

EU-CHILE
- The Association Council -

Athens, 27 March 2003

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FIRST MEETING OF THE EU-CHILE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

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1. The first meeting of the Association Council established by the EU-Chile Association Agreement was held in Athens on 27 March 2003.
2. The meeting was chaired by the Greek Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Anastasios Giannitis, as President of the EU Council. The Chilean delegation was lead by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Soledad Alvear. The Commission was represented by the Commissioner for Trade, Mr. Pascal Lamy.
3. Ministers welcomed the adoption of the EU-Chile Association Agreement, which allowed the bulk of the trade chapter, the institutional framework and the trade-related co-operation provisions to enter provisionally into force from 1 February 2003. They reiterated their conviction that this Agreement is an important political step, which will give a great impetus to the EU-Chile relations.
4. Ministers approved the rules of procedures of the Association Council, of the Association Committees and of the Special Committees established by the EU-Chile Association Agreement, thus setting up the institutional framework of the Association Agreement. This significant step will allow the joint bodies to start meeting and operating, and to adopt – where relevant - appropriate decisions and recommendations on the implementation of the Association Agreement.

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5. Ministers took note with satisfaction of the assent given by the European Parliament on the proposal of an EU-Chile Association Agreement. They invited National Parliaments to accelerate their ratification procedure.
6. Ministers agreed that pending the entry into force of the Association Agreement, they would pursue their political dialogue as foreseen in the Joint Declaration on political dialogue between the European Union and Chile annexed to the 1996 Framework Co-operation Agreement.

Ministers recalled the importance of this dialogue, as a means to promote, disseminate and defend democratic values. Without ruling out *a priori* any topic for discussion, they agreed that their political dialogue should primarily be structured round the following topics:

- (a) Strengthening of democracies;
- (b) Promotion and protection of Human Rights;
- (c) Sustainable development;
- (d) Promotion of peace and stability, confidence and security building measures and prevention of conflicts;
- (e) Fight against terrorism, organised transnational crime, traffic of arms, and international control of illegal drugs;
- (f) Human security
- (g) Measures against illegal immigration and against the trafficking of human beings.

Ministers agreed that appropriate mechanisms should be devised so as to enable the EU and Chile to co-ordinate positions and undertake joint initiatives in the appropriate international fora, and to co-operate in the field of foreign and security policy and in the fight against terrorism.

Ministers highlighted more particularly the relevance of strengthening the EU-Chile consultation and co-ordination at the Security Council of the United Nations.

7. Ministers congratulated both Parties' administrations for the smooth and efficient implementation of measures and administrative arrangements necessary to allow the trade-related provisions to enter into force on 1 February 2003. Ministers entrusted the Association Committee with the review of the implementation process and with the identification and handling of any possible issues that may arise.

Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to the finalisation of the Doha Development Agenda as provided in it and to an outcome that will strengthen the multilateral trading system. In that sense, they agreed to work together for a successful fifth Ministerial Conference in Cancun.

8. Ministers agreed that consultations between the EU and Chile should be initiated as soon as possible so as to allow the Association Committee to make a recommendation on a possible adaptation of the main strategic priorities of bilateral co-operation for 2003-2006, taking into account the needs that may arise from the implementation of the Association Agreement. Ministers also invited the Association Committee to take stock of the on going or soon to be implemented co-operation projects and to agree on a timeframe of priority co-operation projects to be launched.

Recalling that the Agreement foresees that the participation of each Party as an associated partner in framework programmes, specific programmes and other activities of the other Party shall be promoted, Ministers agreed that the Association Committee shall further define the mutual areas of interest to which this political commitment shall apply.

Ministers noted with satisfaction the strong interest showed by the scientific community following the signature of the Agreement for scientific and technological co-operation between the European Community and Chile.

9. Ministers decided that the next Association Council will take place in 2004 and that the first Association Committee will take place in Brussels in November 2003.
