

Santiago, 28 March 2001

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**MINISTERIAL MEETING BETWEEN THE  
ANDEAN COMMUNITY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION  
Santiago de Chile, 28 March 2001**

**JOINT PRESS RELEASE**

1. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Andean Community and the European Union met in the city of Santiago de Chile on 28 March 2001, on the occasion of the Xth Institutionalised Ministerial Meeting between the European Union and the Rio Group.
2. At the meeting, held in the framework of the political dialogue mechanisms between the Andean Community and the European Union established in the 1996 Rome Declaration, an exchange of ideas and views was held on the political and economic situation in both regions, and on the state of and prospects for relations between them.
3. The Parties expressed their satisfaction at the recent visit by the Secretary-General of the Andean Community to the European Union institutions, and at the frank dialogue held on matters of common interest to the two regions.
4. Ministers restated their commitment to supporting and promoting participatory democracy and the full and transparent functioning of the democratic institutions.
5. Ministers reviewed the political events in the Andean region. They welcomed the resumption of negotiations between the Government of Colombia and the FARC and the prolongation of the demilitarised zone as well as the preliminary agreement reached with the ELN in order to secure an encounter zone. The Parties agreed on the need to achieve, through negotiation, a lasting peace as well as respect for the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law. Ministers emphasised the importance of the role of the international community and the countries of the support group for peace. Ministers welcomed the invitation of the Commission to host the third meeting of the peace support group in Brussels next 30 April.

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6. Ministers expressed their support for the consolidation of the democratic system in Ecuador and welcomed the efforts made in order to resolve the economic problems of the country in an atmosphere of democracy and transparency. They urged the international community to cooperate with Ecuador in order to tackle these issues.
7. Both Parties voiced their support for the Peruvian Government's efforts to restore democracy to re-establish institutional order and full respect for human rights in Peru, and to press ahead with an electoral process that genuinely reflects the will of the people. It is in this context that the European Union's significant contribution to the development of such an electoral process in Peru must be seen.
8. The Ministers stressed the prior importance of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as the forum for furthering gradual and mutually advantageous multilateral trade liberalisation and establishing basic rules and principles for the international trading system, resulting in a more equitable distribution of the benefits of globalisation.

They also highlighted the need to make important progress in the ongoing mandated negotiations which include agriculture and services, as well as on the implementation of the agreements reached under the Uruguay round.

In the prospect of the 4th Ministerial meeting of the WTO in Qatar, the Ministers agreed to work further towards the launching of a new comprehensive round based on a balanced agenda taking adequate account of the interests of all the members of the Multilateral Trading System. This round must be directed at strengthening access to markets without excluding any sector, to develop and strengthen the rules and disciplines of the WTO and to promoting a better integration of developing countries into the Multilateral Trading System.

The Ministers also stressed the need to make progress on the WTO's cooperation schemes designed to strengthen the technical and institutional capacity of the developing countries and, particularly, of the least developed countries.

They also underlined the need for a transparent and inclusive preparatory process leading up to the 4th Ministerial meeting involving all members of the WTO and of the need for civil society to have appropriate access to information and to provide opportunity for dialogue prior to and during the conference.

9. The Parties highlighted the efforts of the Andean General Secretariat and the European Commission to draft terms of reference for the study making it possible to assess the current state of and prospects for economic and trading relations between the two regions, in order to fulfil the mandate contained in the Vilamoura Declaration of 24 February 2000.

10. In this context the Parties welcomed the adoption of the terms of reference for the abovementioned study and agreed on the need to accelerate the preparation of the study. The Andean Ministers stressed their interest in the study being completed before the Madrid Summit so that a decision could be taken concerning the definition of a new structure for Euro-Andean relations, taking account of the desire to make progress in the negotiation of an Association Agreement, without prejudice to the preferences established under the GSP being continued until the new agreement came into force.
11. Ministers recognised the positive socio-economic effects of the special system of tariff preferences granted by the European Union to the Andean Community, which backed up the efforts made by the Andean countries in the fight against drugs, and the Andean Ministers thus stressed the importance of extending this special system until the new arrangements for Euro-Andean relations come into force. This will enable trade and investment between the two regions to be established on a firmer basis.
12. Ministers agreed, in the context of their forthcoming institutional meetings, to continue looking at the future of Euro-Andean relations in the light of the new dynamic given to international and interregional relations by globalisation and technology.
13. Ministers noted the positive development of institutionalised political dialogue with the Andean countries on the fight against drugs and related offences, based on the principle of co-responsibility. They expressed their confidence that this sustained effort would continue and to this end expressed their support for the VIth High-Level Meeting on Drugs and the IVth Meeting on Chemical Precursors to be held shortly.
14. Likewise, Ministers expressed satisfaction at the achievements of Bolivia in eradicating illicit coca-leaf crops and stressed the importance of supporting specific measures by the international community to ensure the sustainability of these results.
15. Ministers highlighted their interest in forthcoming institutionalised meetings between Andean countries and the European Community, such as the Joint Committees and joint subcommittees on industry and trade, and science and technology being held swiftly, as these areas have proved to be ideal mechanisms for strengthening political, social, economic and cultural links between the two regions, adapting to suit the challenges of the 21st century.
16. Lastly, Ministers expressed their satisfaction at the progress in the follow-up to the Rio de Janeiro Summit, voicing their support for the continued strengthening of relations, and particularly at the concerted efforts to ensure that the new architecture of relations between the two regions takes forward the process of consolidation and intensification initiated during the nineties.