



Council of the
European Union

011037/EU XXVI. GP
Eingelangt am 12/02/18

Brussels, 12 February 2018
(OR. en)

7350/02
DCL 1

PVD 19
ASIE 6
PESC 104

DECLASSIFICATION

of document: ST7350/02 RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED

dated: 20 March 2002

new status: Public

Subject: Report of the Asia Oceania Working Group of 7 March 2002

Delegations will find attached the declassified version of the above document.

The text of this document is identical to the previous version.

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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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TRANSMISSION OF TEXT

from : Secretariat

Subject : Report of the Asia Oceania Working Group of 7 March 2002

Please find annexed the report of the Asia Oceania Working Group of 7 March 2002.

I. OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

ASEM

1. Denmark will circulate a revised version of the background paper on the possible main contents of ASEM 4 (Doc. 31/02) with a view to comments and then transmission to the Asian countries.

2. The Presidency, Denmark, Commission and Secretariat will elaborate a draft annotated agenda of the SOM at Lanzarote for comments with a view to circulation to the Asian countries.

KOREA

3. The Presidency indicated that it will shortly, in cooperation with the Commission, circulate a new paper on overall EU-DPRK relations with a view to a Regional Directors' Troika mission envisaged to visit Pyongyang in mid April.

BURMA/MYANMAR

4. The Presidency will issue revised terms of reference for the Regional Directors Troika mission to Burma/Myanmar, taking account of comments made at the Group

5. The PSC is invited to take note of the Group's view that Common Position 96/635/CFSP on Burma/Myanmar, which expires on 29 April, should be extended, without substantive amendment, for a further six months. The Group also recommends that the Council, in adopting a new Common Position, consider issuing conclusions commenting on developments in Burma/Myanmar, in the light of the findings from the forthcoming mission by Troika Regional Directors

7. The Presidency will consider with HOMs in Rangoon/Yangon if they would be able to update the list of persons subject to the measures contained in the Common Position in time for the adoption of the new Common Position next month.

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EU-ASEAN

8. The UK will provide details by coreu of the conclusions of the EU-ASEAN Maritime Security conference.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

9. The Group did not endorse the sending of an EU Election Observation Mission to PNG given the current security situation

INDONESIA

10. The Presidency will circulate a revised declaration by it on behalf of the EU concerning the Moluccas, with a view to its early publication.

VIETNAM/CAMBODIA: MONTAGNARDS

11. HOMs in Phnom Penh and Hanoi are invited to make the demarches set out in CFSP/PRES/MAD/0529/02.

CAMBODIA

12. The Presidency will consider how the EU could be more active in pursuing the creation of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal.

CHINA

13. The Presidency will proceed with the exchange of letters with the Chinese MFA on the basis of the text in CFSP/PRES/MDAD/524/02, which was agreed by the Group.

BANGLADESH

14. The Presidency will circulate by Coreu the draft elements for an EU message on the occasion of the forthcoming Development Forum in Paris, which have been tentatively agreed by local HoMs.

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SRI LANKA

15. HoMs in Colombo are invited to to update their analysis of the political situation in the country after the ceasefire agreement with the LTTE, and to make recommendations for appropriate steps the EU could undertake to support the peace process.

II. REPORT

ASEM

1. The Danish delegation presented its draft background paper on the possible main contents of ASEM 4 (document 31/02). Delegations considered that this document was an extremely helpful contribution. As regards the possible deliverables in section 3 of the paper, there was wide agreement on the approach proposed for concise factual Chairman's Statements reflecting actual discussions and results, main elements pre-agreed through informal consultations and formally negotiated political declaration on the new international security situation:

- concerning the new Asian proposal on a consultative mechanism, some delegations had reservations about creating such mechanisms considering that the EU should make better use of the SOM for such consultations and also make use of occasions offered by international fora on a case-by-case basis. Regarding the existing consultations, following on the FMM in Beijing, Denmark indicated that a meeting of Permanent Representatives of ASEM countries at the United Nations had taken place in early September last.
- There was wide agreement on the proposal for a dialogue, in a retreat form, regarding culture and civilizations. However, some delegations pointed out the need to recognize that there was as great a difference between some Asian cultures and Muslim culture as between European and Muslim cultures. The Commission considered that this discussion in the retreat should not take place on the basis of different European and Asian papers.
- Regarding enlargement, it was considered that the Leaders should not discuss this issue at ASEM 4, it should be dealt with by the FMM in Madrid and at the Lanzarote SOM (Coordinators at Madrid having agreed that the substantial issues of enlargement should be addressed at ASEM 5 in 2004). However, it was noted that there was a possibility (still to be

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confirmed) that Cambodia wished to decouple its application to join ASEM from the cases of Myanmar and Laos, if confirmed, this would obviously create a new situation.

