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## OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3482nd Council meeting

### Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 18 July 2016

President **Federica Mogherini**  
High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security  
Policy

# P R E S S

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<sup>1</sup> • Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.

• Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).

• Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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**ITEMS DEBATED**

**Fight against terrorism**

In the aftermath of the attack in Nice, ministers discussed the fight against terrorism. They observed a minute of silence at 12.00 to pay tribute to the victims. Ministers expressed their condolences to France, expressed their solidarity and readiness to continue supporting France in the Sahel and in all external operations, also on the basis of article 42.7, as invoked by France in November 2015. They also discussed the ongoing work on counter-terrorism.

Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy underlined that all ministers agreed that we need to eradicate the roots of the hatred that we saw hitting Nice, Dhaka, Bagdad and other places in Europe, Africa, in the Arab world and in Asia. She noted that it's a common threat to all of us, and that only a common approach that can be the answer.

**Turkey**

Over lunch, EU ministers discussed the latest development in Turkey. The Council then adopted the following conclusions:

"The EU strongly condemns the attempted coup in Turkey and reiterates its full support to the legitimate institutions of the country. It deplores the high number of casualties and stands in solidarity with the Turkish people. The EU welcomes the common position of the political parties in support of Turkey's democracy.

The EU calls for restraint to be shown by Turkish authorities, including by the police and security forces. All must be done to avoid further violence, to protect lives and to restore calm.

The EU calls for the full observance of Turkey's constitutional order and stresses the importance of the rule of law prevailing. It is crucial to ensure full respect for all democratic institutions of the country including the elected government and the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The EU underlines the need to respect democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms and the right of everyone to a fair trial in full compliance with the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, including Protocol 13 on the abolition of the death penalty. In this context, the EU recalls that the unequivocal rejection of the death penalty is an essential element of the Union acquis.

Turkey is a candidate country and a key partner for the European Union. The EU remains committed to working together with a democratic, inclusive and stable Turkey to address our common challenges."

**EU Global strategy**

EU foreign ministers had a discussion on the follow-up to be given to the EU global strategy on foreign and security policy that the High Representative presented to the European Council on 28 June. The strategy is intended to guide the EU foreign and security policy in the years to come. Ministers welcomed the document and expressed their readiness to continue the work in the implementation phase.

The High Representative concluded the debate underlining her intent to present in the Autumn a framework with processes and timelines. This framework will detailed the work to come to operationalise the vision set out in the strategy, on strands such as security and defence, but also policy coherence and civilian policies including sustainable development and migration, as well as the link between development and humanitarian aid.

**China**

The Council discussed the EU strategy towards China and adopted Council conclusions.

[Full text of the Council conclusions - EU Strategy on China](#)

**Latin America**

The Council discussed EU relations with Latin America, mainly with Venezuela but also on Colombia and Cuba. The High Representative also underlined the importance of the forthcoming EU-CELAC Foreign ministers meeting that will take place in the Dominican Republic on 25-26 October.

On Cuba, on 11 March 2016, the EU initialled a Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA), the first ever bilateral agreement between the EU and Cuba. The objective of EU remains to sign the PCDA by the end of the year.

On Colombia, the Council took positively note of the agreement of 23 June on a bilateral and definitive ceasefire and the end of hostilities.

The Council adopted the following conclusions on Venezuela:

