



FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

25 June 2018 in Luxembourg

The Foreign Affairs Council, chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, will start at 9.30 with **a joint session between foreign affairs ministers and defence ministers**.

They will discuss EU cooperation in security and defence, including on the permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) and other defence initiatives, military mobility and the proposed European Peace Facility. It will also be an opportunity to follow-up to the tasking by the European Council of March 2018 on countering **hybrid threats**, as a joint communication by the High Representative and the Commission was adopted on 12 June.

The Council will adopt conclusions on security and defence. The Council is also expected to adopt a decision setting out the common set of governance rules for the projects undertaken in the context of PESCO.

Foreign ministers and defence ministers will then have a session on **EU-NATO cooperation** together with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. Ministers may refer, in particular, to progress made in cooperation on military mobility.

Foreign ministers will then discuss **Yemen** together with UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, who will brief on his peace plan. It will be an opportunity for the EU to reaffirm its commitment to a UN-facilitated negotiated solution and to discuss ongoing EU efforts on the crisis in the country. The Council will adopt conclusions on Yemen.

In the afternoon, the Council will discuss on **current affairs** allowing foreign ministers to review pressing issues on the international agenda.

The Council will then discuss and adopt conclusions on the **Horn of Africa and the Red Sea**, focusing on maritime security, economic development and migration.

The Council will then take stock of the progress made in the implementation of the **EU Global Strategy** on the basis of the second annual progress report.

Finally, the Council will discuss **Jordan**. The High Representative will debrief ministers on her visit of 9-10 June to the country.

The Council is expected to adopt a number of conclusions without debate, including on the Sahel/Mali, on EU priorities at the UN and UNGA 73 and on EU cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries.

Press opportunities:

- +/- 09.00 Doorstep by High Representative Federica Mogherini
- +/- 12.45 Press statement by High Representative Federica Mogherini on security and defence
- +/- 18.00 Press conference following the Foreign Affairs Council

[Press conferences and public events via video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

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

Security and defence

Foreign affairs ministers and defence ministers will exchange views on security and defence cooperation. Among other things, they will focus on PESCO, military mobility and the proposed European Peace Facility. They will also discuss hybrid threats. EU cooperation on security and defence has three strategic priorities: responding to external conflicts and crises, building the capacities of partners and protecting the EU and its citizens. Among the specific actions that have been undertaken to achieve these goals are:

- the **permanent structured cooperation - PESCO**, the Council is due to adopt a decision setting out a common set of governance rules for projects undertaken within the PESCO framework.

On 11 December 2017, the Council adopted a decision establishing PESCO. All EU member states are taking part in PESCO, except three countries (Denmark, Malta and the United Kingdom). Participating member states agreed on an initial list of 17 projects to be undertaken under PESCO. The projects cover areas such as training, capability development and operational readiness in the field of defence. These initial projects were formally adopted by the Council on 6 March 2018. On the same day, the Council adopted a roadmap for the implementation of PESCO.

- **military mobility**, with the aim of addressing the obstacles which are hampering the movement of military equipment and personnel across the EU.

The High Representative and the Commission presented a joint communication on improving military mobility in the EU on 10 November 2017 and an action plan on 28 March 2018. This is also an area identified for stronger cooperation between the EU and NATO as well as a project in the framework of PESCO. The Council is set to approve the military requirements for military mobility.

- the **European Defence Fund**, which is one of the key initiatives proposed by the Commission, reaffirmed in its proposal for the future multiannual financial framework (MFF 2021-2027).

On 13 June 2018, the European Commission presented its proposal for the future MFF in the field of defence, focusing on a European Defence Fund with a proposed envelope of €13 billion. The European Defence Fund aims to foster innovation and allow economies of scale in defence research and in the industrial development phase by supporting collaborative projects. This will strengthen the competitiveness of the Union's defence industry. With the same objective, the Commission proposed the establishment of a European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) under the current multiannual financial framework, on which the co-legislators reached an agreement on 23 May 2018.

- the proposal by the High Representative for a **European Peace Facility**, which would be an off-EU budget fund with a proposed allocation of €10.5 billion.

On 13 June 2018, the High Representative, with the support of the Commission, proposed to the Council to create a European Peace Facility, an off-EU budget mechanisms devoted to security and defence. The aim of the facility would be: funding the common costs of military operations under the Common Security and Defence Policy (currently covered by the Athena mechanisms); contributing to the financing of military peace support operations led by other international actors (such as the African Peace Facility today); and providing support to third states' armed forces to prevent conflicts, build peace and strengthen international security.

Ministers will also discuss how to strengthen the EU's ability to **counter hybrid threats**, on the basis of the joint communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats adopted by the Commission and the High Representative on 13 June 2018.

At the European Council of 22 March, in the aftermath of the Salisbury attack, EU leaders called for strengthening the EU's resilience to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear-related risks, including through closer cooperation between the European Union and its member states as well as NATO. They stated that the EU and its member states should reinforce their capabilities to address hybrid threats, including in the areas of cyber, strategic communication and counter-intelligence. They invited the European Commission and the High Representative to take this work forward and report on progress by the June European Council.

