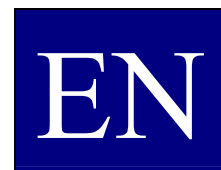




**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 29 May 2008
10088/08 (Presse 156)

**1st CAPE VERDE-EU Ministerial Troika Meeting
Brussels, 27 May 2008**

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

1. Within the framework of the Special Partnership between the EU and Cape Verde, the first ministerial Troika meeting between the Republic of Cape Verde (CV) and the European Union (EU) was held in Brussels on 27 May 2008 under the Co-Chairs of His Excellency Mr. Victor Borges, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cape Verde and Mr. Andrej Šter, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, President of the Council of the European Union. Furthermore the EU delegation consisted of Mr. Stefano Manservigi, Director General of the Directorate General for Relations with the ACP and Development, the European Commission, Mr. Jean-Christophe Belliard, Personal Envoy for Africa of Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary-General, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the General Secretariat of the European Council and Ms. Sophie Villette, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France in its capacity of incoming Presidency.

Hereinafter the Cape Verde delegation and the EU delegation will be jointly referred to as “the Parties”.

P R E S S

2. In November 2007 the Council adopted a Communication of the European Commission on the future of the relations between the European Union and Cape Verde, which sets the framework for strengthening and deepening their relations through the establishment of a Special Partnership EU/CV, aimed to reinforce political dialogue, policy convergence and cooperation between the Parties, in new and sensitive sectors.
3. It was in this context of political dialogue that the Parties underlined the need to address common threats such as the drug traffic through Cape Verde to Europe, the importance of agreements allowing legal migration, and the full integration of Capeverdeans living legally in the EU. CV informed the meeting of the graduation of CV from the LDC list which represents new challenges to the development strategy and the needs of the country. It also informed the meeting of a recommendation made by the Transitional Support Group calling the international community to pay special attention to the specificities of the country in areas such as access to concessional funding, free market access and debt relief.
4. The Parties passed in review the political situation in the West African region, in particular in some countries emerging from political crisis. In this regard, they welcomed the stable situation in Guinea-Bissau and the increased focus of the Government in implementing its ambitious reform programme. They further appealed to the international community to deliver support as promised in several areas and expressed confidence that these efforts would be coordinated effectively with the ongoing reforms. The Parties took note of the conclusions of the meeting of the International Contact Group in Praia on 5 May 2008 in particular concerning security sector reform and fight against drug trafficking, both areas requiring continued efforts and attention from national and international actors. They also stressed the need to support Guinea-Bissau in its preparations for the elections on 16 November 2008, in particular to support financially to fill the funding gap.
5. The parties took note of the appointment of a new Prime minister in Guinea. They expressed hope that the efforts made in the political and economic reform process will continue. The Parties encouraged all actors to pursue the overall positive steps towards stabilisation of the country. The EU informed Cape Verde on the status of the article 96 process. Following the adoption of new electoral laws and the setting-up of the Independent National Electoral Commission, the EU underlined the need for setting a firm date for the legislative elections and informed Cape Verde of its willingness to take part in the observation of these elections.

