

Background¹
Brussels, 22 October 2015

FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council (Development) 26 October 2015 in Luxembourg

The Council, starting at 10.00, will be chaired by Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The Council will discuss **humanitarian affairs**, in preparation for the World Humanitarian Summit to be held in 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul and take note of the work of UN high-level panel on humanitarian financing, launched by the UN Secretary-General in May 2015.

EU development ministers will have their first in-depth discussion on the future of the **EU's relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries** in view of the expiry of the Cotonou agreement in 2020.

Over a joint lunch with ministers of environment, development ministers will have a discussion on how to take forward the **implementation of the 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development** "Transforming our world", which was adopted at the United Nations Summit in New York on 25-27 September 2015.

Following-up on their previous Council meeting on 26 May, development ministers will revisit **gender and development** issues and adopt Council conclusions in this regard.

Finally, the Council will discuss **migration, refugees and development**, focusing on how development cooperation can most effectively contribute to address the current challenges faced by Europe and its partner countries.

Press opportunities:

- 9.45 (tbc) Doorstep by High Representative F. Mogherini (arrival)
- 16.30 (tbc) Joint doorstep by High Representative F. Mogherini and Commissioner for international cooperation and development N. Mimica (departure)

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Press conferences and public events by video streaming: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu>

Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery on: www.eucouncil.tv

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¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

Humanitarian affairs

The Council will discuss humanitarian affairs. Ministers will have an orientation debate in preparation for the World Humanitarian Summit to be held in 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul.

The EU (the Commission and the member states together) is the world's largest humanitarian donor. From the EU budget alone, over EUR 2.3 billion a year are provided. However, despite record contributions from donors worldwide, the gap between humanitarian needs and the funding available for humanitarian response continues to grow. The Summit, called by the UN Secretary General, is the first multi-stakeholder occasion to review the global humanitarian system, which is faced by an unprecedented increase in the number of people affected by conflicts and natural disasters, including the highest number of displacements since World War II. It will be an opportunity for a critical assessment of the current state of humanitarian affairs.

The conversation will be informed by a recent communication and accompanying staff working document from the Commission "Towards the World Humanitarian Summit: A global partnership for principled and effective humanitarian action". The papers open the discussion on the most effective policies and tools for delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Commission Vice President Georgieva will present to ministers a report on the results of UN consultations in the framework of the UN high-level panel on humanitarian financing launched by the UN Secretary-General in May 2015.

[Communication from the Commission "Towards the World Humanitarian Summit: A global partnership for principled and effective humanitarian action"](#)

[Accompanying Commission staff working document](#)

EU-ACP relations post 2020

Development ministers will have an in-depth discussion on the future relations between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries in view of the expiry of the Cotonou agreement in 2020. They will build up on the preliminary discussion held by foreign affairs ministers in their Council meeting of 12 October and will explore further what would be the best successor arrangement to advance joint interests after 2020.

The Council discussion will be based on the joint consultation paper adopted by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commission on 6 October 2015. The consultation paper opens the discussion on the post-Cotonou EU-ACP relationship both on what the content of partnership should be ("Shared values and common interests"), and how it can best function ("Towards a more effective partnership").

The Cotonou agreement was signed on 23 June 2000 and is due to expire on 29 February 2020.

Relations between the EU and the ACP date back to 1975 and the first Lomé convention. Today, the EU-ACP partnership is comprehensive: it includes a political dimension, economic and trade cooperation as well as development cooperation.

Over the last two decades, major developments have taken place within the EU and within the ACP group of States. The EU has now 28 member states. The ACP group of States, composed of 79 countries (all ACP States are party to the Cotonou partnership agreement except Cuba), is more diverse than ever. The economic situation of many ACP countries has improved while others still face major challenges.

EU regional partnerships with Africa, with the Caribbean and with the Pacific Islands have been strengthened. At the international level, world leaders have just agreed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, setting a new global framework for poverty reduction and sustainable development with ambitious goals. The future relationship will have to adapt to the new realities of a multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder partnership.

[Joint consultation paper "Towards a new partnership between the EU and the ACP countries after 2020"](#)

[EU relations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States \(ACP\)](#)

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Over lunch, development ministers will have an exchange of views together with environment ministers on how to put into practice the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit (New York, 25-27 September 2015). It includes a set of sustainable development goals, that are broader than the millennium development goals, and they are also universal – for all countries to implement in both internal and external policies. It also incorporates the Addis Ababa action agenda on financing for development, agreed in July 2015.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda follows a long process of dialogue and negotiations, involving governments and non-state actors launched at the Rio+20 Summit in June 2012.

