



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**Summary of remarks  
by Javier SOLANA,  
EU High Representative for the CFSP,  
to the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee and  
the Chairs of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of  
the National Parliaments**

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), addressed today the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament and the Chairs of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of the National Parliaments on recent developments concerning the main issues on the international agenda.

The following is an edited summary of Mr SOLANA's introductory remarks:

*Mr. Chairman,*

*Thank you for inviting me once again to address you in the European Parliament. I am happy to speak at this joint meeting of the EP Foreign Affairs Committee with the Chairs of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of the National Parliaments.*

*I spoke to most of you, National Parliamentarians, in Paris in late July at the COFACC - and to you, Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, in Brussels in early September. But it is true that, at the speed with which events are taking place, two or three months can look like an eternity.*

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS:**

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*Mr Chairman,*

*Barack Obama will be the new President of the United States. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly congratulate him on what we can call an historic victory. President-elect Obama has run on a platform of change and I think that this should be very welcome. There are many things in the world that will have to be changed. My core message to you, to the American People and to the citizens of Europe is that we have to try to do this together. Elections are always about renewal. The stakes are very high and we have to formulate a common agenda. And what is more important: to implement it together.*

*Much has happened in the last period of time. Not least yesterday's historic US elections, but also the global financial crisis, which is shaping the international landscape in profound ways. This is a global problem and therefore requires a global solution. The European Union has shown leadership but we have to maintain our attention focussed. The financial crisis will accelerate what has already been taking place in the world for some time, that is a shift of power from the West to the East. The financial crisis has also shown that we need stronger global institutions. Therefore we need to change the formats of these institutions and bring new powers around the table.*

*However, I would like to stress that these new challenges of the financial and economic crisis should not make us forget the old agenda: climate change, non-proliferation, poverty, many of the things that have been with us for sometime. They remain on the agenda and we must continue to work to find solutions for them.*

*Mr Chairman, let me now turn to some urgent foreign policy issues.*

*In recent days and weeks, we have seen dramatic events in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A real human tragedy is taking place there. Over the last years, the EU has been very much engaged in that country and has invested a lot in peace and stability in DRC, a country of great importance for the overall stability of Africa.*

*I have spoken to all key players and leaders looking for a solution to this crisis, including President Kabila, President Kagame of Rwanda, the Chairmant of the African Union Commission, Mr Ping, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon.*

*The UN and the African Union are the key actors. The efforts that we have been undertaking recently in cooperation with the French Presidency and the summit that will take place in Nairobi next Friday are crucial. The EU stands ready to assist as best as it can: on the humanitarian front, also politically. I will see the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Sharm el-Sheik in the margins of the Quartet meeting this weekend. The EU has been working on potential actions in order to find a solution to this crisis and we will continue to be engaged.*

*Another point I want to raise is Somalia. Almost every day we hear about new acts of **piracy off the coast of Somalia**. This is the reason why the EU has decided to launch an ESDP naval operation. It will be the first naval operation under the ESDP. The operational planning is now taking place at the Operational HQ in Northwood (UK), under the authority of a British Rear Admiral. We aim to launch it in December. The operation will contribute to the implementation of UNSC resolutions 1814 and 1816, assist in deterring piracy and escort World Food Program shipping. We will cooperate closely with all actors involved in the region.*

*Let me stress that action against piracy cannot replace support to the political process in Somalia. The ceasefire agreed among the parties should take effect as of today. I have called on all Somalis and all countries involved and the Arab League to join this process.*

*Mr. Chairman,*

*Since I was here last time, in late September, **Georgia** has been very, very high on the EU agenda. As you know, we are active on the diplomatic front. We play a leading role in the Geneva talks and we hope that the next round foreseen for 18/19 November will be constructive. But, as you know, we are also present on the ground, with more than 200 monitors. Our monitoring mission deployed in record time, honouring our side of the commitments of the 8 September agreement reached in Moscow. The deployment of the EU Monitoring Mission led to the swift withdrawal of Russian forces from the "adjacent areas" to South Ossetia and Abkhazia. It was a very important step, allowing many internally displaced people to return.*

