

Canadian Chair's Statement

Gatineau, Quebec, March 30, 2010

G8 foreign ministers met in Gatineau, Quebec, March 29-30, to exchange views and coordinate action on situations and issues that affect global peace and security. In Gatineau, ministers discussed three broad themes: nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament; terrorism; and security vulnerabilities. Ministers agreed that security and prosperity are best sustained by democratic states that respect human rights and the rule of law. The following reflects the sense of the discussions, as understood by the Chair.

Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament

The threat to global security from nuclear proliferation is grave, and 2010 is a critical year for setting a course for the future. G8 foreign ministers applauded the conclusion of negotiations between the United States and the Russian Federation to reduce further their nuclear arsenals, noting that this is an important step towards a world without nuclear weapons. These discussions also help create positive momentum for success in May at the Review Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, on which ministers issued a separate statement. Ministers also discussed the successes of the Global Partnership against the Spread of Materials and Weapons of Mass Destruction, and asked for an assessment of its achievements, and of continuing challenges, in order to consider whether the Partnership should be extended beyond 2012. Ministers were of the view that the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April will be an important opportunity to promote the security of nuclear materials in order to prevent their falling into the hands of terrorists or other unauthorized persons or entities. In this respect, ministers stressed the need to implement, and to support developing countries in the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540, which requires states to take concrete measures against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Iran's continued non-compliance with its obligations under United Nations Security Council resolutions, as well as its IAEA obligations, regarding its nuclear program is of serious concern to G8 ministers. While ministers recognized Iran's right to a civilian nuclear program, Iran's recent actions, including its lack of transparency on the construction of an uranium enrichment facility near Qom, as well as its recent decision to expand its uranium enrichment operations in violation of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, and its refusal to respond to efforts of the five Permanent members of the UNSC plus Germany to broker a diplomatic solution to the issue all deepen serious doubts about the peaceful nature of its nuclear program. Ministers urged in the strongest possible terms that Iran cooperate fully with the IAEA and comply with relevant UNSC resolutions. In the context of the dual track approach, ministers agreed to remain open to dialogue, and also reaffirmed the need to take appropriate and strong steps to demonstrate international resolve to uphold the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and persuade Iran to build greater international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear program.

Concern was expressed that legitimate dissent continues to be violently suppressed by the Iranian government. Ministers called upon the Government of Iran to observe the rule of law and universally recognized human rights.

North Korea's nuclear and missile programs are destabilizing for the region, and for global security. Ministers urged North Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks without pre-condition, and to fulfill its commitments, including the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In this regard, they underscored the need for all states to fully implement UNSC resolutions 1718 and 1874. They called on North Korea to address the concerns of the international community about the humanitarian situation, including the abduction issue.

Terrorism

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, extensive international collaboration has weakened the ability of terrorists to train recruits and execute attacks. However, terrorists continue to seek new ways to pursue their goals. In a separate statement, ministers strongly condemned the cowardly terrorist attacks on the Moscow subway on March 29, and called for the prosecution of those responsible.

Ministers also discussed their concerns about the upsurge in kidnappings perpetrated by terrorists, including for financial gain, and the links of some terrorist groups to illicit drug trafficking, piracy and organized crime. Ministers discussed the need to remain vigilant and agreed to continue to collaborate to thwart and constrain the actions of terrorists, including bringing terrorists to justice so that they can find no place to hide. They agreed that multifaceted and coordinated efforts are needed to counter violent extremism and radicalization, to curb the spread of terrorist ideology and to address local conditions that give rise to violent extremism. They affirmed their commitment to the principles of inclusion, tolerance, democracy and respect for human rights in the fight against terrorism. In the face of the global terrorist threat, the ministers emphasized the need for more systemic, proactive and comprehensive response to this challenge, building upon the universal counter-terrorism conventions, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, UNSC resolutions and other relevant mechanisms and instruments. They agreed to work out a robust action plan envisaging, inter alia the reinforcement and relevance of the activities of the Roma/Lyon group and Counter-Terrorism Action Group in order to enhance their contribution to the global effort to combat terrorism. This plan will be submitted to the leaders at the Muskoka Summit. Ministers also discussed the importance of continuing to strengthen the security of transportation, including aviation, worldwide.

