



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



CUBA - Council Conclusions

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

" The Council reaffirmed the Common Position of 1996 which, in the context of the European Union's relations with Cuba, set out the following objectives: encouraging a process of transition to pluralist democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and a sustainable recovery and improvement in the living standards of the Cuban people.

The Council took note of the release in June 2004 and in November 2004 of a number of the 75 political prisoners imprisoned in March 2003, but noted that the prisoners have not been released unconditionally. The Council reiterated its urgent request to Cuba unconditionally to release all political prisoners of the group of 75 and urged the Cuban authorities to release all other political prisoners still being detained.

The Council reiterated its continued willingness to maintain a constructive dialogue with the Cuban authorities aiming at tangible results in the political, economic, human rights and cooperation sphere.

The Council decided that the EU would develop more intense relations with the peaceful political opposition and broader layers of civil society in Cuba, through enhanced and more regular dialogue.

All the measures taken on 5 June 2003 would be temporarily suspended. The Council decided, therefore, that the EU would suspend the limitation of high-level visits. During those visits the human rights situation and the position of the dissidents would be raised with the Cuban government and civil society. Meetings with the peaceful opposition might be part of high-level visits. Partners would inform one another of each visit. The Council decided that the EU and its Member States would also suspend the reduction of the level of participation in cultural events. The Council decided that the abovementioned measures would be reviewed before July 2005, in the light of the evolution towards democratic pluralism and the respect of human rights in Cuba."

P R E S S