[EU cooperation on security and defence \(background information\)](#)

[Action Plan on military mobility, press release, 28 March 2018](#)

[EU budget: Stepping up the EU's role as a security and defence provider, 13 June 2018](#)

[A Europe that protects: EU works to build resilience and better counter hybrid threats, 13 June 2018](#)

EU-NATO cooperation

Foreign ministers and defence ministers will discuss EU-NATO cooperation together with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, ahead of the EU-NATO Summit to take place on 11-12 July.

On 8 June, the Council adopted conclusions on the third progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by the EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017.

A total of 74 concrete actions are currently driving the cooperation between the EU and NATO. They cover the following areas: hybrid threats, operational cooperation including maritime issues, cyber security, defence capabilities, defence industry and research, exercises, supporting partners' capacity building and political dialogue. Topics also include counter-terrorism, military mobility and women, peace and security.

The concrete actions have oriented the implementation of the July 2016 joint declaration between the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO.

[Factsheet on EU-NATO cooperation \(EEAS\)](#)

Yemen

Foreign ministers will discuss Yemen together with UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths. Martin Griffiths, who was appointed to his position on 16 February 2018, will have the opportunity to brief on his peace plan, following his presentation to the UN Security Council on 18 June 2018. It will be an opportunity to exchange views on the ongoing EU efforts, including political outreach (in particular the regional dialogue with Iran on Yemen), humanitarian and development support, and to explore ways to strengthen the UN-led process. The council will adopt conclusions on Yemen.

The discussion will take place in the context of the recent intensification of military operations in and around the port of Hodeidah. Hodeidah is one of the most densely populated areas in Yemen, with an estimated population of more than 600 000 people, and 70% of food imports to Yemen transit through its port. The ongoing operation could have a massive impact on the delivery of commercial and humanitarian items to Yemen, where more than 22 million people are in need of humanitarian or protection support.

The Council last adopted conclusions on Yemen on 3 April 2017. On 11 December 2017, in the context of a broader discussion on the Middle East, foreign ministers expressed their concern at the serious deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Yemen. They agreed to continue working to re-invigorate UN-led efforts towards a political solution to the conflict in Yemen, in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

[Statement by the High Representative Mogherini and Commissioner Stylianides on the latest developments around Hodeidah, Yemen on 13 June 2018](#)

[Council conclusions on Yemen, 3 April 2017](#)

Current affairs

Foreign ministers will review pressing issues on the international agenda. The High Representative and ministers may refer to the conference on Libya hosted in Paris on 29 May, the Summit between the US President Trump and DPRK leader Kim Jong-Un on 12 June in Singapore, the elections in Turkey and the agreement announced by Prime Minister Tsipras and Prime Minister Zaev on the name issue. The High Representative may also refer to the main outcomes of the event on climate and security that she hosted on 22 June in Brussels.

[Statement by High Representative Federica Mogherini on the outcome of the summit between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 12 June 2018](#)

[Speech by High Representative Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on Libya, 29 May 2018](#)

[Joint press statement by European Council President Donald Tusk and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg on the solution to the "name dispute", 13 June 2018](#)

[Statement by High Representative Mogherini and Commissioner Hahn on the agreement announced by Prime Ministers Tsipras and Zaev on the name issue, 12 June 2018](#)

[Climate, Peace and Security: the time for action, 5 June 2018 \(EEAS website\)](#)

Horn of Africa and the Red Sea

The Council will discuss the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea and will adopt conclusions.

Developments in the Gulf region have triggered a renewed geopolitical competition on both shores of the Red Sea. Combined with the absence of adequate system of cooperation and conflict prevention and management mechanisms, those developments, not least the conflict in Yemen, are dangerously affecting security in and around the Red Sea. This could jeopardise EU security and interests by impacting freedom of navigation and further destabilise the Horn of Africa.

In this context, ministers will discuss how to boost EU engagement to foster an inclusive regional dialogue on issues such as economic integration and peace and security, including maritime security. At stake are the preservation of the security of the Bab el Mandeb/Gulf of Aden maritime route - through which a significant proportion of all imports from and exports to Europe transits; the harnessing of irregular migration flows; the containment of terrorist threats and the prevention of instability in the EU's wider neighbourhood.

In its conclusions, the Council is expected to underline the importance of the Red Sea region in geopolitical and strategic terms to global trade, regional economics and overall stability. It is set to express the EU's readiness to engage with all the relevant actors and to contribute to reviving ties and building a community of shared interests, commerce, investment and security. As the peace, security and development of this wider region would benefit from more cooperation, not competition, the EU is expected to express its encouragement for the creation of an organised and inclusive regional forum for dialogue and cooperation around the Red Sea as a matter of urgency. The Council is also due to reaffirm that the EU will continue to work towards reinforcing inter- and intra-regional cooperation with partners across the Horn of Africa, using all available instruments.

