Environment and sustainable development: Johannesburg World Summit 2002, 10 years after Rio

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In view of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the Council held a wide-ranging debate focusing on the outcome of the fourth meeting of the Preparatory Committee in Bali (27 May - 7 June 2002) and the strategy on the way forward up to Johannesburg. The Council was unanimous for the EU to continue to be proactive, to show leadership and to take all necessary initiatives in view of bridging the gaps and making the Summit a success, while defending the EU's position and convictions. The Council subsequently adopted the following conclusions setting out the EU's position to be forwarded to the Seville European Council, which should convey a strong political message to the Johannesburg Summit. The Council: 1) reiterates that all development should be sustainable and, to this end, the WSSD must be seen as part of a process in the search for a Global Deal encompassing also the Doha Development Agenda, the Monterrey Consensus and the World Food Summit Five Years Later. 2) expresses the EU to express its determination to exercise leadership and to continue playing a major role in global efforts to eradicate poverty and to achieve sustainable development at all levels, integrating its economic, social and environmental dimensions in a balanced and mutually supportive way. By the same token, it stresses the need for improved coherence between internal and external policies of the EU, as well as between policy areas, and to encourage reform of subsidies that have considerable negative effects on the environment and are incompatible with sustainable development. 3) stresses the EU is willing to putting forward constructive proposals so that WSSD becomes a success. The EU is determined to ensure that WSSD outcomes (Political Declaration, Plan of Implementation, and Voluntary Partnerships) are mutually supportive and focused in terms of reinforced commitments by all countries, as well as international institutions, civil society and business. 4) underlines that globalisation should be the treated in a specific chapter in Johannesburg and be addressed in a manner that helps make it work for sustainable development and ensures that it benefits and creates new opportunities for all, especially the poorest. 5) stresses that the Political Declaration to be adopted in the Johannesburg Summit should include a renewed commitment to sustainable development. The EU position should stress the need to bridge the gap between rhetoric and action in line with the Plan of Implementation. WSSD is an exceptional occasion for reaching a global partnership to work towards general prosperity, peace and security, based on good governance, including democracy, respect for human rights, rule of law, fighting corruption and terrorism, gender equality, sound environmental, social and economic policies, respect for and promotion of cultural diversity and dialogue between civilisations, including with indigenous peoples, being all of them necessary foundations of sustainable development. 6) The EU recalls that the development of partnerships must be driven by the priorities identified by developing countries and countries with economies in transition in support of their future development. They should build on existing institutions andstructures and in particular identify the benefits to be achieved through regional co-operation such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). 7) stresses the importance of monitoring and follow up of the WSSD commitments, including those made in the framework of voluntary partnership initiatives, linked to the follow up of Doha and Monterrey.