

Introduction to the Meeting of Chairpersons of Security and Internal EU Affairs Committees.

Conference topic: Integrated rescue system, legal and illegal migration in connection with environmental security.

Date and venue: 22.-23. February 2009, Prague

Motto: *„Deteriorating environment may put many of mankind's accomplishments achieved over the past few decades in significant danger. It undermines our fight against poverty and eventually it can jeopardize the international peace and security“.*

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations

European Commission and Javier Solana introduced their Report on impact of climatic changes on international security in the spring of 2008. Almost all long-term development forecasts coincide in the fact that degradation of environment in the long-term horizon will negatively influence the economic, social and security development throughout the world to a great extent.

Joint conference of Chairpersons of Security and Internal EU Affairs Committees of EU member states will endeavour to deal with this topic and to search for preventive measures to impose limitations on environmental threats. The following questions will be undoubtedly mentioned in opening remarks and discussed in the follow-up discussions:

1. Lack of water and foodstuffs due to climatic changes in sub-Saharan Africa as well as in some Asian regions causes and will cause subsistence issues and may result in a migration wave.
2. Warmer climate and extreme temperature variation forecasts, changes in air circulation and subsequent droughts in already dry regions in comparison to increased precipitation and risk of floods in other regions. Ocean level increase forecasts, shore erosion and loss of significant territories.
3. In addition to uncontrolled migration, the climatic changes and its consequences can cause instability and radicalization in weak countries that will no longer be able to face up the issues. This can result into ethnic and religious conflicts.
4. The advanced countries can face a new threat of global inequality. This will materialize in strong migration from regions affected by starvation, poverty, floods or civil conflicts. This threat will involve both transit and final destination countries.
5. Energy security issues may be yet another consequence of environmental degradation. Sources of raw materials such as crude oil and natural gas in

particular are located in distressed areas and their unreliability and instability can increase as a result of social and demographic issues.

6. Responsibility for prevention and resolution of such threats lies with the new and old world players embodied in G8, but also with the new countries such as Brazil, India, South Korea, Indonesia etc. that experience significant economic growth at the moment. The new and old world players need to look for joint accountability and political concept hand in hand with the new world players. The European Union can be a role model and add value with its institutional form and with its *acquis communautaire*.
7. Last and possibly the most important issues to discuss are the questions of prevention and level of EU readiness to face possible conflicts and disasters. The European Union shall look for and prepare new and efficient preventive measures, early warning systems, improved civilian protection, crisis management and natural disasters reaction tools to tackle the new climatic reality and its consequences. Funding of such common systems and measures including the research shall be allowed for in the European budget.

European Union is a space of freedom, security and justice. Degradation of environment may fundamentally breach and deteriorate such security. I firmly believe that our conference will contribute to comprehension of the fact that environmental security is a key issue in the EU security concept and will therefore be resolved with a great level of consistency.

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