

30 May 2007

**G8 Foreign Ministers' Meeting
Potsdam, 30 May 2007**

Chairman's Statement

G8 Foreign Ministers met in Potsdam on 30 May to discuss a range of global and regional issues. The meeting focussed on Kosovo, the situation in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Sudan and Iran as well as North Korea. We met with Foreign Minister Kasuri of Pakistan and Foreign Minister Spanta of Afghanistan to discuss the situation in Afghanistan, cooperation between their countries and how the G8 can support such cooperation. On this subject, we issued a joint statement with our colleagues from Afghanistan and Pakistan. We also exchanged views on Iraq, Nagorno-Karabakh, the situation in Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Somalia. We issued a joint declaration on the promotion of the Rule of Law.

Kosovo

Ministers discussed UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari's comprehensive proposal submitted to the UN Security Council by the UN Secretary General on 26 March. While there continue to be different views on substance and on the way forward, discussions are still ongoing.

Iran

Foreign Ministers reiterated their profound concerns over the proliferation implications of the Iranian nuclear programme. We remain committed to a negotiated solution which would address the international concerns over Iran's nuclear programme and are united in our commitment to see the proliferation implications of Iran's nuclear programme resolved.

We endorse the Statement made by the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, with the support of the High Representative of the European Union, on the occasion of the adoption of UNSC Res. 1747 and express our disappointment over Iran's failure so far to engage on the proposals contained therein which would include cooperation with Iran on civil nuclear energy, legally-binding guarantees on the supply of nuclear fuel, and wider political security and economic cooperation and, hence, would bring far reaching benefits to Iran and the region. Such Iranian engagement would provide a means to address the international community's concerns while taking account of Iran's legitimate interests in building a modern civilian nuclear programme for energy diversification purposes.

We urge Iran to comply with its international obligations and UNSC Res. 1696, 1737 and 1747, in particular its obligation to suspend all enrichment related activities, and deeply deplore the fact that, as evidenced by the IAEA Director General's latest report to the Security Council, Iran has expanded its enrichment programme. Should Iran continue not to heed the call of the Security Council, we shall support further appropriate measures as agreed in in UNSCR 1747.

Foreign Ministers call on Iran to play a more responsible and constructive role in the Middle East region and in particular to accept a solution based on two states, Palestine and Israel, existing side by side in peace and security. We welcome Iran's participation at the

neighbouring countries' conference on Iraq in Sharm El Sheikh and hope that Iran will contribute to efforts to reach stability in Iraq. We condemn the threats towards Israel by the Iranian government and the repeated denial of the Holocaust by representatives of the Iranian government.

North Korea

Foreign Ministers reiterated the G8 commitment to achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We urge North Korea to return to full compliance with NPT obligations and, in accordance with the Joint Statement and UNSC-Resolutions 1695 and 1718, to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes as well as ballistic missile programmes. We fully support the Six Party Talks and swift implementation of the initial actions agreed on 13 February 2007 as a first step towards full implementation of the Joint Statement of September 19, 2005 in good faith. We also urge North Korea to respond to other security and humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the early resolution of the issue of abductions.

Middle East Peace Process

Foreign Ministers reiterated the G8's commitment for a negotiated, comprehensive, just and lasting settlement in the Middle East. We expressed the hope that the talks between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas will address elements of the political horizon and lay the foundation for negotiations for the establishment of a Palestinian state, consistent with the Roadmap and based on the UNSCR 242, 338, 1397, and 1515. The Quartet which meets today in Berlin will continue to play a central role. We call on the Government of the Palestinian Authority to commit fully to the principle of non-violence, recognize the right of Israel to exist and accept previous Israeli/Palestinian agreements consistent with the Quartet statements of February 9 and 21, and March 21 2007. In this connection, we reiterate our call on the Government of the Palestinian Authority to bring terrorist violence to an end and to take immediate measures to release the abducted Israeli soldier. We urge the Palestinian leadership to do everything it can to put an end to the firing of rockets into Israeli territory. We call on Israel to show restraint in responding to these attacks and refrain from all activities which are not in accordance with international law. We remain deeply concerned with the continuation of the settlement activities and the ongoing construction of the barrier on Palestinian lands. We continue to call on Israel for the immediate resumption of the transfer of withheld Palestinian tax and custom revenues, directly or through the Temporary International Mechanism. We also reiterate our call for the release of elected members of the Palestinian government and legislature by Israel .