- "1. The EU and Venezuela have strong historic and cultural links and share the same fundamental values and democratic principles. Venezuela is also a country where more than 600 000 European citizens currently reside. Those ties and close relations with the Venezuelan people underline the interest of the European Union in the political, social and economic stability of Venezuela.
1. In this context the European Union fully supports the efforts by Former Presidents Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, Mr. Leonel Fernández and Mr. Martín Torrijos to facilitate an urgent, constructive and effective dialogue between the government and the parliamentary majority in Venezuela. These efforts provide a crucial opportunity to create enabling conditions and a framework for peaceful and shared solutions to the country's multidimensional challenges. Therefore, the European Union urges all institutions and political players to engage in this process in full respect of the democratic and constitutional framework, rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms, including those of jailed opponents who cannot exercise their rights.
2. The European Union stands ready to support the efforts of dialogue in every way possible. In this context, the Council encourages the High Representative to maintain regular contacts with Mr. Rodriguez Zapatero and to support the work of the three former Presidents. The Council invites the High Representative, the EEAS and the Commission services to explore further ways for possible EU support to foster dialogue and overcome the economic and social challenges that the country is facing, including through assistance appropriate to most urgent needs.
3. The reconciliation in Venezuela is of the utmost importance both for the European Union and for countries in the region. The European Union believes that regional countries and organisations, as well as other main international partners, have a key role to play to encourage the government and the opposition to engage in a genuine dialogue and in addressing the pressing needs of the people of Venezuela."



**Migration**

Due to time constraints, the High Representative informed ministers that she would update member states in the coming days via other means on the state of play of the tasking set by the European Council in its June conclusions.

In these conclusions, the European Council called for a mobilisation of all EU relevant instruments and sources of funding. It highlighted the need for a partnership framework of cooperation with individual countries of origin and transit, focusing on saving lives at sea, increasing returns, enabling migrants and refugees to stay closer to home and, in the long term, helping third countries' development in order to address root causes of irregular migration by using all relevant EU policies and tools in close collaboration with member states. Federica Mogherini was appointed, both in her capacity as vice President of the Commission and as High Representative, to lead the implementation of this approach, in coordination with EU institutions and member states.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Somalia**

The Council is adopted conclusions on Somalia, calling for a credible and accountable electoral process, which will ensure the necessary legitimacy for the elected leadership. The Council highlights the importance of finalising the constitutional review process, establishing effective Somali security and defence forces, strengthening rule of law and enhancing stabilisation efforts, as well as speeding up the consolidation of the administrative structure of the federal Somali state.

[Read the full text of the conclusions](#)

**Afghanistan**

The Council adopted conclusions on Afghanistan, endorsing the second annual implementation report of the "European Union Afghanistan Strategy: 2014-16". The Council affirms in particular that the EU and member states overarching strategic goal should remain **the development of Afghan institutions** to safeguard progress to date and to make further progress in the development of a **more effective and ultimately sustainable Afghan state**. Key objectives are to promote security; reinforce democracy; encourage economic and human development ; strengthen the rule of law, including the fight against corruption, and the protection and promotion of human rights in particular the rights of women, including in the context of the peace process and continue the fight against the narcotic and drug industry.

The conclusions also mention the forthcoming **Brussels Conference on Afghanistan**, scheduled for 4-5 October and to be co-chaired by the EU and the Afghan government. The conference is expected to focus in particular on: progress in Afghan state and institution building through implementation of the **reform agenda**; international support in view of **sustained funding** at or near the current levels until 2020 as well as **regional support** for a political process towards **peace** and reinforced cross-border **economic cooperation**.

[Read the full text of the conclusions](#)

## **Pakistan**

The Council adopted conclusions on Pakistan. The EU relations with Pakistan are framed by a 5-year engagement plan adopted in 2016. The Council endorses the 2016 report on the implementation on the engagement plan, and to welcome the fact that relations with Pakistan have expanded in scope and intensity during implementation.

The Council invites the High Representative and the European Commission to initiate consultations with Pakistan on a framework for engagement beyond the EU-Pakistan 5-year engagement plan, with particular priority given to human rights, the strengthening of democracy, rule of law and governance, as well as migration including readmission.

[Read the full text of the conclusions](#)

## **South Sudan**

The Council adopted conclusions on the recent outbreak of violence in South Sudan.

[Read the full text of the conclusions](#)

## **Preparation of the EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial meeting**

The Council adopted the agenda for the EU-GCC joint council and ministerial meeting, held in Brussels on 18 July.

## **EU- Lebanon Euro-Mediterranean agreement - Protocols on accession of several countries to the EU and on participation in EU programmes**

The Council approved two decisions on the conclusion of a protocol to the EU-Lebanon Euro-Mediterranean agreement to take account of the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania.

