

## **JOINT STATEMENT. MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF CYPRUS, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, HUNGARY, POLAND AND SLOVENIA (CYPRUS, 23 NOVEMBER 2001)**

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the six Candidate countries negotiating accession to the European Union on the basis of the conclusions of the Luxembourg European Council in December 1997 Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia met, for the fifth time, in Limassol, Cyprus, on 23 November 2001.

The Ministers expressed their deep regret for the tragic events of 11th September 2001 in the United States and unequivocally condemned terrorism. They reaffirmed their firm commitment to join forces with all Governments and international organizations in the effort to eliminate terrorism and their full alignment with the position of the European Union in this regard.

The Ministers reviewed and assessed the current state of accession negotiations and considered how to take forward its successful conclusion without further delays. This can be achieved only by fully respecting the road map and the basic principles of the accession process such as the principle of differentiation and individual treatment. They called upon the Presidency and the Member States to adopt the relevant Common Positions in due time and to avoid any linkages between the negotiations and the EU internal debates. The Ministers reiterated their strong belief that the success of the negotiations depends largely on the ability of both Member States and the candidate countries to show a significant degree of flexibility.

The Ministers recalled with satisfaction the conclusions of the Göteborg European Council regarding the enlargement process. They expressed the belief that the new international environment calling for a stronger and more effective European Union, will contribute towards reconfirmation of the EU preparedness to conclude the negotiations in the year 2002. The Ministers expect that the European Council in Laeken will give the necessary guidance for the successful completion of the accession negotiations in line with the recommendations of the European Commission's 2001 Strategy Paper. They also welcomed the proposal of the Commission and the intention of the Spanish Government to start the drafting of the Accession Treaty and its Annexes. Together with the successful conclusion of the negotiations this would allow the signing of the Treaty by the end of 2002 concluding the historic vision "from Copenhagen to Copenhagen". Accession could then take place on 1 January 2004.

The Ministers also welcomed the Commission's intention to ensure that the Council should discuss financial issues early in 2002 and expect that the final Common Positions should properly reflect the EU's political commitment and the principle of equal treatment between the current and future Member States.

The Ministers reaffirmed their countries' determination to continue and to conclude their internal preparation for accession within the timeframe they set for themselves.

The Ministers expressed the desire of their countries to be actively engaged in the discussions on the Future of Europe. They expect to be invited to participate in the work of the Convention on an equal footing with the current Member States. Proceeding from the

decisions of the Nice and Göteborg European Councils they expect their countries to participate as full Members in the next Intergovernmental Conference.

The Ministers agreed to meet next in Poland in May 2002.

[Quelle: <http://www.kum.hu/kulugy>]