We welcome the Arab Peace Initiative as reaffirmed in the declaration of the Arab League Summit of March 29 and the continuing efforts to promote it as a contribution to the peace process. We also welcome the positive reactions by the Israeli government and the first meeting of the Israeli, Egyptian and Jordanian Foreign Ministers in Cairo on this subject.

Concern was expressed about the security situation in the Gaza strip as well as the severe humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories. We call upon all Palestinian leaders to end internal violence and to resume their dialogue. We encourage Egypt and Saudi Arabia to continue their efforts to reconcile the Palestinian factions. We reiterated our firm commitment

to continue providing assistance to the Palestinian people and to strengthen Palestinian institutions. We agreed that movement and access are essential and, in this regard, call on both parties to fully implement the Movement and Access Agreement of 15 November 2005.

Lebanon

We recognize the need to reinforce Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence and call for full and speedy implementation of UNSCR 1701 and all other relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

The G8 fully support the legitimate and democratic government of Lebanon and urge for a rapid solution to the current political deadlock and progress towards national reconciliation. Such a solution which is of utmost importance for the stability and development of Lebanon and in the interest of all Lebanese people should be sought only through dialogue with all political forces and with full respect for the democratic institutions of the country. In this context, we remain committed to the establishment of a Special Tribunal for Lebanon. We urge all members of the international community to lend their support and to cooperate with the Tribunal, once it has been established.

We call upon all parties, first of all the regional players, and in particular Syria, to fully implement UNSCRs 1559, 1636, 1680 and 1701 and to refrain from interfering in the domestic affairs of Lebanon.

Iraq

Foreign Ministers reiterated the G8 commitment to Iraq's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The G8 condemn in the strongest terms all acts of terrorism and politically motivated or sectarian attacks against the Iraqi population. We fully support the democratically elected Government of Iraq and its efforts to restore public order, promote national reconciliation and the rule of law as well as economic reconstruction. We equally support its efforts to engage neighbouring states and the International Community.

We welcome the launching of the International Compact with Iraq on 3 May 2007 in Sharm El Sheikh hoping that the benchmarks set by the Government of Iraq for its economic, political, security and social reform strategies will encourage Iraq to pursue these targets with all determination. The key responsibility to implement these targets lies with the Iraqi government. We expect the implementation of the ICI, including the establishment of an ICI Secretariat, to take place in a timely manner and without duplicating the structures of the IRFFI.

Foreign Ministers also welcomed the meeting of neighbouring countries with broader international participation on 4 May 2007. The international community, and in particular the States in the region, have a responsibility to support and promote the difficult process of national reconciliation and stabilisation in Iraq, and to prevent any outside interference that could undermine this process. At the same time, international and regional co-operation are needed to address the humanitarian needs resulting from the displacement of four million civilians within and outside Iraq. We are determined to build on the progress achieved at this forum in order to maintain its positive impact on the further development of the situation in Iraq and hope that it will contribute to a long-term process of regional confidence building

through dialogue and co-operation. We believe that the establishment of an effective follow-up mechanism envisaged in the Final Statement of this meeting will facilitate the achievement of the above-mentioned goals.

G8 Foreign Ministers condemn the kidnapping in Baghdad on 29 May of five British citizens and call for their immediate safe release.

BMENA

Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) Initiative. Based on true partnership with governments and civil societies in the region in the spirit of respect for each country's diversity, the G8 offer their support to efforts geared at promoting good governance, the rule of law, human rights, including equal rights for women, social justice, strong civil societies, modern education systems and economic integration. We believe that the BMENA-initiative provides a good example of cooperation between the G8 and governments, business and civil society of the region that seeks to promote a shared vision of peace, security and prosperity thus countering extremists who aim to sow division, hatred and terror.

We look forward to the third meeting of Ministers of Education from the G8 member states and the states in the region as well as the fourth "Forum for the Future", which we recognise as an important forum for political dialogue between the G8 and the BMENA region.

