

**STABILITY PACT EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE "WORKING TABLE II"**  
**SOFIA 20-21 JUNE 2002**

**INTERVENTION BY THE EU SPANISH PRESIDENCY**

1. The EU wishes to thank the Bulgarian Government for the organisation of this event and its warm welcome.
2. The Regional Table, at its extraordinary meeting in Bucharest a couple of weeks ago, formally adopted the priority objectives, "achievable", for 2002 and more simplified, direct working methods for the Stability Pact.
3. The EU would like to draw the attention of the participants in WT II to the importance of achieving concrete and measurable progress not only in the achievable that explicitly belong to this WTII's competence, e.g. Trade and Investment or Infrastructure. It is important to keep in mind that the work of the Working Tables is inter-linked and sustainable development in the region depends upon the progress not only in this Working Table but also in WT III and specially in the success of WT I.
4. The General Affairs Council in May 2002 restated that the strengthening of the regional dimension and reinforced regional co-operation were necessary and went hand in hand "with the rapprochement to the European Union. The Council, in this regard, welcomed the increased emphasis of complementary of the SAP and Stability Pact activities, mainly promoting regional dialogue inter alia in the fields of Trade, Investment and Infrastructure.
5. The Council also welcomed the important contributions by other relevant regional initiatives, such as the Central European Initiative, the South Eastern Europe Cooperation Process and the Adriatic Initiative, to enhance regional co-operation.
6. In this sense, and being coherent with the principle of "regional ownership", the UE looks forward to hearing to what the different countries from the region have to say on important issues under the scope of WTII. Echoing the Council conclusions of 9 April and 11 June 2001, we would also like to hear the assessment from the parties on the state of affairs, evaluation of effectiveness and progress made in solving the issues under WT II. With this information we will all have a clearer picture of what the real needs are and in to which aspects we should concentrate in the future.
7. Looking ahead, and as WT I and III have already done, the EU believes that each Working Groups and Task Forces within Working Table II should set objectives for 2003, and that the Chairman will notify these to the Special Co-ordinator by September for forwarding to the Regional Table at the end of this year. This endeavour should be reflected in the Chairman's conclusions at the end of this meeting.
8. Specific tasks within the framework of the priority objectives or "achievable" for 2002 -in the instance of WTII Trade and Investment and Infrastructure (including Energy)- approved a couple of weeks ago, should also be set. Progress against these objectives and tasks could then be assessed at the next meeting of this working table.