The EU is strongly engaged in the Horn of Africa, through political dialogue, its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions (EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta, EUCAP Somalia, EUTM Somalia), and development cooperation. Through regional and bilateral programmes and the Trust Fund for Africa, the EU is providing over €3 billion to the Horn of Africa (2014-2020). The EU has a Special Representative to the Horn of Africa, Alexander Rondos, whose mandate is to contribute actively to regional and international efforts to achieve lasting peace, security and development in the region and to enhance the quality, intensity and impact of the EU's multifaceted engagement in the Horn of Africa.

EU Global Strategy

The Council will discuss the EU Global Strategy on the basis of the second annual progress report by the High Representative. The second report on the implementation of the EU Global Strategy focuses on the progress already achieved in the areas of security and defence; resilience and the integrated approach; better linking the internal and external policies of the EU and public diplomacy. Two new priorities already identified in the EU Global Strategy were added as specific priorities of implementation last year: strengthening regional orders and reinforcing the rules based multilateral order.

On 19 June 2017, foreign ministers discussed the first annual progress report and highlighted the important work achieved in the areas of security and defence cooperation and on strengthening state and societal resilience in the EU's neighbourhood and beyond. On 17 July 2017, at their subsequent meeting, foreign ministers provided further guidance on the priorities for 2017-2018, agreeing that these should include both a follow-up to the strands of work of the first year and new initiatives.

The High Representative presented the EU Global Strategy "Shared vision, common action: a stronger Europe" to the European Council on 28 June 2016. The strategy is intended to guide EU foreign and security policy in the years to come. The European Council welcomed the presentation and invited the High Representative, the Commission and the Council to take the work forward.

[EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy \(website\)](#)

Jordan

The Council will discuss Jordan. High Representative Federica Mogherini will inform ministers about her visit to Jordan on 9-10 June 2018.

Foreign ministers will take stock of relations between the EU and Jordan, including the socio-economic cooperation under the EU-Jordan partnership. They will discuss how to continue supporting the country in the best possible way at a critical time, as Jordan has just changed government in a context of economic difficulties and social contestation.

Moreover, Jordan is one of the countries most affected by the crisis in Syria, hosting more than 657 000 Syrian refugees. This gives the country the second highest share of refugees in the world in proportion of its population (around 9%). The EU has supported Jordan with over €1.8 billion in assistance to refugees and vulnerable communities since the beginning of the crisis. This commitment was renewed at the occasion of the Brussels II conference on supporting the future of Syria and the region (24-25 April 2018).

[Remarks by High Representative Federica Mogherini at the press conference with Ayman Al Safadi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan, 10 June 2018 \(EEAS website\)](#)
[European Union response to the Syria refugee crisis in Jordan \(EEAS website\)](#)

Other items

The Council is expected to adopt a number of decisions and conclusions without debate, including Council conclusions on the Sahel/Mali, the negotiating mandate for the future agreement between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, Council conclusions on EU priorities at the UN and UNGA73 and Council conclusions on EU cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries.

Council conclusions on the Sahel/Mali

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the Sahel/Mali. The Council is expected to reiterate the EU's strategic and comprehensive engagement towards the Sahel region. The Council will reaffirm that the EU will continue to support the stabilisation efforts of the G5 Sahel countries as a basis for the development of the Sahel. The Council is set to call for enhanced coordination with all international actors involved to tackle the root causes of the multiple challenges in the region and promote its sustainable and inclusive development.

In relation to the situation in Mali, the Council is due to underline the need for consistent progress in the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. The Council will reaffirm the EU's commitment to support Mali in the forthcoming electoral process and to accompany Mali in its efforts to improve the security and the development of the north and centre of the country.

[Mali and the Sahel: Council adopts conclusions \(press release, 19/06/2018\)](#)
[Factsheet on the European Union and the Sahel \(EEAS\)](#)
[EU Delegation to Mali](#)

Council conclusions on EU priorities at the UN and UNGA 73

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the EU priorities at the UN and at the 73rd UN General Assembly (UNGA). The conclusions are expected to highlight how in today's volatile and unpredictable world, the EU will engage to boost multilateralism.

The conclusions are also expected to identify the key EU priorities for supporting the UN through a period of change, translating the EU commitment to multilateralism into a proactive multilateral agenda. For the 73rd UNGA, the EU will focus on peace and conflict prevention, a common positive agenda with the promotion and protection of human rights at the heart of multilateralism, as well as an expanding global engagement in issues such as climate action, the environment, migration, counterterrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The conclusions are also expected to highlight that partnerships and outreach are essential to deliver a strong multilateralism at the country level, where it matters the most. The conclusions are expected to underscore the importance of an overarching EU-UN strategic partnership.

[The EU at the UN General Assembly \(background information\)](#)

Council conclusions on EU cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on EU cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries. The Council is set to underline that sustainable urban development as well as inclusive, balanced, integrated territorial and urban policies are essential for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable", as well as all the other SDGs.

The Council will note that the built-up areas of cities in developing countries, particularly in Asia and Africa, are expected to increase in size by 200% by 2030, and that urbanisation and associated challenges are also significant in other regions. The Council is set to note that the continued rapid pace of urbanisation implies that the fulfilment of EU policy objectives can only be achieved through strengthened partnerships with cities and relevant local authorities in third countries.