It also adopted a decision on the conclusion of a protocol to the EU-Lebanon Euro-Mediterranean agreement which enables Lebanon to participate in EU programmes.

## **EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Council**

The Council adopted the EU's common position in view of the eighth meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council with Albania, to take place in Brussels on 8 September 2016.

## **Decision on the conclusion of a protocol for the participation of Azerbaijan in EU programmes**

The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of a protocol which enables Azerbaijan to participate in EU programmes such as Creative Europe or Horizon 2020. The participation of Eastern neighbourhood partners in EU programmes seeks to promote reform and modernisation in these countries.

## **EU priorities at the United Nations and the 71st UNGA**

The Council adopted the EU priorities at the United Nations and the 71st United Nations General Assembly (September 2016 – September 2017). The coming year will be focused on consolidation and implementation of the agreements reached in the past year. These include the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, the Addis Ababa action agenda of the third international conference on financing for development and the Paris climate agreement.

The priorities mention that the EU remains committed to strengthening the United Nations and continue playing an active role at the UN in all areas of relevant activities. The priorities also stresses the need for a truly global responsibility sharing on migration and refugees; solving crises and sustaining peace; tackling terrorism and violent extremism as some of the key challenges.

[Read the full text of the EU priorities at the United Nations and the 71st United Nations General Assembly](#)

## **Restrictive measures against the Democratic Republic of Congo**

The Council adopted amending legal acts which transpose into EU law the recent UN Security Council resolution renewing UN sanctions on the Democratic Republic of Congo until 1 July 2017. This Security Council resolution also provides certain amendments to the arms embargo exemptions and the designation criteria.

## **EUCAP Sahel Niger**

On 18 July 2016, the Council extended the mandate of EUCAP Sahel Niger until 15 July 2018 and agreed on a budget of €26.3 million for the period 16 July 2016 to 15 July 2017. The Council also adapted the mission's mandate to assist the Nigerien central and local authorities as well as the security forces in developing policies, techniques and procedures to better control and fight irregular migration.

[Link to press release](#)

## **EU-Central America association council agreement**

The Council adopted a decision on the EU position on the EU-Central America association council regarding the replacement of appendix 2 to annex 2 of the agreement. This appendix is based on the Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) of 2007. The modification seeks to update it to reflect the HS of 2012.

## **COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY**

### **Code of conduct and discipline for EU civilian CSDP missions**

The Council adopted a code of conduct and discipline for EU civilian CSDP missions (11036/16).

### **Staff regulations of the European Union Institute for Security Studies**

The Council adopted the decision concerning the staff regulations of the European Union Institute for Security Studies (5978/16).

## **JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**

### **Schengen Evaluation - Netherlands**

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2015 evaluation on the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of return by the Netherlands (11126/16).

**TRADE**

**EU-Jordan Euro-Mediterranean agreement - Rules of origin - Syrian refugees**

The Council approved a [decision](#) for a temporary relaxation of the rules of origin under the [EU-Jordan Euro-Mediterranean agreement](#) so as to enhance Jordan's exports to the Union and create additional employment opportunities, especially for Syrian refugees.

In the framework of the International Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region, held in London on 4 February 2016, Jordan declared its intention to permit Syrian refugees to participate in the formal labour market in Jordan.

The decision follows a request made by Jordan on 12 December 2015.

**EU-Egypt Euro-Mediterranean agreement -Protocol on accession of Croatia to the EU**

The Council approved a decision on the [signing and provisional application](#) of a [protocol](#) to the EU-Egypt Euro-Mediterranean agreement to take account of the accession of Croatia to the EU.

The [conclusion](#) of the protocol is pending of the consent of the European Parliament.

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Union for the Mediterranean ministerial conference on Employment and Labour**

The Council adopted the EU and its member states' position for the ministerial conference of the Union for the Mediterranean on Employment and Labour which will take place in Jordan on 27 September.