

**17 October 2012**

The EEAS is pleased to circulate the Joint Communiqué in respect of the EU-Cape Verde Political dialogue meeting at Ministerial level which took place in Brussels on 17 October 2012.

## **Introduction**

1. Within the framework of the Special Partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Cape Verde (CV), the fifth political dialogue meeting at ministerial level between, was held in Brussels on 17 October 2012, under the co-chairing of Her Excellency, Mme Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus, on behalf of Her Excellency, Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and of His Excellency, Mr Jorge da Silva Borges, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Cape Verde.

The complete list of delegates can be found in Annex 1 to the communiqué.

2. The parties reaffirmed the principle of political dialogue as a fundamental dimension of their Special Partnership (SP), while underscoring their shared values and common interests, in particular as regards the advancement of peace and security, democracy, good governance, the respect of the rule of law, human rights, and development, both locally and globally.

## **I. Economic situation**

3. The Ministers reviewed the economic situation in Europe as well as in Cape Verde. They underlined that the global economic crisis has had an impact not only on the least developed countries but also on middle-income countries such as CV. Significant efforts have been made at EU level to give a comprehensive response to the sovereign debt crisis in the euro zone. These crises clearly point to the need to intensify efforts both in the EU and in Cape Verde to avoid unsustainable public debt, to encourage responsible practices in the financial sector and to improve overall competitiveness. The parties recognized the importance of foreign direct investment in the development of the Cape Verdean economy and the role of investment protection in this context.

- 4 With a view to avoiding a setback in the economic and social progress achieved in many of these countries in recent decades, it is necessary to maintain coordinated actions at international level to continue reducing poverty and reinforcing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- 5 In the case of Cape Verde, special attention should be given to ensure the irreversibility of its economic transition and graduation from LDC to MIC status by assisting the country with instruments adapted to its new development situation. Furthermore, the parties agreed on the need to address the issue in the planning of their future cooperation

### **Bilateral relations EU-CV**

- 6 Launched at the end of 2007, the SP illustrates the importance accorded by the EU and CV to their relations. It is part of the EU's fundamental support to CV's efforts to consolidate social and economic progress. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the implementation of the SP and agreed to continue their dialogue and to build on their joint activities.
- 7 The EU welcomed the presentation by CV's government of the 2012 activities and of the *Plano de Trabalho 2013* (2013 Action Plan). The Plan is a working document, to be adjusted by the parties whenever needed.
- 8 On the Special Partnership, the EU reiterated its commitment to support in particular the implementation of the security/stability and the technical convergence pillar
- 9 The Ministers welcomed the successful conclusions of negotiations between the European Commission and CV on EU-CV joint Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements which are key pieces of the ongoing Mobility Partnership between EU and CV. The Visa Facilitation agreement will be signed in Praia on 26 October 2012, on the occasion of President Barroso's visit to Cape Verde.
- 10 The parties stressed the need for a regional approach to migration and reiterated their engagement to continue the implementation of the Rabat Process on Migration and Development. The parties underlined the importance of the Common Visa Application Centre

currently operating in Praia and which received significant EU, Portuguese, Belgian and Luxembourg funding.

- 11 At the bilateral level, the parties reviewed the progress made by CV and noted with satisfaction the ongoing consolidation of democracy and efforts for the modernisation of the State, especially in terms of administration, financial management, justice and security, the management of migratory flows and poverty reduction.
- 12 The EU recalled the positive Mid Term Review of the implementation of the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF indicative programme which led to an increase of 10.2 million Euro in EU funding. Such a significant increase in EU Aid represents a particularly strong effort at a time of crisis, clearly illustrating the EU determination to support Cape Verde, and its firm commitment to the Special Partnership.
- 13 CV informed that the next Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy will be presented on 5.11.2012 to its external partners as a solid basis for the new EU budget support programme and for the programming of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF.
- 14 Regarding fisheries, the two parties discussed the implementation of the existing fisheries partnership agreement. They repeated their commitment to fully respect the 2011 protocol's provisions and to work together to ensure the sustainability of fisheries in Cape Verde. Cape Verde and the EU agreed that any additional management measures should be based on the best available scientific advice.
- 15 CV recalled that fisheries is part of the more global concept of sea cluster, an important component, among others, of the Development Transformational Agenda of Cape Verde, positioning the latter as a Middle Atlantic and West African hub, to take advantage of its strategic geographic position, rule of law and political stability, good governance and security.

In this regard, CV would welcome support for cooperation between Cape Verde and the three outermost regions of Madeira, the Azores and the Canary Islands (MAC), in the fields of maritime transportation, the environment and related areas.

### **III. Regional Issues**

## **West Africa Region**

- 16 The parties assessed the current situation in West Africa, devoting special attention to relations with ECOWAS as well as the recent developments in Guinea Bissau and in the Sahel area. They once more expressed apprehension for the political and security instability in the region, calling on all those concerned to observe democratic principles and respect the rule of law. They also condemned the use of force or violence as a means of achieving or remaining in power. They reaffirmed their commitment to support the region's leadership in addressing its own challenges and once again stressed the capital role to be played in that respect by ECOWAS. In that context, the parties highlighted the need for increasing ECOWAS capacities and further developing its structures, and the paramount importance of Member States' commitment to, and participation in, ECOWAS.
- 17 On trade, the parties recognized the importance of bringing the West Africa regional Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations to a successful conclusion this year.
- 18 The Ministers condemned the coup d'état which took place in **Guinea Bissau** in April 2012 and stressed the need to work within the framework of the UNSC Resolution 2048/2012 in view to agreeing on an inclusive roadmap, with agreed benchmarks and calendar for the return to constitutional order, the implementation of security sector reform, the fight against impunity, combating drug trafficking and removing the military's grip on power.
- 19 Concerning the situation in the Sahel, the Ministers expressed deep concern at the deteriorating political, security, humanitarian and human rights situation in the Sahel region and in northern and southern Mali. In line with relevant AU and UN decisions, they urged the Government of National Unity in Mali to adopt and implement a credible Roadmap including (i) an agenda leading to free and fair elections (ii) the restructuring of the army under civilian control (iii) a peace prospect for northern Mali including dialogue with all stakeholders except from extremists and terrorists. They agreed that given the gravity of the situation, international coordination is key to elaborate solutions for the crises in Mali and in the region across the board.
- 20 **Trans-border organised crime** in the region, including **drug trafficking**, remains a serious source of concern for the EU and CV. Both phenomena have implications for security, good governance and the rule of law for the countries in the region. Their links to armed groups,

including terrorist movements (Sahel area), and their contribution to State failure, are further reasons for concern. The parties stressed that rapid renewal and implementation by ECOWAS of its Regional Response Action Plan against Drug Trafficking and Related Organised Crime in West Africa (2008-2011) was now more urgent and important than ever. In this respect, CV welcomed the continued engagement of the EU to support the implementation of the Plan.. The parties agreed that assistance to law enforcement agencies in the region was an essential element to be considered in the response to these problems.

### **Next Meeting**

21 The parties agreed that the next meeting will take place in CV, in the second half of 2013.