



Tehran, 30 August 2003

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**Summary of the statement of
Javier SOLANA,
EU High Representative for CFSP
at a press conference in Tehran, 30 August 2003**

Below is a summary of the statement that Javier Solana made at a press conference in Tehran today, Saturday 30 August, after meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Kharrazi.

On this occasion the HR condemned the terrorist attack committed in Najaf, Iraq on Friday.

“Let me say how pleased I am to be here in Tehran today. A year has passed since my last visit to your country, but during this time I have had the opportunity of meeting your leaders on many occasions, either in Brussels or in other parts of the world. Now I am here, once again, at the invitation of Minister Kharrazi, with whom I have had very good and frank discussions, as friends do have.

It is an important moment for EU-Iran relations. The EU highly values these relations and we would like to be able to strengthen them further. During the year that has passed since my last visit, we have opened negotiations on a Trade and Cooperation Agreement. They have been accompanied by a deepening of our political dialogue, including a dialogue on human rights.

In that respect, as you know, we have identified four areas of concern, namely Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass destruction, Human Rights, the Middle East Peace Process and the fight against international terrorism. We follow developments in these four areas very closely. I have urged the Minister to renew efforts for more progress on all of them.

Minister Kharrazi and I discussed the nuclear program in some detail. This is an issue of increasing concern for us. The report presented recently by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Dr. El Baradei, raises a number of serious questions. It is important that Iran urgently clarifies those outstanding questions. Full cooperation and transparency with the IAEA are fundamental, now and in the future. Confidence is key. That is why we welcome the engagement made by the Iranian authorities to commence discussions on an additional protocol to tighten the inspection mechanisms. As I mentioned already a year ago, the signature and full implementation of such a protocol would be a crucial factor in creating that confidence. We expect to see rapid progress in the discussions with the IAEA. Only by taking such steps we will be able to avoid unwelcome effects on EU-Iran relations.

On the Middle East conflict, let me share with you my profound preoccupation at the current situation.

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Therefore efforts by everybody are more than ever needed, including those of Iran. We expect from Iran a constructive role, supporting the goal of the Quartet Road Map for a two-state solution. Support and funding of terrorist groups must cease. The killing of civilians can never be accepted.



The EU and Iran have started a dialogue on Human Rights. We have a new session planned in a couple of weeks. On human rights, too, we would like to see improvements of the situation.

With the Minister, we also discussed the situation in the region, in particular Afghanistan and Iraq. We are horrified at the attack yesterday in Najaf. I want to express our condemnation of such a terrible act. I am aware that you are all shocked by the number of innocent people, close to your hearts, killed yesterday. We share this horror. Perpetrators of such monstrous acts should be brought to justice. I want to express my sympathy to the relatives of Ayatollah Al-Hakim and all the victims. Europeans and Iranians share the wish for a stable and democratic Iraq.

When I meet this afternoon President Khatami, I will express once again my personal engagement in the positive development of our bilateral relations. Iran is an important player in the region and an important country for us. The EU wants a healthy and profound relation with you. I will be at the forefront of these efforts.”

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