



Message from Margot Wallström, Commissioner for the Environment ¹

Session 1: The Environment and Security Challenge

**The Hague Conference on Environment, Security and Sustainable Development
Peace Palace, The Hague, 9-12 May 2004**

"I am very happy to have the opportunity to send this message to the organisers and participants at The Hague Conference on Environment, Security and Sustainable Development. My schedule does not permit me to be with you in person but I want to wish you a very fruitful meeting.

Your conference is especially noteworthy in that it is co-organised by so many distinguished organisations with a notable track record in championing the environment also in relation to foreign policy and sustainable development.

The European Commission itself has long been working to ensure the integration of environment in all of its policies within Europe (Cardiff Council et seq) and of course, since the Lomé IV Convention (1990) and the subsequent Cotonou Agreement, the European Union has been working to ensure that environment is also an integral part of its development policies and taken into account in its assistance to developing countries. The EU and its Member States are the largest donors of ODA worldwide.

In March 2002, The Barcelona General Affairs Council adopted a strategy on environmental integration in external policies. Then last year the Thessaloniki European Council agreed to launch an initiative aimed at promoting the integration of environment into external relations through the creation of an informal network of environment experts within Foreign Ministries, the so-called Green Diplomacy Network.

The network's first organisational meeting took place in Athens on 25 June 2003 and resulted in a draft action plan and a work programme which is ongoing. The Italian Presidency held a second meeting in Rome on 3 November last year. This meeting allowed for a more concrete discussion on the role of the network, building upon the conclusions from Athens, and resulting in the endorsement of "Working Guidelines for the Green Diplomacy Network".

On 12 December 2003, the Council adopted a European Security Strategy: "A Secure Europe in a Better World", in which it is stated:

"Security is a precondition for Development. Conflict not only destroys infrastructure, including social infrastructure; it also encourages criminality, deters investment and makes normal economic activity impossible. A number of countries and regions are caught in a cycle of conflict, insecurity and poverty.

Competition for natural resources – notably water – which will be aggravated by global warming over the next decades is likely to create further turbulence and migratory movements in various regions.

Energy dependence is a special concern for Europe. Europe is the world's largest importer of oil and gas. Imports account for about 50% of energy consumption today. This will rise to 70% in 2030. Most energy imports come from the Gulf, Russia and North Africa."

The European Union's concern about water and energy issues was also reflected in our taking a lead role within two of the main partnership agreements adopted alongside the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in

¹ This message was presented by **Margaret Brusasco-Mackenzie**, Member Green Globe Network / Former Advisor for Sustainable Development, DG Environment, European Commission

Message from Margot Wallström

September 2002. We have followed this up in the context of the EU Water Initiative and the EU Energy Initiative. The Water Initiative is the subject of a background paper that DG Environment has contributed to this conference. Our work in this area was warmly welcomed and was the subject of great interest at the recent UN CSD meeting in New York which focussed on water, sanitation and human settlements.

The European Commission is also currently undertaking a review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy in the Framework of the Goteburg Process.

That is also why we look forward to receiving the conclusions from your timely conference so that we may reflect together on how to ensure an even more integrated approach to environment, security and sustainable development in the enlarged EU and in all our policies worldwide.

With sincere best wishes,
Margot Wallström”

10 May 2004

Institute for Environmental Security
www.envirosecurity.org