*These two elements, the political one and the one on the ground demonstrate that the EU has achieved concrete results. We will continue to push for further progress, step by step, in close coordination with our partners - particularly the UN and the OSCE. Of course, there is still a lot to be done. Maintaining unity inside the EU and commitment to our principles remains essential.*

*This brings me to our relations with **Russia**. It is clear that EU-Russia relations have been affected by the Georgian crisis. You will remember that the special European Council of 1 September asked the Commission and the Council Secretariat to produce a review of where we stand with Russia. Our paper is factual. The recommendations will be for the Council. It will be up to the Foreign Ministers at the GAERC meeting on Monday to discuss them, as part of the preparations for the EU-Russia Summit in Nice on 14 November.*

*Although we are at a critical juncture with Russia, there is no alternative to a strong relationship. We need Russia as much as Russia needs the EU and that is why contacts are ongoing. I was in St. Petersburg recently at a Foreign Minister's meeting with Russia. We had frank but open talks with Foreign Minister Lavrov.*

*Let me now move on to the **Western Balkans**. In **Kosovo** our top priority is the deployment of EULEX throughout the territory of Kosovo. We hope very much that our mission will be deployed by early December. As you know, we have a very intense dialogue with Belgrade, underlining that the mission constitutes the best guarantee for the Rule of Law and the protection of the Serb community in Kosovo. We also want to see how we can get Serbia closer to the EU. Serbia is making good progress on the road to the European Union. The report released today by the European Commission says how much progress has been made. The SAA has not yet been implemented but the ideas are there and we hope now that Serbia will prove full cooperation with ICTY and that the report to be presented by the prosecutor in December will be positive.*

*A word about **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. We are concerned about the current political situation and the type of statements coming from some political leaders. Extreme nationalism is coming back. We have to be very careful about that. We want Bosnia and Herzegovina to move closer to the European Union. But let me make this point very clear: they must comply with what was agreed with us and what was agreed in Dayton. We will have a debate about Bosnia and Herzegovina next Monday. As you know the office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina may have to move into a new structure. We hope that we will have the possibility of doing so next year.*

*Let me also say a few words about the **Middle East**. There will be a Quartet ministerial meeting in Egypt next weekend. It will provide an opportunity to analyse the situation in view of the US elections and to see how we can move the process forward. We have a complex picture with elections in Israel in February and a change in the US of administration. But we do not have time to waste and I hope that the new administration will not spare a day in helping to find a solution.*

*Last week I visited the Gulf region and Syria. I have been in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Syria. The economic and political context in which we are living, makes it necessary to construct deep relations with the countries of the region.*

*In Syria there are signs of change and signs of hope after the decisions taken by the President. We hope that this will continue and have an impact on the overall region, in particular Lebanon, where elections are to be held in 2009.*

*Turning to **Afghanistan**. The situation there is complex and difficult both in terms of security and governance. The year 2009 will be an important year. We have to work together with the US taking into consideration Pakistan. The EU is increasingly active in Afghanistan, including our police mission, EUPOL Afghanistan, with 160 additional international personnel to be deployed to reinforce the mission, starting in December. With a new Head of EUPOL and a new EUSR in total cooperation with the UN Secretary General Envoy Mr. Eide, we hope we will be able to move the process forward with our partners and the Afghans themselves.*

*Mr. Chairman,*

*I think we have many more issues that we would like to discuss together, but I think that these are the most acute problems on the table right now. As I said at the beginning we are at a very historical moment, one of hope but also one of crisis. The current economic crisis will probably last for some time. We will have to see how we will tackle this because it will also have consequences on the foreign policy agenda. We will have to work with all the important actors, the United States and other countries, as well as with international organisations. Global problems require global solutions.*

*Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for your attention.*

After his introductory speech, the High Representative participated in a debate with MEPs and MPs, that focussed on the following subjects: the Western Balkans, Georgia, EU-Russia relations, Central Asia, transatlantic relations, Africa, in particular the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia, the Middle-East, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Union for the Mediterranean, the review process of the European Security Strategy, the current financial crisis and EU-NATO relations.