Ministers discussed their military and civilian engagement in Afghanistan, to ensure that it will not again become a haven for terrorists. They discussed the need to help the Afghan Government assume responsibility for security, delivery of basic services and democratic governance within its borders, and for the Government of Afghanistan to do its part in delivering on the commitments made at the London Conference last January. The views of ministers are detailed in a separate statement.

Ministers also discussed the situation in Pakistan, and the government's efforts to address its domestic economic and social challenges, including strengthening its democratic institutions. They also welcomed the Government of Pakistan's actions to root out violent extremism, particularly in the border region with Afghanistan.

Ministers agreed to continue to support both the Afghan and Pakistani governments in their efforts in the border region. They also agreed that military-only responses are not sufficient, and that solutions must include support for development, sound governance and economic reform. In this respect, ministers agreed to undertake, in partnership with the Afghan and Pakistani governments, and the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, an Afghanistan Pakistan Border Region Prosperity Initiative aimed at building trade and border infrastructure to foster economic development and local employment. Ministers issued a separate background document on the Initiative.

Ministers discussed the increased terrorist activity in the Arabian Peninsula and parts of Africa, in particular Yemen, Somalia and the Sahel. Internal conflict and areas beyond effective government control create fertile ground for terrorists to recruit and operate with impunity, and have led to other problems of piracy, kidnapping, illicit trafficking in drugs, arms and people, and illegal migration. Ministers discussed how the international community could support the Government of Yemen in its efforts to combat terrorism and implement an agenda of political and economic reform. The truce between the government and the northern rebels is welcome. The ongoing instability in Somalia was also of concern to ministers, who encouraged international support for the Transitional Federal Government. They were also deeply concerned

by region-wide security threats across the Sahel posed by the expanding reach of criminal gangs and terrorist cells. Ministers discussed the inter-connectedness of these problems, and the need for broad regional approaches and engagement with local governments to reinforce their capacity to combat terrorism and strengthen security, as well as to address socio-economic challenges.

Security Vulnerabilities

Many countries lack effective and accountable institutions necessary to prevent and manage conflict, manage security in post-disaster situations, or fight terrorism, proliferation and transnational organized crime. Ministers discussed the need to help such countries and regional institutions to build the institutional capacity that underpins democratic governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights to enable them to effectively address their security vulnerabilities. Ministers welcomed Canada's proposal to host a conference of senior officials to identify ways to make such capacity building efforts more effective and coherent.

Ministers shared the view that, while relief efforts in Haiti must continue, attention must also be directed to the longer-term infrastructure, governance and security needs of the country. They discussed their desire to help Haitians build a new and better future for Haiti, based on the principles of ownership, inclusiveness, accountability, effectiveness, coordination and sustainability. They urged all donors to be generous in their support for Haiti at the international conference which will take place in New York on March 31, 2010.

Ministers also spoke about the challenges faced by some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean from transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking in drugs, and the increasingly widespread implications not only for the Americas, but also for Africa (through which the drugs transit) and Europe. They reaffirmed their commitment to combat these security vulnerabilities through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, in particular with regional organizations, including the Organization of American States. They endorsed the statement on the Middle East issued by the Quartet on March 19, and emphasized the importance of the proximity talks as a step towards the resumption of bilateral negotiations. They urged both parties to adhere to the Road Map, and to promote an environment conducive to successful negotiations. They also reaffirmed their commitment to provide continued support to help the Palestinians build democratic institutions. Ministers also discussed the need for national dialogue in Burma/Myanmar, and their concern about the recently adopted restrictive electoral law. They called for the elections planned for 2010 to be transparent, fully inclusive, free and fair. They also called on the Government of Burma/Myanmar to enable full democratic participation in the upcoming election and to release all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, whose continued detention would undermine the credibility of the elections. They agreed that the elections to be held in Sudan in April could be an important step in Sudan's democratic transformation as mandated by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, in advance of the January 2011 referendum on the future status of Southern Sudan. They underscored the need for progress in Darfur.

Ministers agreed to meet next in New York in September, 2010, on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly.

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