

## Press conference held by Javier Solana and Milo Djukanovic at the Council of the European Union (Brussels, May 2006)

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[Javier Solana] It is a great pleasure for me to receive Milo Djukanovic, the Prime Minister of Montenegro, a friend of many, many years, and days after the referendum that took place in Montenegro. Let me make just a few remarks, a few comments on behalf of the European Union. First, I told to him personally, as I said publicly the other day, that we want to congratulate the Montenegrin people. I want to say that, for us, the referendum has been free and fair, and the results very impressive, taking into consideration the very high percentage of turnout. So, for us, the question of the referendum is over, since the international institutions in which we trusted to analyse the behaviour of the electoral process have said that the referendum was free and fair. So we accept the results and we expect that, the sooner the better, the little things that may still have up to discussion are clarified, and, the sooner the better, we begin working to reconcile the Montenegrin people — number one — and also for the Montenegrins to arrange their relationship in a constructive manner with Belgrade.

[Milo Djukanovic (interpretation)] Ladies and gentlemen, I today had the honour to be received by Mr Solana only a few days after the referendum that we have conducted in Montenegro. I informed Mr Solana of the overall referendum process in Montenegro. We shared the pleasure with the quality of the process we have conducted. And we agreed that we now have a new political reality that we hopefully will continue to contribute to regional stability and the European perspective of the Western Balkans. This is precisely what I would like to underline in this meeting with the High Representative of the European Union for security and foreign policy. It's my conviction that, after the referendum in Montenegro, we will have not only better internal stability of Montenegro, but that this will also contribute to better regional stability and a clearer European perspective of the Western Balkans. Since Mr Solana has spoken quite extensively of the contents of our conversation, I wish just to thank Mr Solana, to thank Ambassador Lajcak and their aides, to thank them for contributing to the realisation of such a process in Montenegro by their very good input and involvement. I wish to assure you that Montenegro has ahead a certain and a near European future.