

FOURTH ASEM FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING  
DECLARATION ON THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

Madrid, 6-7 June 2002

ASEM Foreign Ministers, concerned about the danger of continuing violence in the Middle East, reaffirm the need for a peaceful and comprehensive political solution of the conflict. To this end, they take note of the efforts of the Quartet and others, and support the idea of convening soon an international conference with agreed goals and time frame, which will allow the parties concerned to move forward simultaneously with political, economic and security issues, on the basis of international law, UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1322 and 1397, and the Madrid Formula "Land for Peace". In this context, Ministers stress the important role of the United Nations and, in particular, the United Nations Security Council in the political solution of the issue and warmly welcome the Saudi Security Council in the political solution of the issue and warmly welcome the Saudi Arabian Initiative and the historic Declaration of the Arab Summit in March 2002.

Ministers urge the parties to take all the relevant measures within their reach to overcome the present crisis and, in particular, the full implementation of UNSCR 1402 and 1403, including the establishment of a meaningful ceasefire and the permanent withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian areas and a more determined action by all parties concerned for immediate cessation of all acts of violence including acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction. Ministers are also fully supportive of any feasible idea of allowing a third part mechanism, to provide security for both Palestinians and Israelis.

Ministers welcome the Palestinian Authority's intention to undertake in-depth reforms and to hold elections as soon as possible. All parties should ensure that these elections take place under conditions that allow a free and fair casting of votes.

Ministers call on the international community to preserve, strengthen and assist the Palestinian Authority, including through efforts to rebuild its infrastructure, security and governance capacity. They call also on the donor community and

the international financial institutions to renew their commitment to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, and to assist in economic and institutional reconstruction.