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Summit Home

About the G8 Summit

G8 Member Nations

Summit Security

Sea Island Summiteer

Turtle Tracks

About Coastal Georgia

Frequently Asked Questions

Contact Us

## Summit Background

### Past Summits

#### • 2004 Summit

### Documents

### Partnership for Progress and a Common Future with the Region of the Broader Middle East and North Africa Sea Island, Georgia June 9, 2004

1. We the leaders of the G8 are mindful that peace, political, economic and social development, prosperity and stability in the countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa represent a challenge which concerns us and the international community as a whole. Therefore, we declare our support for democratic, social and economic reform emanating from that region.
2. The peoples of the Broader Middle East and North Africa have a rich tradition and culture of accomplishment in government, trade, science, the arts, and more. They have made many lasting contributions to human civilization. We welcome recent statements on the need for reform from leaders in the region, especially the latest statement issued at the Arab League Summit in Tunis, in which Arab leaders expressed their determination "to firmly establish the basis for democracy." Likewise, we welcome the reform declarations of representatives of business and civil society, including those of Alexandria and the Dead Sea, Sana'a and Aqaba. As the leaders of the major industrialized democracies in the world, we recognize our special responsibility to support freedom and reform, and pledge our continuing efforts in this great task.
3. Therefore, we commit ourselves today to a **Partnership for Progress and a Common Future** with the governments and peoples of the Broader Middle East and North Africa. This partnership will be based on genuine cooperation with the region's governments, as well as business and civil society representatives to strengthen freedom, democracy, and prosperity for all.
4. The values embodied in the Partnership we propose are universal. Human dignity, freedom, democracy, rule of law, economic opportunity, and social justice are universal aspirations and are reflected in relevant international documents, such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.
5. In launching this Partnership, we adhere to the following principles:
  - 5.1. Strengthening the commitment of the International Community to peace and stability in the region of Broader Middle East and North Africa is essential.
  - 5.2. The resolution of long-lasting, often bitter, disputes, especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is an important element of progress in the region.
  - 5.3. At the same time, regional conflicts must not be an obstacle for reforms. Indeed, reforms may make a significant contribution toward resolving them.
  - 5.4. The restoration of peace and stability in Iraq is critical to the well-being of millions of Iraqis and the security of the region.

5.5. Successful reform depends on the countries in the region, and change should not and cannot be imposed from outside.

5.6. Each country is unique and their diversity should be respected. Our engagement must respond to local conditions and be based on local ownership. Each society will reach its own conclusions about the pace and scope of change. Yet distinctiveness, important as it is, must not be exploited to prevent reform.

5.7. Our support for reform will involve governments, business leaders and civil societies from the region as full partners in our common effort.

5.8. Supporting reform in the region, for the benefit of all its citizens, is a long-term effort, and requires the G-8 and the region to make a generational commitment.

6. Our support for reform in the region will go hand in hand with our support for a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab- Israeli conflict, based upon U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338. We fully endorse the Quartet's Statement of May 4, 2004 and join the Quartet in its "common vision of two states, Israel and a viable, democratic, sovereign and contiguous Palestine, living side by side in peace and security." We support the work of the International Task Force on Palestinian Reform and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and urge all states to consider the assistance they may provide to their work. We welcome the establishment of the World Bank's Trust Fund and urge donors to contribute to this important initiative. We join in the Quartet's call for "both parties to take steps to fulfill their obligations under the roadmap as called for in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1515 and previous Quartet statements, and to meet the commitments they made at the Red Sea Summits in Aqaba and Sharm el Sheikh." We reaffirm that a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including with respect to Syria and Lebanon, must comply with the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 425, which "Calls for strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries."

7. We stand together united in our support for the Iraqi people and the fully sovereign Iraqi Interim Government as they seek to rebuild their nation. Iraq needs the strong support of the international community in order to realize its potential to be a free, democratic, and prosperous country, at peace with itself, its neighbors, and with the wider world. We welcome the unanimous approval of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 on Iraq, and we join in supporting the continued, expansive engagement of the United Nations in Iraq after the transfer of sovereignty, as circumstances permit. We pledge to provide support and assistance for the electoral process leading to national elections for the Transitional National Assembly no later than January 31, 2005. We are united in our desire to see the Multinational Force for Iraq, in accordance with the UNSCR 1546, succeed in its mission to help restore and maintain security, including protection of the United Nations presence, and to support humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. We express our shared commitment, and urge others, to support the economic revitalization of Iraq, focusing on priority projects identified by the Interim Government. We welcome the success of the recent International Reconstruction Fund Facility donors' conference in Doha, and commit to meeting before the next conference in Tokyo later this year to identify how each of us can contribute to the reconstruction of Iraq. Debt reduction is critical if the Iraqi people are to have the opportunity to build a free and prosperous nation. The reduction should be provided in connection with an IMF program, and sufficient to ensure sustainability taking into account the recent IMF analysis. We will work with each other, within the Paris Club, and with non-Paris Club creditors, to achieve that objective in 2004. To help reestablish the ties that link Iraq to the world, we will explore ways of reaching out directly to the Iraqi people – to individuals, schools, and cities – as they emerge from decades of dictatorship and deprivation to launch the political, social, and economic rebirth of their nation.

8. The Partnership we launch today builds on years of support for reform efforts in the region through bilateral and multilateral cooperation programs. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership ("Barcelona Process"), the U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative, and the Japan-Arab Dialogue Initiative are examples of our strong commitment to supporting democratic and economic development. We are similarly committed to such progress in Afghanistan and Iraq through our multilateral reconstruction efforts. The Partnership we propose will build on our on-going engagement in the region.

9. The magnitude of the challenges facing the region requires a renewed commitment to reform and cooperation. Only by combining our efforts can we bring about lasting democratic progress. We welcome and support the work of other governments, institutions, and multilateral agencies that aim to assist the region's development.

10. Central to this new Partnership will be a “ **Forum for the Future** ,” which will root our efforts in an open and enduring dialogue. The Forum will provide a framework at ministerial level, bringing together G-8 and regional Foreign, Economic, and other Ministers in an ongoing discussion on reform, with business and civil society leaders participating in parallel dialogues. The Forum will serve as a vehicle for listening to the needs of the region, and ensuring that the efforts we make collectively respond to those concerns.

11. Our efforts in the Partnership we commit to today focus on three areas:

11.1. In the **political sphere** , progress toward democracy and the rule of law entails instituting effective guarantees in the areas of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which notably imply respect for diversity and pluralism. This will result in cooperation, the free exchange of ideas, and the peaceful resolution of differences. State reform, good governance, and modernization are also necessary ingredients for building democracy.

11.2. In the **social and cultural sphere** , education for all, freedom of expression, equality between men and women as well as access to global information technology are crucial to modernization and prosperity. A better-educated workforce is a key to active participation in a globalized world. We will focus our efforts to reduce illiteracy and increase access to education, especially for girls and women.

11.3. In the **economic sphere** , creating jobs is the number one priority of many countries in the region. To expand opportunity, and promote conditions in which the private sector can create jobs, we will work with governments and business leaders to promote entrepreneurship, expand trade and investment, increase access to capital, support financial reforms, secure property rights, promote transparency and fight corruption. Promotion of intra-regional trade will be a priority for economic development of the Broader Middle East and North Africa.

12. The Partnership for Progress and a Common Future offers an impulse to our relationship with the Broader Middle East and North Africa region. As an expression of our commitment, we issue today an initial Plan of Support for Reform outlining current and planned activities to give life to this Partnership.

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