6. The Parties welcomed the improvement of the security and political situation in Côte d'Ivoire since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement in March 2007. The Parties encouraged the authorities to take further steps towards resolving the difficulties and welcomed the ongoing efforts on restructuring the armed forces. The Parties also welcomed the setting of the date of 30 November 2008 for the presidential elections and encouraged Ivorian political actors to ensure transparent elections in line with international standards. The EU informed Cape Verde of its willingness to assist the election process. The Parties considered the Ivorian request to be included in the agenda of the UN Peace Building Commission.
7. The Capeverdean delegation made a presentation of the Special Partnership EU/CV, including its background, objectives, structure, financial instruments. In this regard the delegation stressed the strategic geographical situation of Cape Verde as well as the potential of the Special Partnership to help the country to develop safely and effectively within the world economy.
8. The parties underscored their common values and principles in respect of democracy, good governance, the respect of human rights and the rule of law; the very good standards and practices of Cape Verde in terms of governance represent the foundation for the further development of its relations with the European Union.
9. The Capeverdean delegation highlighted specific vulnerabilities of the country, inter alia of environmental and climatic nature that affect the precarious agricultural production and food security, vulnerabilities which again are aggravated by economic conditionalism due to insularity and the small size of the country as well as the continuing increase in food and oil prices.
10. The Capeverdean delegation reiterated the firm commitment of the Government towards transforming into a much more modern, competitive and secure State and enabling its integration into the global economy.
11. The Special Partnership shall be implemented by means of the Action Plan. The Action Plan, which has a programmatic and indicative nature is articulated on six pillars: i) good governance; ii) security and stability; iii) regional integration; iv) technology and standard convergence; v) knowledge-based society; vi) poverty alleviation and development. The operational translation of the Action Plan will be a series of work plans, including specific projects within a given timeframe, normally a year.

12. The Parties agreed on the institutional arrangements applicable to the Special Partnership, i.e. one ministerial meeting per year, two meetings per year of the 'Groupe Technique de Suivi' (GTS), while meetings of the 'Groupe Local de Suivi' (GLS) are to be held in Praia at least every three months. If necessary, technical meetings of sub-groups of the GTS could take place. These arrangements should be sufficiently flexible in the next two years to take into account the specificities of this partnership.
13. The Parties reviewed the progress to date in the implementation of the Action Plan on the basis of a presentation made by the Capeverdean delegation and expressed their satisfaction for the progress made in several priority sectors such as:
- Good governance; in that area is being implemented not only important measures to consolidate democracy and the rule of law but also a State Reform Agenda which aims at building a modern and competitive state being efficient and responsive in terms of administration, financial management, justice and internal security;
 - Security and stability; the State has achieved positive developments in the area of national defence and security, reflected in the creation of the National Police, the reform of the Armed Forces, the training of Judicial Police and the enhancement of maritime surveillance, areas which are crucial to safeguarding the quality of life of the Capeverdean people, protecting and attracting foreign investment;
 - Migration; the EU and CV agreed that CV will be a pilot country for the new 'Partnership for Mobility' (PfM), and a Declaration to this effect will be signed on 5 June 2008;
 - Cooperation with the outermost regions of the European Union; cooperation has corresponded to the objectives of the Special Partnership and the interested parties are actively engaged in deepening their relationship. This engagement has been translated into several ventures in different areas and levels. Thus, within the framework of the 'Wider European Neighbourhood Action Plan' the European Commission recently approved the 'Transnational Cooperation Programme Madeira-Açores-Canarias (MAC) 2007-2013', successor of INTERREG III B;

- Integration of Cape Verde in the West African region remains a priority by the Government. In this context, while assuring increased regional participation of Cape Verde, the Government must also take on board the specificities of the country as the unique island nation of the region, namely when addressing the regional economic partnership agreement and the regional funding;
 - Technology and standards convergence; integrated into the Government's policy of alignment and harmonization of the Capeverdean standards to the Community acquis, Cape Verde has adopted the policy of the European Union in terms of electronic communications, electronic commerce and postal services;
 - Knowledge based society; the process of developing a society of knowledge and information in Cape Verde presents already significant results in respect of the production and distribution of goods and services and rendering public health care and social services as well as justice;
 - Poverty alleviation and development; the Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme for the 10th EDF was recently adopted by the Commission, thus allocating 51 million euros to cooperation with Cape Verde. 11,5 million euros are specifically allocated to the support of the Special Partnership. The identification of specific projects is currently underway;
14. The Parties expressed their satisfaction with the progress of the work plan for the period 2008-2009 and emphasized the importance for the government to continue working on its concept, in particular identifying concrete projects in view of entering the implementation phase as soon as feasible. The work plan will focus on the areas mentioned in paragraph 13.
15. The Parties agreed that the next Ministerial Troika will take place under the Czech Presidency in the first half of 2009.
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