Afghanistan

Foreign Ministers welcomed the progress Afghans achieved in the last year in their effort to build a secure, economically viable and democratic state free from terrorism and narcotics, and based on the rule of law. Afghanistan can be fully confident that the G8 will continue providing support and assistance to implement the security, governance and development goals laid down in the Afghanistan Compact to achieve a modern country in line with the aspirations of the Afghan people. We welcome the commitment of those countries that are sending civilian and military personnel to Afghanistan and contribute significant funds to the reconstruction and development of the country.

Foreign Ministers deplored the continuing threats to security which present an obstacle to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We welcomed ISAF's expansion to the southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan and the ongoing commitment by its members to assist the Afghan Government in its stabilisation and reconstruction efforts. We call on regional states to contribute constructively to this effort, including by combating insurgent financing and sanctuary, and the trafficking of narcotics. We are mindful of the efforts of the security forces to avoid causing civilian casualties and encourage continued efforts to this end. We deeply regret the losses sustained by the Afghan national security forces and ISAF members in their fight against terrorist groups and strongly condemn attacks by Taliban and other terrorist groups on civilians, Afghan Security Forces and officials, as well as on international military and civilian personnel.

We renew our support for the UN's central role and, in particular, for the work of the UN Secretary General's Special Representative and the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, UNAMA, and its leadership role in the work of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board.

We encourage UNAMA to expand its presence in the provinces to ensure that all Afghans can share the benefits of reconstruction and development. We praise those countries which give shelter to Afghan refugees and we commend the efforts of the UNHCR and other international organizations to find durable solutions for the return and the integration of Afghan refugees from neighbouring countries. We reiterate our commitment to helping Afghanistan to improve governance, human rights and the rule of law and call upon the Afghan Government to increase, wherever possible, its efforts to strengthen its justice, police and corrections systems and its institutions of governance with the support of the international community.

G8 Foreign Ministers met with their colleagues from Afghanistan and Pakistan to discuss cooperation between their countries and how the G8 can support such cooperation. In this context, we welcome the recent meeting of President Karzai and President Musharraf in Ankara and the Ankara declaration. Together with our colleagues from Afghanistan and Pakistan, we issued a statement on dialogue and cooperation between both countries in which the G8 undertake to support concrete projects agreed by both sides to improve cooperation on security, refugee issues, economic development, and to promote people-to-people contacts.

Nagorno-Karabakh

Foreign Ministers agreed that settlement of the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh is vital for regional peace and stability. The G8 support the efforts undertaken by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group and call on the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to increase efforts to reach agreement on the basic principles proposed by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group. In this connection, we welcome the intention of both Presidents to meet at the margins of the CIS-meeting in St. Petersburg on 9 June, 2007, and call on them to reach early agreement on the basic principles in order to pave the way for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Sudan

Foreign Ministers expressed deep concern at the tragic security and humanitarian situation in Darfur. We deplore the bombings carried out in April and urge the Government of Sudan to cease such aerial attacks in accordance with UNSCR 1591. Ministers stressed the need for an immediate cessation of hostilities by all parties and discussed ways to this end.

Emphasizing that only a political solution can end the crisis in Darfur, we fully support the initiative of the special envoys of the UN and AU, Jan Eliasson and Salim Salim, towards implementing their roadmap for renewed negotiations. We encourage them to move the political process forward swiftly with a view to starting negotiations in the near future. We call on the Government of Sudan and rebel movements to engage fully in the process. We welcome the support of the SPLM as well as neighbouring countries to bring the rebel groups together and urge all sides to co-ordinate their efforts under the leadership of the AU and UN special envoys. We discussed the continuing grave human rights violations in Darfur, including sexual and gender based violence, and expressed the conviction of our governments that the perpetrators should be brought to justice.

