

## Conclusions of the Santa Maria da Feira European Council: extract concerning the Western Balkans (19 and 20 June 2000)

**Caption:** On 19 and 20 June 2000, the Santa Maria da Feira European Council considers that the countries of the Western Balkans are potential applicants for accession. The European Union supports the Stabilisation and Association Process of the countries of the region by the provision of technical and economic assistance.

**Source:** European Council. Presidency Conclusions. [ON-LINE]. [Brussels]: Council of the European Union, [21.06.2005]. Available on [http://ue.eu.int/cms3\\_fo/showPage.asp?id=432&lang=EN&mode=g](http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=432&lang=EN&mode=g).

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[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/conclusions\\_of\\_the\\_santa\\_maria\\_da\\_feira\\_european\\_council\\_extract\\_concerning\\_the\\_western\\_balkans\\_19\\_and\\_20\\_june\\_2000-en-09d65e00-81bc-4b22-987a-d3ecb4fa1979.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/conclusions_of_the_santa_maria_da_feira_european_council_extract_concerning_the_western_balkans_19_and_20_june_2000-en-09d65e00-81bc-4b22-987a-d3ecb4fa1979.html)

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## Santa Maria da Feira European Council (19 and 20 June 2000) Presidency Conclusions

[...]

### V. External relations

[...]

### D. Western Balkans

66. The European Council welcomes the report by the Secretary General/High Representative, under the authority of the Presidency and the Council, and in full association with the Commission, on the Western Balkans and strongly supports them in their efforts to ensure the impact, coherence and visibility of the Union's policies in the Western Balkans. It invites them actively to pursue the initiatives and implement the priorities identified in their report.

67. The European Council confirms that its objective remains the fullest possible integration of the countries of the region into the political and economic mainstream of Europe through the Stabilisation and Association process, political dialogue, liberalisation of trade and cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs. All the countries concerned are potential candidates for EU membership. The Union will support the Stabilisation and Association process through technical and economic assistance. The Commission has already presented proposals to the Council to streamline and accelerate the procedures for disbursement of assistance and the early extension of asymmetrical industrial and agricultural trade benefits to the Balkan States.

68. The European Council encourages the States of the region to increase their regional cooperation, including through regional trade arrangements. The EU is ready to intensify its cooperation with them, including in economic and financial assistance, political dialogue, free trade, approximation of EU legislation and cooperation in other policy areas.

69. The European Council invites the Secretary General/High Representative, under the authority of the Presidency and the Council, and in full association with the Commission, to pursue action on the basis of the Lisbon mandate, in particular intensified cooperation in the region in Justice and Home Affairs as well as in other areas.

70. The European Council reiterates its support for democratic and economic reform in Croatia and looks forward to the early start of negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement. It welcomes the progress made by FYROM in negotiations for a SAA and underlines the importance it attaches to the inviolability of frontiers, in particular to the territorial integrity of FYROM. The European Council urges the Albanian government to continue its efforts to respond to the issues raised in the Commission's feasibility study and notes the "roadmap" for Bosnia and Herzegovina outlining where further progress is needed in order to achieve the full benefits of Stabilisation and Association.

71. A democratic, cooperative FRY living in peace with its neighbours will be a welcome member of the European family of democratic nations. The European Council supports the civil society initiatives as well as the democratic forces in Serbia in their struggle to achieve this goal and urges them to stay united and reinforce their cooperation. The Union looks forward to the time when the FRY will be able to participate fully in the Stabilisation and Association process.

72. In the face of massive economic and political pressure exerted by Belgrade, the EU will continue to support Montenegro's efforts towards democratic and economic reform and applauds the Montenegrin government policies of ethnic tolerance and regional cooperation.

73. One year after the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1244, the European Council reiterates its

support for its full implementation and for free and fair municipal elections in Kosovo later this year carefully prepared and properly monitored by the competent international bodies. Extremist violence will not be tolerated. Local leaders are strongly urged to live up to their responsibilities by actively contributing to the establishment of a multi-ethnic, tolerant society where refugees and displaced persons are able to return and in which all the people of Kosovo can live in safety.

74. Emphasising the need to further strengthen regional cooperation, the European Council reaffirmed the Union's determination to continue playing a leading role in the Stability Pact. It welcomed the adoption in Thessaloniki of the "Agenda for Stability" as a framework for future action. The Reconstruction Agency as an authority implementing the future CARDS Programme should be allowed to use its full potential in order to achieve the goals set out in Cologne.

75. The European Council welcomed the idea, proposed by France, of a summit meeting between the European Union and the countries of the Western Balkans which, although at different stages, are most advanced in their democratic evolution. Such a summit would allow the countries of the region to be reassured of Europe's solidarity with them, and permit an examination with them of the means to accelerate the process of democratic and economic reform. The European Council invites the Council, assisted by the Secretary-General/High Representative, and the Commission, to begin work on preparing such a summit meeting.

[...]