

HELSINKI CONFERENCE CONCLUSIONS

HELSINKI CONFERENCE: DEBATE AND COOPERATION

The Helsinki Conference was held at the Finlandia Hall in Helsinki, Finland from September 7 to 9, 2005. The event was composed of three days of activities. On Wednesday, 7th September, numerous seminars were organised in by interested organisations in partnership with the Helsinki Process. About 1500 persons visited these seminars and debated issues from child labour to the EU as a global actor.

On Thursday and Friday about 600 invited participants from over 70 countries met the challenge of engaging in dialogue between stakeholders coming from many different cultures. The plenary sessions gave insight into the work of international processes in general, there was opportunity to evaluate the work of the Helsinki Process and the multistakeholder concept it has advanced, and future cooperation was discussed and planned. The simultaneous key dialogues and roundtables gave insight into specific issues from many different points of view. These discussions reaffirmed the need for urgent action and cooperation, in order for solutions to be implemented. Although discussions could have been continued beyond the time limits and there were opinions still to be voiced, the most central call at the Conference was for the move to action. Action is where the mobilisation of political will will be measured.

SAID AT THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE

“The time has come to recognise that war on want is war against terror. It is time to start working... In this I hold on to the hope that we are after all all part of the same human race.”

Prince El Hassan Bin Talal

“There are two bullets for all of us. The real challenge is for governments to come to agreement on a small arms treaty.”

Irene Khan

“Including parliamentarians in national delegations to multilateral meetings should be encouraged. The participation of relevant parliamentarians in international meetings would facilitate the implementation of commitments.”

Mohamed Shake

HELSINKI PROCESS WILL CONTINUE

The Helsinki Conference was also a place to plan the next steps of the Helsinki Process. The Friends of the Helsinki Process governments, Algeria, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Hungary, Malaysia, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Thailand and the United Kingdom together with Finland and Tanzania made a commitment to advance a number of issues which were raised at the Conference. The group plans to work in close coordination with and among other stakeholders in addition to inviting other governments to joint their efforts.

As follow-up, five Round Tables will be set up on issues of peace and security, poverty and development, governance, environment and human rights. These Round Tables will be challenged by the requirements of the global agenda to reach beyond the Millennium Declaration and 2015. The aim is to contribute to a movement for change and to have different actors work together on this. As a first step, a Helsinki Process Consultative Group will be brought together to provide political support and guidance for the follow-up. The Consultative Group will be chaired by the Foreign Ministers of Finland and Tanzania. The Finnish and Tanzanian governments have agreed to continue to facilitate the second phase of the Helsinki Conference. The aim is to evaluate the second phase in 2007. Whatever the evaluation at that point, it will be better when active participation and sharing of responsibility occurs widely between different stakeholders.

HAVE YOU VISITED THE WEBSITE?

Helsinki Conference materials are available at www.helsinkiconference.fi

- Read the concluding remarks made by the co-chairs, Ministers Erkki Tuomioja of Finland and Abdulkader Shareef of Tanzania, at the Helsinki Conference closing
- Watch the sessions
- Listen to the debate
- See the primary points made by some of our key speakers