



FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

15 July 2019

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 discussion on **current affairs**, allowing ministers to review pressing issues and latest developments on the international agenda.

Foreign ministers will discuss **Iran** in light of recent developments. The discussion follows the meeting of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) on 28 June and the recent announcements and steps by Tehran to reduce its implementation of certain aspects of the JCPoA.

The Council will also discuss and adopt conclusions on **Iraq**. Foreign ministers will take stock of the situation following parliamentary elections one year ago and in the context of mounting regional tensions.

The Council will discuss the situation in the **Central African Republic**. Ministers will reflect on how the EU could further strengthen its support to the country in view of the rising violence. The High Representative will debrief ministers on her visit to Bangui on 12 July.

Over lunch, EU foreign ministers will have an exchange of views with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, **Nicolae Popescu**.

The Council is expected to adopt a number of conclusions and decisions without debate, including conclusions on EU priorities at the United Nations and the 74th UN General Assembly.

Press opportunities:

+/- 9.20 (tbc) Doorstep by High Representative Federica Mogherini

+/- 16.00 Press conference following the Foreign Affairs Council

[Council meeting page](#)

[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 Council press office.

Current affairs

The Foreign Affairs Council will start with a discussion on current affairs. The High Representative and foreign ministers will touch upon recent developments in **Sudan**, following up on the discussion at their last meeting and **Venezuela**, following the visit by the newly appointed Special Adviser for Venezuela Enrique Iglesias. Ministers may also touch on **Turkey's** current illegal drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. Developments in the **Council of Europe** may also be raised.

The High Representative may also debrief ministers on the **EU-Ukraine Summit** on 8 July and the **EU-G5 Sahel** ministerial meeting as well as her mission to several countries of the region.

[Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in Sudan, 28 June 2016](#)

[Sudan: Foreign Affairs Council statement, 17 June 2019](#)

[Venezuela: the Council's response to the crisis \(background information\)](#)

[EU-Ukraine summit, Kyiv, Ukraine, 08/07/2019](#)

[Cinquième Réunion Ministérielle entre la Haute Représentante de l'Union Européenne et les Ministres en charge des Affaires Etrangères du G5 Sahel, press release, 10 July 2019](#)

Iran

Foreign ministers will discuss Iran, where they are expected to focus on the tense situation in and around the Persian Gulf region, and on ways to reduce the ongoing risk of miscalculation which could result in military escalation. They are also due to address the current state of play regarding the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) following the meeting of the Joint Commission of the JCPOA on 28 June and in light of recent developments on 1 and 7 July regarding Iran's incremental reduction of its nuclear related commitments.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has confirmed that Iran has exceeded the limits provided by the JCPOA for both the 300kg stockpile of low-enriched uranium and the 3.67% enrichment level. An emergency meeting of the IAEA's board of governors was also convened on 10 July.

The EU is deeply concerned that Iran is pursuing activities inconsistent with its commitments under the JCPOA. The EU has been consistent and clear that its commitment to the nuclear deal depends on full compliance by Iran. Compliance issues must be addressed within the framework of the JCPOA, and a Joint Commission should be convened urgently.

The Council last discussed Iran on 13 May 2019. During that meeting, foreign ministers focused on the implementation of the JCPOA following the decision by the United States not to extend waivers with regards to trade in oil with Iran and not to fully renew them for JCPOA nuclear non-proliferation projects as well as in the context of the announcement by Iran on 8 May 2019 concerning its commitments under the JCPOA. Ministers also discussed the ongoing EU efforts to enable the continuation of legitimate trade with Iran, including through the operationalisation of the special purpose vehicle "INSTEX".

[Joint statement of the foreign ministers of France, Germany, the UK, and the High Representative of the European Union on Iran / JCPOA \(09/07/2019\)](#)

[Joint statement of the foreign ministers of France, Germany, the UK, and the High Representative of the European Union on Iran / JCPOA \(02/07/2019\)](#)

[Chair's statement following the 28 June 2019 meeting of the Joint Commission of the JCPOA](#)

[Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and restrictive measures \(background information\)](#)

Iraq

The Council will discuss Iraq and adopt conclusions. Foreign ministers will take stock of developments in the country. They will discuss how the EU can further support Iraq in this challenging moment complicated by the context of mounting regional tensions.

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions, building on those adopted in January 2018, which endorsed the EU Strategy for Iraq. In its conclusions, the Council is expected to reiterate the EU's steadfast support for Iraq's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the importance of Iraqi ownership of the country's internal political and economic reform processes. Furthermore, it will underline the EU's continued commitment to the preservation of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of Iraqi society.

The Council is also set to welcome the formation of a Federal Government, including the recent ministerial appointments. It is due to affirm that it is now crucial that all political players and institutions in Iraq work together to address the country's urgent needs, especially in relation to the provision of security, basic services and sustainable jobs for all Iraqis across the country.

The EU relation with Iraq is focused on the implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq, including enhanced political cooperation, and on the continued implementation of the EU Strategy for Iraq of January 2018. This EU-Iraq partnership has been underpinned by EU financial support in excess of EUR 1.2 billion since 2014 from the EU institutions alone.

