

# STATEMENT BY EPP CHAIRMAN WILFRIED MARTENS ON THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

*Brussels, October 8, 2001*

The American military response in conjunction with its allies was not unexpected.

No alternative to this course of action was available under present circumstances. The civilised world is confronted with terrorist networks that have a total disregard for the sanctity of human life and values and as such must be removed.

The Taliban regime has demonstrated to the world its undemocratic nature and its complete heartlessness. It shows total disrespect for the Islamic faith. In addition to its support of the Al-Qaeda network, its extreme fundamentalist policies and practices have brought the country to ruination and millions of its citizens to the point of starvation, which surely cannot be the policy of Islam.

The past three weeks have demonstrated tremendous solidarity by democratic countries in combating this organised evil. I hope that Muslim leaders around the world will take a similar position in opposing Afghanistan's Taliban regime and its mentors such as Bin Laden who are a discredit to all civilised societies.