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**Statement by
Javier SOLANA,
EU High Representative for the CFSP,
on the agreement on Iran's nuclear programme**

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), made the following comments today on the agreement reached as a result of talks between France, Germany and the UK with the support of the High Representative on the one hand, and Iran on the other hand, concerning the Iranian nuclear issue:

"This is a welcome agreement. We can now look forward to the International Atomic Energy Agency's report that Iran's voluntary suspension is being implemented in full. As the Heads of State and Government of the European Union made clear at the last European Council we want a durable, cooperative and long-term partnership with Iran. This agreement opens the way. Potentially it is the start of a new chapter in our relations. The negotiations on a Trade and Cooperation Agreement should be resumed as soon as suspension is verified.

It is however only the start. We now need to work rapidly to produce a solid long-term agreement. This should on the one hand provide lasting confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and on the other bring concrete results in the area of trade, technology exchange and security, as well as in the nuclear dimension. This will not be an easy task but we have taken the first step and that is very important."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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Background on agreement on Iran's nuclear programme

In October 2003, the European Council re-iterated its grave concerns on Iran's nuclear programme and identified the urgent need for Iran to restore international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. The Council also underlined its readiness to explore ways to develop a wider co-operation with Iran.

Since then, efforts were undertaken by several Member States to develop, through collective effort at the IAEA in Vienna and through dialogue with Iran, a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The Teheran joint Statement of 21 October 2003 was a first step, in which Iran committed itself to suspend enrichment and reprocessing activities.

The European Council, on 5 November 2004, re-iterating the importance it attached to building confidence, called on Iran to implement a sustained suspension of all enrichment related and reprocessing activities, on a voluntary basis. In return, the Council expressed preparedness to further engage with Iran, including through the resumption of the negotiations on a trade and co-operation agreement.

The understanding reached today with Iran were developed in negotiations, at senior officials level, between Iran and several Member States supported by representatives of the EU High Representative, and are based on the following principal axes:

- Iran committed itself to immediately suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities as a confidence-building measure. Iran will/has notify its decision to suspend to the IAEA and will invite the IAEA to verify that the full suspension has been put into effect. The suspension will be sustained as long as negotiations on long-term arrangements will last.
- The European side reconfirms Iran's right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The negotiations on a trade and co-operation agreement with Iran will be resumed and the EU will actively support the opening of WTO accession negotiations with Iran, as soon as the IAEA will have confirmed that the full suspension is in place. At the same time, a process of enhanced dialogue between the EU and Iran will be initiated which will cover the areas of technology and co-operation, nuclear issues, and political and security issues.

The overall objective to be reached through the implementation of these understandings is to develop mutually acceptable long-term arrangements concerning the Iranian nuclear programme, and a solid basis for stable and lasting relations between the EU and Iran.

Agreement

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Governments of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, with the support of the High Representative of the European Union (E3/EU), reaffirm the commitments in the Tehran Agreed Statement of 21 October 2003 and have decided to move forward, building on that agreement.

The E3/EU and Iran reaffirm their commitment to the NPT.

The E3/EU recognise Iran's rights under the NPT exercised in conformity with its obligations under the Treaty, without discrimination.

Iran reaffirms that, in accordance with Article II of the NPT, it does not and will not seek to acquire nuclear weapons. It commits itself to full cooperation and transparency with the IAEA. Iran will continue implementing voluntarily the Additional Protocol pending ratification.

To build further confidence, Iran has decided, on voluntary basis, to continue and extend its suspension to include all enrichment related and reprocessing activities, and specifically: the manufacture and import of gas centrifuges; work to undertake any plutonium separation, or to construct or operate any plutonium separation installation; and all tests or production at any uranium conversion installation. The IAEA will be notified of this suspension and invited to verify and monitor it. The suspension will be implemented in time for the IAEA to confirm before the November Board that it has been put into effect. The suspension will be sustained while negotiations proceed on a mutually acceptable agreement on long-term arrangements.

The E3/EU recognise that this suspension is a voluntary confidence building measure and not a legal obligation.

Sustaining the suspension, while negotiations on a long-term agreement are under way, will be essential for the continuation of the overall process. In the context of this suspension, the E3/EU and Iran have agreed to begin negotiations, with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable agreement on long term arrangements. The agreement will provide

objective guarantees that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively for peaceful purposes. It will equally provide firm guarantees on nuclear, technological and economic cooperation and firm commitments on security issues.

A steering committee will meet to launch these negotiations in the first half of December 2004 and will set up working groups on political and security issues, technology and cooperation, and nuclear issues. The steering committee shall meet again within three months to receive progress reports from the working groups and to move ahead with projects and/or measures that can be implemented in advance of an overall agreement.

In the context of the present agreement and noting the progress that has been made in resolving outstanding issues, the E3/EU will henceforth support the Director General reporting to the IAEA Board as he considers appropriate in the framework of the implementation of Iran's Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol.

The E3/EU will support the IAEA Director General inviting Iran to join the Expert Group on Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle.

Once suspension has been verified, the negotiations with the EU on a Trade and Cooperation Agreement will resume. The E3/EU will actively support the opening of Iranian accession negotiations at the WTO.

Irrespective of progress on the nuclear issue, the E3/EU and Iran confirm their determination to combat terrorism, including the activities of Al Qa'ida and other terrorist groups such as the MeK. They also confirm their continued support for the political process in Iraq aimed at establishing a constitutionally elected Government.