The 2030 Agenda responds to global challenges by addressing poverty eradication and the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a comprehensive way. The new 17 sustainable development goals and the 169 associated targets cover key areas such as poverty, inequality, food security, health, sustainable consumption and production, growth, employment, infrastructure, sustainable management of natural resources, oceans, climate change and gender equality and peaceful and inclusive societies.

[Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development \(UN\)](#)

Migration, refugees and development

In this last Council meeting in the Foreign Affairs configuration before the Valletta Summit on migration (11-12 November), EU development ministers will exchange views on the inter-related issues of migration and development.

In the light of the current crisis, the forthcoming Council discussion will explore the possible contribution of development cooperation to the EU's and Member States' response. It will build on the EU ministers' informal meeting in New York on 23 September, where they agreed on the importance to continue and increase their present engagement through development cooperation to address the root causes of forced displacement and irregular migration in Africa and elsewhere.

A global approach to migration and mobility was adopted in 2005 and updated in 2011, and provides an overarching framework for the EU's external migration policy, including migration and development. The action plan for 2014-2017 under the EU-Africa Migration and Mobility Dialogue focuses on six priorities including addressing the root causes of migration. The Rabat process, launched in 2006 in cooperation with countries of Western and Central Africa, the European Commission and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) also promotes dialogue on migration and development. In a similar vein, the Khartoum process was established in 2015 with countries of the Horn of Africa.

In response to the unprecedented migratory and refugee crisis, the EU stepped up its engagement and has strengthened its cooperation with third countries on migration both at bilateral and multilateral level. Ministers will also take stock of the progress made towards the setting up of an emergency trust fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa; which is expected to be a major deliverable of the Valletta Summit.

The Council will be invited to discuss around two main considerations:

- how development cooperation and assistance can make an effective and short-term impact contribution to the crisis response, and
- how can the EU further improve its instruments and policies, including through mainstreaming of migration-related issues.

[Council conclusions on Migration, 12 October 2015](#)

[Valletta Summit on migration, 11-12/11/2015](#)

[Finding solutions to migratory pressures](#)

Gender and development

Following-up on their Council meeting of 26 May, ministers will discuss how to support the promotion, fulfilment and protection of women's and girls' rights in EU external relations, policies and programmes.

In order to promote gender equality through external relations and development policies, the EU adopted in 2010 a gender action plan (GAP) on gender equality and women's empowerment in development for a five-year period. Ministers are expected to adopt conclusions on new plan for the period 2016 - 2020 which builds on the progress achieved and the lessons learned.

The new framework for action foresees that EU's gender policies in external relations should focus on four pivotal areas: girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity; social and economic rights; voice and participation; and shifting the institutional culture to more effectively deliver on EU commitments.

In its conclusions, the Council is expected to set out its orientations on promoting women's and girl's rights and women's empowerment, in particular in development cooperation.

[Council conclusions on Gender in Development, 26 May 2015](#)

[Joint staff working document "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020"](#)

Other items

The Council is expected to take a number of decisions without discussion ("A-items"):

Afghanistan

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on Afghanistan reaffirming the commitment of the EU to Afghanistan and its people in the critical phase the country has been experiencing over the past months. It is expected to call the government of Afghanistan and all partners in the region to engage credibly to end conflict and ensure a stable environment. The Council will also welcome the EU's decision to accept the invitation by the Afghan government to co-host the next comprehensive ministerial conference on Afghanistan in Brussels in 2016.

[EU relations with Afghanistan](#)

Burundi

The Council is set to approve a draft letter inviting Burundi's authorities to consultations in application of article 96 of the EU-ACP partnership agreement (the Cotonou agreement). The objective of the consultations is to encourage Burundi to commit to take measures within a time frame in sensitive areas such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, on the basis of the principles of the Arusha agreements. This decision is to be taken as part of the EU's action in support of efforts by the international community, and particularly by the East African Community and the African Union, to achieve a lasting political solution through an inter-Burundian dialogue.

[EU relations with Burundi](#)

Policy coherence for development

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on policy coherence for development, reaffirming its importance of policy coherence for development as a crucial contribution to increasing the effectiveness of EU development cooperation. The conclusions will invite the Commission and the EEAS to present concrete proposals on how to integrate policy coherence for development into the EU approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The Council will set out the EU's key objectives and priorities for the 14th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIV), which will establish the work programme for 2016-2020. The Council is expected to notably request that UNCTAD plays an important role in the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

EU Horn of Africa strategic framework

As a response to the current and recently more pronounced challenges in the Horn of Africa, the Council is due to adopt the EU Horn of Africa regional action plan 2015-2020. The action plan outlines the EU's comprehensive approach and complete existing policies, in particular the EU-Horn of Africa strategic framework adopted in 2011. It presents the EU's strategic orientations for its activities in 2015-20. The Council will reassert the EU attachment to continuing close co-operation with partners across the region in using all available instruments to support peace, stability, sustainable growth and prosperity.