



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**I SUMMIT EUROPEAN UNION TROIKA -  
CENTRAL AMERICA  
Guadalajara, Mexico, 29 May 2004**

**Joint Communiqué**

1. The Heads of State and Government of Central America (CA) and the European Union (EU), represented by the Troika, met in Guadalajara, Mexico on 29 May 2004, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the San José Dialogue between the regions, inaugurated in Costa Rica in 1984, and renewed in Florence in 1996 and in Madrid in 2002. The regions share the view that the process has been of great value, having played a central role in the establishment of peace and democracy in Central America, in the economic and social development, as well as in the region's integration process.

2. Leaders celebrated the strengthening of the historical ties and the development of closer relations between the regions, resulting from the Dialogue, and undertook to deepen and enrich the process, to ensure additional benefits for their respective societies through the achievement of concrete objectives.

**P R E S S**

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3. Central American leaders welcomed the historical enlargement of the EU, and the extension of the Political Dialogue to Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Cyprus, Malta, and Slovenia. The EU noted with satisfaction the announcement by the Central American countries of their intention to conclude agreements ending the visa requirement for the citizens of these new Member States.
4. Leaders emphatically condemned the attacks of 11 March 2004 in Madrid, and expressed their deepest solidarity with the people and Government of the Kingdom of Spain.
5. They welcomed the signature of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and CA, signed 15 December 2003, in Rome, and reiterated the importance of its prompt implementation.
6. Leaders also reaffirmed that an Association Agreement between their regions, which includes a free trade area, was a common strategic objective and that the prospect of such an Agreement should give a new impetus for strengthening the regional economic integration process. They agreed to open now a process leading to an agreement, which would start at this stage with a joint assessment phase of the Central American economic integration process. This would lead, in due course, to negotiations. Leaders also agreed that any future FTA shall be built on the outcome of the Doha Development Agenda and the realization of a sufficient level of regional economic integration.
7. In order to implement the above-mentioned process, leaders decided that the Joint Committee, established by the Cooperation Agreement in force between Central America and the European Union should meet in the second semester of 2004 to clearly define the steps to follow, what will be the timetable of activities and which goals and objectives have to be accomplished in the process leading to opening substantive negotiations for a mutually beneficial agreement.
8. Leaders recognized the importance of the Special Regime GSP – Drugs as an instrument that had contributed effectively to the fight against the world drug problem, as well as to the increase and diversification of Central American exports to the European market.

The EU is exploring WTO-compatible ways to ensure access under the Generalised System of Preferences scheme to the European market for the Central American countries affected by the production and traffic of drugs.

9. Both regions expressed their satisfaction with the progress achieved in the strengthening of the Central American integration process. They expressed their support for the work of the Ad-Hoc Commission mandated by the Central American Presidents to propose plans for an integral reframing of the regional institutions. They recognised advances in the implementation of the Central American Action Plan for Economic Integration, particularly with regard to the establishment of a Customs Union in CA, and its work programme. They also supported the Central American countries' progress and ambition to advance in eliminating tariff and non-tariff barriers for the facilitation of intraregional commerce.

10. Taking into consideration the advances achieved by the Central American integration process, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to intensify its cooperation with CA, in order to continue strengthening the integration process, according to the priorities established in the Regional Strategy 2002-2006 document.

11. Leaders expressed their support for joint actions undertaken by the Central American countries in matters of regional security, in order to address all threats to the citizenry and their property. In this field, they supported the decisive work of the Central American Security Commission, carried out in the framework of the Treaty for Democratic Security, which demonstrates the commitment of the region to the fight against terrorism, drugs and related crimes, organized crime, the illicit traffic and circulation of weapons, and delinquency.

12. They agreed to strengthen their cooperation to eradicate these threats and to continue to contribute to the establishment of a culture of peace in the region; in particular, to take measures to cooperate in the judicial and police fields, as well as, inter-alia, in institutional support and the harmonization of legislation, all of which are essential elements of an integral strategy for regional security.

13. Leaders agreed to continue to cooperate to eradicate corruption, taking measures to foster ethics and transparency in public and private actions. In order to confront this phenomenon which is a threat to the stability of States and the economic capacity of States and Governments to address urgent social problems, they agreed to increase support for the judiciary, police, and all other institutions responsible for the prevention, control, and suppression of such acts. They agreed to give special attention to actions which facilitate the repatriation of illicitly-obtained assets, deepening their collaboration, to ensure that the responsible parties are brought to justice.

14. Both regions underlined the importance of the participation of civil society in the strengthening of relations between Central America and the European Union. They applauded the holding of the EU-Central America Civil Society Forum on Regional Integration on 29 January 2004 in Brussels and welcomed the consultations that are now taking place with civil society regarding the process of integral reframing of regional institutions.

15. The Leaders of both regions agreed on a further meeting at Summit level in Vienna in 2006. They also recalled that the next meeting of the San José Dialogue, at Ministerial level, would take place in 2005 and looked forward to the success of that event.

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