

## **JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY (FEBRUARY 20, 2002)**

Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany met on February 20, 2002 to discuss primarily the further development of bilateral relations and current issues of the European politics.

Both Ministers of Foreign Affairs agreed on the importance of further developing Czech-German relations in all areas in the coming years. They stressed the positive role of the Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations signed ten years ago and of the Czech-German Declaration from 1997, and called them, together with a wide political and social consensus in both countries concerning this issue decisive steps in this positive development. They should remain in all its aspects the basis of a good neighbourly relationship and close partnership in the future.

Both Ministers of Foreign Affairs agreed that the Czech-German Fund of the Future and the Czech-German Discussion Forum have been playing an extraordinary positive role in the development of bilateral relations since 1998. They agreed that the mandate of the members of the Fund of the Future Board of directors, that will expire in March shall be prolonged for two subsequent years.

After a detailed conversation on the current issues of the enlargement of the European Union, both Foreign Ministers underlined, that the upcoming entry of the democratic countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the European Union represents not only a historic opportunity for peace and stability in the undivided Europe, but also another milestone in the Czech-German relations. The common membership in the European Union will influence the Czech-German relations in a positive way. At the same time, there is a relation between the political and economic opportunities. Therefore, the Czech Republic and Germany want to continue deepening their close and successful cooperation in the upcoming final part of accession negotiations with the EU. Both Ministers talked also about the issues of the future development of the EU with respect to the opening of the EU Convention.

Both Ministers exchanged opinions on the current explosive situation in the Middle East. They underlined that an uncompromising requirement for the termination of violence and terror and the need to achieve a real armistice on the basis of the commitments, that had been formerly adopted, is a basic precondition for the renewal of peace negotiations between the Israeli government and the representatives of the Palestinian National Administration. They agreed that the negotiations should guarantee the legal requirements for the security of Israel and the implementation of national aspirations of Palestinians on the basis of relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council, including the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state.

[Quelle:<http://www.czechembassy.org>]