



Annapolis, 27 November 2007  
S344/07

**Summary of remarks by**  
**Javier SOLANA,**  
**EU High Representative for CFSP,**  
**on the occasion of the Annapolis Conference**  
**Annapolis (USA), 27 November 2007**

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), participated in the Annapolis Conference on the Middle East during which he made the following remarks:

*"I am very pleased to be here today. I would like to thank the efforts of President Bush and the determination of Secretary Rice, and to pay tribute to the courage of President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert in achieving this moment of hope and opportunity.*

*Agreement of the parties to launch final status negotiations with the aim of completing these by the end of 2008 is a remarkable achievement.*

*This is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss. Now is the moment for all of us to step up and take our responsibilities. I have been very closely involved in previous attempts to achieve peace between Palestinians and Israel. We must learn from past disappointments. Time is not on our side.*

*Ultimately, it is up to the two parties to make this process work. But the sustained support and involvement of the international community will be essential in order to create the momentum to keep today's achievements on track and avoid them being blown off course by occasional crises.*

*Genuine efforts to reach the ultimate political objective of a settlement of the conflict cannot succeed without parallel steps to improve the situation on the ground. Progress towards peace also means urgent improvements in security, in movement and access and in the Palestinian economy. We need to see immediate steps from both sides towards full implementation of commitments under Phase I of the Roadmap.*

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS:**

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*The European Union looks forward to being closely involved in all aspects of the post-Annapolis period. The EU is also ready to accompany this new momentum in a determined fashion:*

- through our role in the Quartet;*
- through the deployment of EU missions on the ground;*
- through our position as the largest donor to the Palestinians;*
- and through the constructive involvement of many of our Member States.*

*The EU is prepared not only to continue its involvement, but to shape it and step it up in support of a new, substantive and credible process.*

*To this end, the EU has approved a plan designed to make the EU's role more creative, more positive and more ambitious as engagement between the parties deepens and starts to deliver results.*

*The EU Action Plan addresses both short-term and long-term issues. Our short-term aim is to help address security and law and order, allowing greater freedom of movement for people and goods, and leading to increased economic activity. This would be complemented by technical assistance to economic and fiscal governance and assistance to the private sector.*

*In the longer-term, our plan would address broader capacity building in order to support the transition from rehabilitation to post-conflict development. We are also looking at the potential EU contribution to the resolution of final status issues.*

*The forthcoming donors' conference in Paris is also a vital part of the next steps that will have to be taken if we want to keep up the momentum. It is crucial to the implementation of Prime Minister Fayyad's Reform and Development Plan, and also to the credibility and sustainability of the political process as a whole. The EU is committed to the success of the Paris Conference where we will be outlining our future support for the Palestinians.*

*We particularly welcome the decision of the Arab League countries to support this meeting and to attend at ministerial level. Through their decision to relaunch the Arab Peace Initiative and through their support for President Abbas, they have played a central role in bringing us all here today.*

*The Arab partners will also play a vital role in the achievement of peace between Israelis and Palestinians as a first step towards a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.*

*We look forward to staying in close touch with Arab partners in the post-Annapolis phase including through regular meetings of the Quartet with the Arab League follow-up committee."*