- Some delegations expressed reservations about the Asians wish for a negotiated declaration on regional priorities in view of the global economic situation. The Commission noted that work on economic issues was proceeding in the context of the TFAP and IPAP. The SOMTI meeting in July in Indonesia would be a very important element in preparing the ASEM Economic Ministers' Meeting shortly to be held before ASEM 4.
 - There was wide support that international security issues should be addressed by ASEM 4. In this regard, some delegations underlined the importance of addressing questions of legal security in the discussion on international terrorism. The EU could raise human rights issues under this heading.
 - Regarding cultural exchanges, some delegations expressed scepticism about the Asian suggestion for a Plan of Action. The Commission was opposed to any suggestion to set up parallel activities to those of ASEF.
2. The Presidency, Denmark, Commission and the Secretariat will elaborate a revised background paper in the light of the discussion.
 3. The Group also discussed other aspects of the SOM in Lanzarote on 2/3 April. The Presidency invited delegations to inform it of any new ASEM initiatives for ASEM 4 which they intend to present at the SOM in Lanzarote.
 4. The Presidency indicated that the Director of ASEF would be invited to brief the SOM. The Commission recalled that the problem of the replenishment of ASEF resources should be discussed this year, with a view to examining ASEF's wish to become within 10 years an independent foundation based on an endowment fund.
 5. Concerning the AETTC, the Presidency recalled that the EU would need to come to a common view soon on the question of the AETTC's future, in view of its poor record to date.
 6. The Commission indicated that it would shortly distribute a new version of the Matrix

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(reorganized according to the cluster format) and invited Member States to inform it of any required additions or corrections.

7. The Presidency drew attention to the information note (Doc. 6787/02) submitted by the Presidency to the GAC on 11 March on the state of preparation of the Migration Ministers' Meeting in Lanzarote on 4/5 April including the draft Conclusions.

KOREAN PENINSULA

8. The Presidency briefed on the report it had circulated on its visit to South Korea on 21/22 February with Mr Westerlund, Commission (doc. 39/02). The Presidency considered that President Bush's recent visit to Korea had saved face for South Korea but had dealt a severe blow to President Kim Dae Jung and the "Sunshine Policy". The DPRK's reaction to President Bush's remarks such as the "evil axis" speech had been both dramatic and negative. The US position on the DPRK was now clearer in the sense that the previous Clinton policy was not acceptable but Mr Bush had not put forward a clear new policy. Clearly, Bush would be much tougher than Clinton. DPRK should now accept that it had missed the boat in not making an arrangement with Clinton, and no new boat would appear. Considerable fear existed in the Korean Peninsula following on the "evil axis" speech, consequently Bush had been obliged to declare publicly that the US did not intend to attack the DPRK. 2003 would be a difficult year for Korea and Kim Dae Jung would likely be replaced by a more conservative administrative, more sympathetic to a hardline US approach, also the problems of the continuation of the moratorium, and the likely non delivery of the two lightwater reactors in the KEDO framework would arise.

9. The Commission shared the Presidency's views but noted also that some elements of South Korean public opinion had been put off by President Bush's position which they considered to be too negative.

10. The Group discussed the question of a possible EU démarche on DPRK for this year's CHR in Geneva, following a request by COHOM. Some delegations argued for the EU presenting such a resolution, in view of the very grave situation of human rights, pointing out that it could also be seen as part of an overall EU approach to the DPRK including political, economic and other aspects.

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11. Other delegations, together with the Presidency and the Commission, agreed on the gravity of the human rights situation but were not in favour of the EU proposing a draft resolution this year. They noted that South Korea strongly supported this view. They considered that the issue should be looked at in a larger picture of overall EU-DPRK relations and the need not to undermine the EU's role as an important, but not major actor in the relations with DPRK. An opportunity should be given this year to DPRK to engage in a dialogue on human rights, if this did not occur in 2002, the question of a resolution could be considered in 2003. One had to be realistic with a country such as DPRK and recognize that any improvements would only happen in a longer-term framework. Some delegations considered that the EU should press the DPRK to give replies on issues already raised such as to enhance its dialogue with the UN and human rights agencies, to ratify certain human rights conventions to comply with obligations called for under conventions it had already ratified, to agree to family reunions, etc. The Presidency agreed that DPRK should be pressed to give a reply to the EU questionnaire submitted to it at the last Troika last year.

12. The Presidency noted that there was no agreement in the Group on the EU putting forward a resolution on DPRK at the CHR in Geneva this year. The Presidency will instead propose language expressing the EU's views on the DPRK's human rights situation in the EU's Statement at the CHR which will be elaborated in Geneva.

JAPAN

- EU-Japan Action Plan

13. The Presidency drew attention to a report on a visit it had made with Mr Westerlund to Japan on 19/20 February to discuss the follow-up to the EU-Japan Action Plan (doc. 39/02). The Japanese side had not advanced far in their internal work on the Plan. It had been agreed that Mr Shiojiri, now responsible for the Plan, would visit Europe in early April. There will also be a meeting between Japan and the EU on the 9 April to discuss the Round Table on Civil Society. The Member States would be invited to this meeting. In reply to the question, the Commission indicated that the economic and trade objectives in the second pillar of the Plan would be followed up by the DG Trade of the Commission in contacts with the appropriate Japanese Ministries.

EU-ASEAN

14. The Group generally welcomed the proposed elements for the agenda of the 14th EU-ASEAN Ministerial meeting. Sweden offered to provide some additional ideas on how human rights and/or the rule of law could be

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included in the agenda. The Commission would provide information on its own, thinking on EU-ASEAN relations in the light of its forthcoming "brainstorming" meeting with ASEAN Ambassadors and the EC's Heads of Delegation in the region

INDONESIA

15. The Presidency briefed on the forthcoming visit by Jakarta HOMs to Irian Jaya-West Papua. It agreed that HOMs would abide, in, their public and private contacts, to the positions expressed by the EU, including in regard to Indonesia's territorial integrity and to the death of Theys Eluay, chairman of the Papuan Presidium Council.

AFGHANISTAN

16. The Group noted Coreu SEC 0455/02 and the Presidency's indications concerning the handling of the various aspects on the agenda of the Special COASI meeting on Afghanistan on 8 March.

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