offences certain acts that may lead to the commission of terrorist offences, namely: public provocation, recruitment and training
- by reinforcing co-operation on prevention both internally (national prevention policies), and internationally (modification of existing extradition and mutual assistance arrangements and additional means).

The convention contains a provision on the protection and compensation of victims of terrorism. A consultation process is planned to ensure effective implementation and follow up.

Council of Europe Convention on laundering, search, seizure and confiscation of the proceeds from crime and on the financing of terrorism (Konvention nr. 198)

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sweden.

Kort beskrivelse: The Council of Europe decided to update and widen its 1990 convention to take into account the fact that not only could terrorism be financed through money laundering from criminal activity, but also through legitimate activities.

This new convention is the first international treaty covering both the prevention and the control of money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The text addresses the fact that quick access to financial information or information on assets held by criminal organisations, including terrorist groups, is the key to successful preventive and repressive measures, and, ultimately, is the best way to stop them.

The convention includes a mechanism to ensure the proper implementation by parties of its provisions.

Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings (Konvention nr. 197)

Armenia, Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Sweden.

Kort beskrivelse: The aim of this convention is to prevent and combat the trafficking in human beings in all its forms, namely national or international, whether or not it is linked with organised crime.

A first fundamental principle outlined in detail in the new convention is that the protection and promotion of the rights of the victims shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

The main added value of this convention is its human rights perspective, its focus on victim protection and its independent monitoring mechanism guaranteeing parties' compliance with its provisions.

Council of Europe: Portugal presents its priorities

Strasbourg, 25.05.2005 - Fernando Neves, Portugal's Secretary of State for European Affairs, today presented in Strasbourg the programme of the Portuguese chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers. He underlined his country's responsibility for the implementation of decisions taken at the Warsaw Summit, at the end of which Portugal took over from Poland at the head of the Council of Europe.

Portugal's priorities will be based around three broad themes:

1 - Promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law:

- a. the Portuguese chairmanship will stress the importance of ratifying Protocol 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights, in the hope that it will enter into force before May 2006;
- b. Working to reinforce the role of the Commissioner for Human Rights;
- c. Consolidating the results already achieved in the protection of children's rights, sex equality, local democracy and the fight against human trafficking;
- d. Reinforcing cooperation and coordination with the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations.

2 - Recognition of the cultural dimension as a means of reinforcing democratic values:

- a. Portugal will place the utmost importance on the cultural dimension of the Council of Europe's activities, in the context of the 50th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention;
- b. It will also strive to strengthen links between cultures on both sides of the Mediterranean, including the possibility of extending the geographical scope of cooperation in the framework of the European Cultural Convention;
- c. Promoting reflection on ways of responding to the underlying causes of terrorism.

3 - Consolidation of social cohesion

- a. The Portuguese presidency will encourage all member States who have not yet done so to ratify the European Social Charter and its revised version;
- b. Special attention will be given to issues involving the family and children.

The Portuguese chairmanship will end in November 2005 with a ministerial session in Strasbourg. Seminars and conferences on the following themes will be organised :

- the protection of children's rights, notably concerning trafficking and violence (Lisbon, June 2005)
- balanced participation of women and men in political and economic decision making (Lisbon, June 2005)
- Local Self-Government (Lisbon, July 2005, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the European Charter on Local Self-Government)
- Economic crime (Lisbon, September 2005)
- The future of cultural cooperation in Europe (Algarve, 2005 - ministerial conference marking the closure of the 50th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention)

Møder i juni 2005

(hvor intet andet er nævnt, holdes mødet i Strasbourg)

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| 31/5-2. | Session: Kongressen af lokale og regionale myndigheder (bl.a. monitoreringsrapporter om lokalt og regionalt demokrati i henholdsvis Danmark og Sverige) |
| 1.-2. | Konference: The protection of the rights of the child, in particular against trafficking and violence (Lissabon) |
| 6. | Møde i Den Parlamentariske Forsamlings stående komité (Lissabon) |
| 6.-8. | Ministerkomiteen |
| 14. | ECRI round table (Istanbul). Samme dag offentliggøres fem landerapporter, heriblandt en rapport om Sverige, angående bekæmpelse af racisme og fremmedhad |
| 15. | Ministerkomitéen |
| 20.-24. | Session: Den Parlamentariske Forsamling |
| 28.-29. | Ministerkomitéen |

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