The EU also supports Iraq through its CSDP advisory mission (EUAM Iraq) which was launched on 16 October 2017 to assist with the implementation of the civilian aspects of security sector reform in Iraq. The mission helps the Iraqi authorities by providing strategic advice on the overall security policy and institutional reform, as well as on the fight against terrorism, organised crime and violent extremism.

[EU delegation to Iraq](#)

[EU Advisory Mission \(EUAM\) in support of security sector reform in Iraq](#)

Informal lunch

Foreign ministers will have an exchange of views with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, **Nicolae Popescu**.

In its conclusions of 20 June 2019, the European Council welcomed the peaceful transfer of power in the Republic of Moldova. It invited the European Commission and the High Representative to work on a set of concrete measures to support the Republic of Moldova, based on its sustained implementation of reforms under the Association Agreement / DCFTA.

In this context, foreign ministers may convey their support and their expectations, in particular on the implementation of reforms related to the Association Agreement, and their willingness to resume conditional financial support from the EU to the Republic of Moldova.

[EU-Moldova relations - factsheet \(EEAS\)](#)

[EU relations with the Republic of Moldova \(Background information, Council website\)](#)

Central African Republic

The Council will discuss the Central African Republic. Ministers will reflect on how the EU could further strengthen its support to the country in view of the rising violence. The High Representative travels to Bangui on 11-12 July and will debrief ministers on her visit.

Ministers will address the situation in CAR which remains fragile, as progress in the implementation of the peace agreement signed in Bangui on 6 February 2019 remains insufficient and security incidents are recurring. They are expected to confirm the EU commitment to the country and to discuss how the EU can further strengthen its support through its different instruments on the path to stability, peace and development.

In this context, ministers may consider the opportunity of establishing a civilian CSDP mission to provide strategic advice to the civilian security forces of CAR. This mission would complement the EU military training mission EUTM RCA which provides training and advice to the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) and also includes a civil-military interoperability pillar. The EUTM RCA is mandated to lead the reform of the security sector. The EU also works with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in CAR (MINUSCA), which supports the CAR and helps them restore State authority.

The EU is one of the most important political and cooperation partners of CAR, including with its training mission EUTM RCA and a substantial development cooperation contribution (€ 487 million for 2017-2020) as well as significant humanitarian aid. The EU and its member states also contribute to development needs in CAR through the Békou Turst fund. The fund has currently a budget of €242,73 million. It finances projects in economic governance, education and health, the security sector reform and democratic governance, as well as rural resilience and employment. The EU also supports actions to help implement the Peace Agreement.

The Council last discussed the CAR on 15 October 2018, when it also adopted conclusions.

[Council conclusions on Central African Republic, 15 October 2018](#)

[Delegation of the EU to RCA](#)

[EUTM RCA](#)

External aspects of migration

Foreign ministers will discuss migration, focusing on external aspects. They will take stock of progress achieved and recent developments.

Over the past four years, joint efforts of the EU, its member states and UN agencies have delivered significant results. The trilateral taskforce on Libya (African Union, European Union and United Nations) has worked towards better protection of migrants and refugees in Libya, helping more than 45 000 people to return safely to their countries of origin from in Libya, whereas 4 000 persons in need of protection have been evacuated. Cooperation on migration, including on returns, with several key countries of origin has been enhanced.

Irregular migration flows to Europe have been significantly decreased. Efforts to better tackle irregular migration and to fight smuggling networks have been considerably strengthened, including through the work of CSDP missions.

Significant EU funding is also being allocated under a wide range of instruments to projects in countries of origin and transit. The EU Emergency trust fund for Africa has in particular demonstrated its added value as a swift and effective implementation tool in view of addressing the root causes of forced displacement and irregular migration and improving migration management. It has currently 205 programmes in place for a total amount of 3.9 billion in targeted initiatives along the main migratory routes. These programmes are dedicated to the creation of jobs and economic opportunities especially for young people and women in local communities, as well as to supporting resilience of and providing basic services for local populations, strengthening the fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and improving stability and governance.

[EU migration policy \(background information\)](#)

Other items

The Council is expected to adopt a number of decisions and conclusions without debate.

EU priorities at the UN and UNGA 74

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the EU's priorities at the 74th UN General Assembly. These conclusions will complement the Council conclusions on strengthening multilateralism adopted on 17 June 2019.

The Council is expected to state that the EU's engagement for a more peaceful, cooperative and just world rests on common values - peace, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, gender equality, sustainable development - as well as the EU's profound commitment to effective multilateralism.

In recent years, the EU has intensified its engagement as a global player and is translating multilateralism into action. In the current global context, the EU seeks to reaffirm the added value and relevance of the UN, and to prove that it delivers benefits to people around the world. The EU will continue to work with and support the United Nations, as part of its efforts to promote, develop and reform the rules-based international order.

The conclusions will establish three mutually reinforcing priorities for the EU and its member states for the duration of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly: 1. Conflict prevention, peace and security, 2. A common positive agenda, 3. Engagement on global challenges.

[Council Conclusions on strengthening multilateralism, 17 June 2019](#)

[The EU and the UN: factsheet \(EEAS website\)](#)

[Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations - New York](#)
