



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Lima, 17 May 2008
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**CENTRAL AMERICA-EU TROIKA SUMMIT
Lima, Peru, 17 May 2008**

Joint Communiqué

1. The Heads of State and Government of Central America and the European Union (EU), represented by the Troika, held a meeting in Lima, Peru, on 17 May 2008 during which they stressed the fruitful nature of the relations existing between the two regions, which had evolved on the basis of the political dialogue and cooperation within the framework of the San José Dialogue established in 1984.
2. The Heads of State and Government of Central America and the European Union emphasized the recent developments achieved in their integration process.

P R E S S

3. The European side welcomed the efforts made and the significant achievements obtained by the Central American region in its integration process. The Heads of State and Government recalled that the processes of regional integration and the negotiation and conclusion of a comprehensive Association Agreement between Central America and the European Community are mutually supportive and are interlinked in that they form part of the joint strategic objective of regional integration as a way of reaching higher levels of social cohesion. In this respect, the parties reiterated the importance of the implementation of previous commitments, including those of the Vienna Summit. In addition, the Heads of State of Central America reiterated their commitment that the region will develop a process for the entry into force of the Customs Union Framework Agreement, and in any case, of the essential elements necessary to enable the functioning of the Association Agreement on a region-to-region basis before the conclusion of the negotiations.
4. Both sides acknowledged the progress achieved in the Association Agreement negotiations, after three rounds of talks and reconfirmed our joint objectives of making substantial progress in the negotiations in order to allow their conclusion during 2009. They reaffirmed the importance of the Agreement, which will provide a broad context for strengthening and diversifying relations between the two regions on the basis of three fundamental and complementary pillars in the political, cooperation and trade areas respectively, with the last of these including the establishment of a free-trade area between the two regions.
5. The Heads of State and Government stressed the importance of EU cooperation in supporting Central America's efforts towards regional integration; notably through the strengthening of the institutional framework, and promoting the social cohesion in and the sustainable development of Central America. The European Troika reaffirmed the European Union's will to continue cooperation with Central America to support the region in its endeavours to give momentum to its integration and development objectives, particularly in areas relating to regional and national institutions in charge of customs, sanitary and phytosanitary, conformity assessment issues, among others. The European Troika also agreed on the importance of cooperation and technical assistance directed towards the private sector, especially small and medium enterprises, that wish to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Association Agreement. The European Troika recalled that support to the deepening of regional integration is a priority of EU funding in the 2007-2013 programming period.

6. The European Troika welcomed the strengthening of trade relations between Panama and Central America and the initiatives towards the incorporation of this country in the Central American Economic Integration process. In addition, it invited them to continue and conclude the process of incorporation of Panama into the Central American Economic Integration System in order to ensure Panama's full participation in the ongoing Association Agreement negotiations between Central America and the EU.
7. The Heads of State of Central America expressed to the Troika their interest in establishing a Common Financial Economic Fund aimed at reducing poverty, promoting development and the integral welfare of Central America and stimulating socioeconomic growth, and which would enable the asymmetries between the two regions and intra-regional to be reduced.
8. The European Troika acknowledged the political commitment to address the challenges of democratic security, and congratulated the representatives of Central America on the significant progress made in this field mainly as a result of the adoption of the Security Strategy for Central America, the approval of the Convention on the Protection of Witnesses in the area of Narcotics Trafficking and Organised Crime, the launching of the Central American Project for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons in conjunction with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as other initiatives to tackle the problems of violence and those related to young people at risk or in conflict with the law, and the creation of the Regional Unit for Democratic Security within the SICA General Secretariat.
9. The European Union Troika for its part confirmed the EU interest in supporting the implementation of specific areas covered by the Strategy.

10. The Heads of State of Central America expressed to the European Troika their concern at the impact of high oil prices on the economies of the countries in the region, which had been causing serious economic effects and threatened to widen the social divide in Central America. They reported that in the face of this challenge, the Heads of State and Government of the SICA countries had approved the "Centroamérica – 2020" Sustainable Energy Strategy, which sets targets for access to energy by the most vulnerable population sectors, as well as for promoting rational use and energy efficiency and the environmentally, economically and socially sustainable use of renewable energy sources and biofuels to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. The aforementioned activities and actions are set out in the Matrix of Actions for Regional Energy Integration and Development, which may constitute a basis for cooperation in this sector.
11. The Central American side presented a contents and scope analysis of the Central American Climate Change Convention, as well as the objectives of the Presidential Summit on the subject of climate change to be held on 28 May 2008 in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, under the auspices of SICA. The European side welcomed these initiatives and agreed to support the management of resources for adaptation and mitigation processes within the framework of SICA's Climate Change Strategy. Both sides agreed to cooperate closely in order to achieve a global and comprehensive post 2012 climate agreement based on the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, guided by the scientific findings of the IPCC and reflecting the elements set out in the Bali Action plan by the end of 2009.
12. The Heads of State and Government stated their strong interest in further enhancing and deepening bi-regional cooperation and exchanges in the areas of science, research and technology, building up on the recent progress achieved in these fields during this year. In particular the parties reiterated their commitment to establish a structured bi- regional dialogue in order to assess current capabilities and needs of the Central American region and identify the most promising areas and common priorities for future bi-regional scientific cooperation.

13. The EU drew the attention of Central America on the importance of advancing the development of digital television. The European Troika underlined the advantages of the DVB standard which has already been chosen by a very large number of countries worldwide.
 14. Both sides stressed the need to develop strategies and measures to reduce the vulnerability of the Central American region to natural disasters and to strengthen capacities of local communities and institutions to prevent, prepare for, mitigate and respond to natural disasters through programmes of capacity building and the increase of human resources by looking for a better aid coordination at national and regional levels in close collaboration with CEPREDENAC and other regional institutions.
 15. Both Parties exchanged points of view on the alarming increase of international food prices and the consequences in different countries. In this regard, Central America requested the European Union their support to the current initiatives to face effectively the situation of food security.
 16. The Heads of State and Government agreed to hold the next Summit within the framework of the VI Summit between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean in Spain 2010.
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