

Communiqué by Federal Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle and Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi, Rome, 20-11-2011

The Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi and the German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle met today in Rome. The two Ministers discussed a number of key European and international issues of mutual interest.

They agreed that the stability of the Euro-zone needs to be strengthened by improving the effectiveness of European Economic and Monetary Union and preliminarily discussed limited changes to the EU treaty. Westerwelle expressed his full appreciation for the economic plan presented by the Italian PM Mario Monti before the Italian Parliament as well as his confidence that the new Italian government will be able to implement the announced measures aimed at stabilizing the country's financial situation and restarting economic growth.

Terzi and Westerwelle discussed in depth the developments in the countries of the Arab Spring, in particular Libya and Egypt in view of the upcoming first round of parliamentary elections. On Egypt both Ministers expressed their serious concern over news from Egypt about violent clashes between the protesters and security forces. They appealed to all sides to immediately refrain from any further acts of violence. The two Ministers also called upon all institutional and political players to contribute to the creation of a peaceful environment necessary for a successful democratic transition. On Libya, they shared the hope that a new and inclusive transitional government will be formed soon in order to start implementing the political road map leading to future free and fair elections. Respect of Libyan ownership and continuation of multilateral engagement should be the two guiding principles of the international strategy aimed at stabilizing the country. Terzi and Westerwelle welcomed the arrest of Saif al Islam. They called on Libyan authorities to guarantee a fair trial for him, in accordance with international standards.

The two Ministers expressed deep concern about the escalation of violence in Syria and condemned the regime's continued repression of its own people. They stressed their support to the initiative of the Arab League and called for adequate responses to Syrian repression by the UN Security Council.

On Iran the two Ministers shared their deep concern for the developments of Teheran's nuclear program as highlighted by the recent IAEA Report. They welcomed the Resolution of the IAEA Board of Governors on the Iranian nuclear program. In their view there is an urgent need to increase the international pressure on Iran – including new sanctions - aimed at changing Teheran's behaviour and fostering its honest and transparent cooperation with the International community, if Iran continues to fail to comply with its international obligations.

The two Ministers also discussed in depth the situation in Afghanistan in view of the upcoming December 5 Bonn Conference. Italy and Germany are among the major troop contributors to Afghanistan and are firmly committed to its stabilization in the framework of the strategy of transition. They stressed the importance of national reconciliation and regional dialogue to lay down the bases for a sustainable stability. Terzi confirmed his attendance at the Bonn Conference and assured his full support for the success of the Conference.

The two Foreign Ministers finally agreed that Italy and Germany will continue to work closely together on all the major European and International issues.