

National Declaration by Ireland at the Seville European Council (21 June 2002)

Caption: On 21 June 2002, the Irish Government makes a National Declaration at the Seville European Council emphasising its commitment to the European Union's security and defence policy.

Source: National Declaration by Ireland - Seville. [ON-LINE]. [Dublin]: Department of the Taoiseach, [20.06.2005].
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National Declaration by Ireland – Seville, 21 June 2002

1. Ireland reaffirms its attachment to the aims and principles of Charter of the United Nations, which confers primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security upon the United Nations Security Council.
2. Ireland recalls its commitment to the common foreign and security policy of the European Union as set out in the Treaty on European Union, adopted at Maastricht, amended at Amsterdam and approved on each occasion by the Irish people through referendum.
3. Ireland confirms that its participation in the European Unions common foreign and security policy does not prejudice its traditional policy of military neutrality. The Treaty on European Union makes clear that the Union's security and defence policy shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.
4. In line with its traditional policy of military neutrality, Ireland is not bound by any mutual defence commitment. Nor is Ireland party to any plans to develop a European army. Indeed, the Nice European Council recognised that the development of the Union's capacity to conduct humanitarian and crisis management tasks does not involve the establishment of a European army.
5. The Treaty on European Union specifies that any decision by the Union to move to a common defence would have to be taken by unanimous decision of the Member States and adopted in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements. The Government of Ireland have made a firm commitment to the people of Ireland, solemnized in this Declaration, that a referendum will be held in Ireland on the adoption of any such decision and on any future Treaty which would involve Ireland departing from its traditional policy of military neutrality.
6. Ireland reiterates that the participation of contingents of the Irish Defence Forces in overseas operations, including those carried out under the European security and defence policy, requires (a) the authorisation of the operation by the Security Council or the General Assembly of the United Nations, (b) the agreement of the Irish Government and (c) the approval of Dáil Éireann, in accordance with Irish law.
7. The situation set out in this Declaration would be unaffected by the entry into force of the Treaty of Nice. In the event of Ireland's ratification of the Treaty of Nice, this Declaration will be associated with Ireland's instrument of ratification.