



The EU's relations with Libya

Overview

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The EU's Mediterranean & Middle East Policy

General Affairs & External Relations Council (GAERC)

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- **13 December 2004: Libya (item debated)**

The Council took note of an intervention by the Italian Minister concerning the follow-up to the expert mission to Libya on illegal immigration. This issue will be examined in the relevant bodies once the report from the expert mission is available.

- **11 October 2004: Libya - Council Conclusions (item debated)**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. The Council reiterated its support for Libya's announcement on 19 December 2003 that it would dismantle weapons of mass destruction programmes. Libya is among the first countries to dismantle voluntarily its weapons of mass destruction programmes under international supervision through a transparent and cooperative process.

2. The Council noted that a settlement was reached in Tripoli on 3 September 2004 on compensation for dependants of victims of the 1986 Berlin discotheque attack. The Council considered this settlement further proof of Libya's readiness to change its policies of the past and of its commitment to responsible government.

3. The Council regarded improvements in the human rights situation in Libya an essential element in the development of relations. Of immediate concern are serious impediments to the right of free speech and association, credible reports of torture of suspects and miscarriages of justice and inhuman conditions of detention. The Council reiterated its position against the death penalty.

4. The Council expressed its deep sympathy with those infected with HIV in the Benghazi hospital.

5. The Council expressed its grave concern over the plight of the Bulgarian and Palestinian medical workers arrested in 1999 as suspects in a criminal case and the death sentences handed down on 6 May 2004. The Council considered that Libya, upon re-examination of existing evidence, may wish to conclude that justice be served by their early release.

6. In reviewing the elements relevant to the development of relations with Libya, the Council recalled its conclusions of November 2002 that cooperation with Libya on migration is essential and urgent. It reiterated its concern about the level of illegal traffic across the Mediterranean from, or via, Libya. The loss of life at sea, maintenance of public order at the ports of entry and the burden of illegal immigration from, or via,

Libya now require effective action by Libya. In this context, the Council also underlined that Libya should respect its international obligations. The Council considered important to the development of relations with Libya that cooperation materialises in areas where remedy is beyond Libyan capabilities or capacities.

7. The Council agreed to embark upon a policy of engagement with Libya and decided upon the following steps:

(a) To repeal the restrictive measures adopted by the EU in application of UNSCR 748(1992) and 883(1993).

(b) To lift the arms embargo.

The Council recalled that arms transfers to Libya will be subject to the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports and decided that a special post-embargo arms transfers regime ('tool box'), which is presently being developed within the Council, will apply.

(c) That a technical mission to Libya be conducted as soon as possible to examine arrangements for combating illegal immigration in accordance with the terms of reference elaborated in response to the Council's mandate of 16 June 2003.

(d) That an act of solidarity with those infected with HIV at Benghazi hospital be implemented as soon as possible.

(e) To follow closely the human rights situation in Libya.

8. The Council is ready to examine a Commission mandate for negotiations on a fisheries agreement with Libya.

9. The Council regarded Libya's full integration into the Barcelona Process the overall objective of engagement. It reiterated that participation in the Barcelona Process, and the subsequent progression towards an Association Agreement, remains subject to Libya's readiness to accept in full and unconditionally the Barcelona Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of 27/28 November 1995 and the Barcelona acquis.

10. The Council invited Libya to respond positively to the EU's policy of engagement as outlined above. In this light, it insisted that Libya resolves remaining EU concerns, notably the case of the Bulgarian and Palestinian medical workers and all outstanding bilateral issues with EU member states, and work together towards stronger relations in the future, bilaterally and in multilateral frameworks."

- **13 September 2004: Libya**

The Italian delegation raised the question of the partial lifting of the arms embargo against Libya to allow for cooperation in the field of the fight against illegal immigration to be taken up rapidly in the Council bodies.

- **16 June 2003: Libya (item debated)**

The Council took note of a request by the Italian delegation that a follow-up mission be sent to Libya to examine arrangements for combating illegal immigration, in the light of a recent exploratory mission by the Commission. It agreed that the Council's preparatory bodies should prepare terms of reference for the mission.