

EURODEFENSE PRESIDENTIAL MEETING
May 9th-11th, 2003
Baden, Austria

The presidents of the ten EuroDefense associations, now that Greece has been formally admitted as a new member, held their first of two annual meetings in Baden, Austria, from May 9th to 11th. The EuroDefense Honorary President, Pierre Schwed, in an opening speech gave his view of the present political situation in Europe and called for further achievement by EuroDefense in the field of ESDP.

The presidents decided to continue the EuroDefense activities along the following lines:

- The present difficulties revealed by the Iraq Crisis demonstrate the need to continue the work and activities of the EuroDefense associations in order to develop an effective and credible ESDP of the European Union. It is even more necessary to continue to strengthen efforts to develop European military capabilities and make full use of the established decision making structures in order to enable the European Union to become a more effective international actor and a more capable partner for the United States.
- Since the summit of St. Malo and the European Council of Cologne, important efforts have been undertaken to develop and implement the Helsinki Headline Goal, which should provide the EU with the necessary military capabilities for effective crisis management. Important work is also going on to develop European strategic capabilities. In the area of non-military crisis management, the EU has taken over the police mission in Bosnia from the United Nations. In the FYROM, the EU has just launched its first military operation, Operation Concordia, to assure stability in the country. The agreement now reached between EU and NATO will enhance the strategic partnership between these two organizations and is of great importance for the future development of ESDP.
- The EuroDefense Presidents welcomed the work of the European Convention in the area of European defence and the important work and proposals presented by the Working Group Defence, chaired by Michel Barnier. In his report, important proposals have been formulated for the future development and strengthening of ESDP. EuroDefense has already submitted to the European Convention a document containing proposals for European defence. Mr. Pierre Schwed has received back a most encouraging letter from Mr. Giscard d'Estaing. Eurodefence will continue to make an active contribution to the European Convention, especially in the field of the policy part of a Constitution.
- EuroDefense members are satisfied with the transatlantic cooperation in fighting terrorism. A framework of cooperation between EU and US security agencies and judicial authorities has been created. Results attained in this field could inspire cooperation between the EU and the US in the defence field.
- It is necessary for the European Union to develop a European Strategic Security Concept which will also outline common European security interests. EuroDefense will actively support such efforts within the European Union.
- EuroDefense will promote efforts to help the European people to understand the interests and risks the EU might be facing. If Europe wishes for more independence in the field of defence, it must strive to use sufficient budgetary resources in a more balanced and coherent way. This would contribute to making the European Union a more equal partner for the USA.

EuroDefense Austria
EuroDefense France
EuroDefense Germany
EuroDefense Greece
EuroDefense Italy
EuroDefense Luxemburg
EuroDefense Netherlands
EuroDefense Portugal
EuroDefense Spain
EuroDefense United Kingdom

On behalf of the above associations:

(The President of the EuroDefense Network)

(The President of EuroDefense Austria)