We are convinced that a robust peacekeeping force in Darfur is of vital importance to provide protection for the civilian population and, thus, to contribute to an enabling environment for

the peace process. While we welcome the acceptance by the Government of Sudan of the UN Heavy Support Package for AMIS as a step in the right direction, we urge the Government of Sudan to accept the Hybrid AU-UN Force as set out in the joint report by the UN Secretary General and the Chairperson of the AU-Commission of 23 May 2007 and enable its speedy deployment. We pay tribute to the AU efforts in Darfur and encourage the international community to provide financial support to AMIS in the transition to the Hybrid Force.

The conflict in Darfur threatens peace and security in the wider region. We therefore call upon the Governments of Sudan and Chad to honour their recently confirmed commitments to halt all support to armed movements engaged in cross-border hostilities and to work towards improving their bilateral relations in good faith.

We reiterate our commitment to continued humanitarian assistance. In this context, we welcome the recent agreement between the UN and the Government of Sudan on facilitating the work of humanitarian organisations and call on the Government of Sudan to implement fully and without delay this agreement. We further call upon all parties in Sudan and neighbouring countries to cease attacks on civilians and humanitarian workers and to ensure safe and unhindered access to the civilian population in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Foreign Ministers also underlined the crucial significance of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement for resolving conflicts in the all parts of Sudan, and urged all parties to redouble their efforts towards its swift and successful implementation.

Somalia

Foreign Ministers remain concerned about the crisis in Somalia which has resulted in heavy loss of human life and the displacement of thousands of people. We call on all parties to show restraint and to commit themselves to a lasting cessation of hostilities paving the way for comprehensive cease-fire arrangements.

In this context we emphasise that Somalia's problems can only be solved through political means. We therefore urge the Transitional Federal Institutions to give clear signals for the convening of the National Reconciliation Congress at which all relevant Somali parties should participate, leading to broad-based representative national, regional and local institutions for the remainder of the transitional period as envisaged in the Transitional Federal Charter and as set out in UNSC Resolution 1744 (2007).

In reaffirming G8 support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), we stress the need for further financial, logistical and technical assistance to the AU and for troop contributing Countries in order to enable its full and effective deployment aimed at creating the conditions for the stabilization of the Country, the early formation of responsible Somali security forces, and an early withdrawal of Ethiopian forces.

Zimbabwe

Foreign Ministers expressed concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe and the nation's political and economic crisis with potential implications for

regional stability. We are convinced that only a constructive dialogue with the participation of all political forces can create the basis for the necessary reforms and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. We welcome the Southern African Development Community's initiative to address the Zimbabwe crisis its mandate to President Mbeki to facilitate laying the foundations for a free and fair election in 2008. The G8 support SADC's efforts and call on the Community to stay engaged and to work towards a solution of the crisis in Zimbabwe. We recognize how important it is that forthcoming elections in Zimbabwe respect the norms and standards that SADC has established, including a cessation of political violence and the full respect of human rights.

Nigeria

We also discussed the political situation in Nigeria following the elections on 14 and 21 April, 2007. We welcome the transfer of power from one civilian government to another and recognize this as an important step in Nigeria's political evolution. We note, however, that national and international observers have concluded that the electoral process was seriously flawed and did not meet international standards, nor were they consistent with NEPAD standards on governance. The G8 stands ready to continue to work with Nigeria in support of the reform process and in improving its capacity for democratic governance.

Promotion of the Rule of Law

Foreign Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the rule of law as one of the core principles on which the G8 build their partnership and their efforts to promote peace, democracy, human rights and sustainable development worldwide. Respect for the rule of law is both a basic condition for economic interaction in a globalizing world and a necessary element of any comprehensive conflict prevention and resolution strategy. We concluded that, in spite of numerous efforts to promote the rule of law, major challenges remain. We therefore issued a declaration in which we undertake to promote a more coherent international approach with the United Nations. In order to discuss the way ahead, the Presidency will convene an experts' conference in the second half of this year.

Coordination of Peacekeeping Training Efforts

Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to regional peacekeeping capacity building and training, especially for Africa as an important component to our continued support for the UN peacekeeping efforts as well as of the African peace and security architecture. Foreign Ministers emphasized the substantive role played by the African Union in this area. In this context, we agreed on the importance of better coordinating peacekeeping training activities, building on existing mechanisms. We tasked our experts to make concrete recommendations to advance efforts already underway in this field.