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**Javier SOLANA,
EU High Representative for the CFSP,
met US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice
in Washington**

Javier SOLANA, European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), met Condoleezza RICE in Washington today to discuss a range of major international issues relating to the Balkans, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa, on which the European Union and the United States work closely together.

On the Balkans, Mr SOLANA and Secretary RICE agreed on the importance of resolving the issue of Kosovo's status and the need to remain politically engaged in the region. They discussed the need to make real progress in the Middle-East peace process and agreed that the Quartet should meet in the near future. Mr SOLANA and Secretary RICE also discussed the situation in Lebanon and the importance of ensuring that the donors' conference in Paris was a success. Progress in settling the Shebaa Farms dispute was also needed, they agreed.

Mr SOLANA and Secretary RICE exchanged views on the situation in Afghanistan and discussed the drug problem in Afghanistan and the NATO operation against the Taliban. Mr SOLANA briefed Secretary RICE on the work being carried out within the EU regarding the possible deployment of an EU police-training mission. They agreed on the importance of coordinating the EU's activities on the civilian side with NATO'S role on the military side.

On the subject of Africa, Mr SOLANA and Secretary RICE agreed that an inclusive government was needed in Somalia and that an international peacekeeping force, possibly a UN force, would be required. They also discussed the need to resolve the crisis in Sudan / Darfur and the importance of supporting the Democratic Republic of Congo.
