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Foreign Affairs

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

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¹ • 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**Current affairs**

The High Representative and foreign ministers discussed the most pressing issues on the international agenda. They referred to the situation regarding Turkey's current illegal drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Council adopted conclusions on Turkish drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean (see "other items approved").

Foreign ministers also discussed the recent developments in Sudan. Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto visited the region on behalf of the EU. Foreign ministers noted that the agreement reached between the Transitional Military Council and Forces for Freedom and Change on 11 July is an important breakthrough, and underlined the importance of supporting the civilian transition, including through additional financial support.

Ministers also touched on Venezuela, following the visit of Special Adviser Enrique Iglesias to Caracas from 7 to 10 July. They reiterated the EU's support for all the efforts, in particular the Oslo process, to find a political solution, while underlining their strong concern over the human rights situation following the report published by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet on 5 July 2019.

The High Representative also referred to the EU-Ukraine Summit, which was held in Kiev on 8 July. Reference was also made to the commemorations of the 5th anniversary of the downing of MH17.

The High Representative also informed about her recent visit to the Sahel region (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger) and about the outcome of the fifth EU-G5 Sahel ministerial meeting in Ouagadougou (9 July).

Iran

The Council discussed Iran in light of the developments in the region and recent announcements and steps by Tehran to reduce its implementation of certain aspects of the Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Ministers discussed the tense situation in the Gulf region and ways of reducing the ongoing risk of miscalculation which could result in military escalation.

They also addressed the current state of play on the implementation of the JCPOA. They reiterated that the EU regrets the decision by the US to re-impose sanctions on Iran following their withdrawal from the JCPOA. They took stock of ongoing EU efforts to enable the continuation of legitimate trade with Iran, including through the special purpose vehicle "INSTEX" which is now operational. They also urged Iran to reverse the steps taken and reaffirmed that the EU's commitment to the nuclear deal depends on full compliance by Iran and that compliance issues must be addressed within the framework of the JCPOA.

Iraq

The High Representative informed ministers about her visit to Bagdad on 13-14 July. Foreign ministers then took stock of developments in the country. They discussed how the EU can provide further support. The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. " The EU recalls its January 2018 Council Conclusions endorsing the EU Strategy for Iraq. The EU reiterates its steadfast support for Iraq's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the importance of Iraqi ownership of the country's internal political and reform processes. It underlines its continued commitment to the preservation of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of Iraqi society. The EU also reaffirms its strong support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as for UNAMI's work.

2. The federal elections held in May 2018 reaffirm Iraq's commitment to democracy.
The EU welcomes the formation of a Federal Government, including the recent ministerial appointments. 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. These steps, together with continued efforts towards national and local reconciliation and the voluntary, dignified, safe and non-discriminatory return of internally displaced persons, are essential to restore trust between the Iraqi people and their political institutions.

3. Strong Iraqi ownership of reforms and of the reconstruction process is necessary.
On that basis, the EU reaffirms its readiness to support the Government of Iraq in the implementation of its programme of political, social, economic and security sector reforms, with a special focus on:
 - a. Strengthening democratic and inclusive governance, fighting corruption, building institutional capacity, improving public services and the effective delivery of basic services, especially water and electricity;

 - b. Improving the business environment, and creating the basis for a more sustainable, diversified, and green Iraqi economy in line with the commitments made at the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq in February 2018. The EU calls for the international partners to deliver on the pledges they made in Kuwait in a timely fashion. Economic and financial reforms are necessary to attract further investments and support;

 - c. Civilian security sector reform, upholding rule of law and ensuring effective control of the Iraqi state over all armed groups and full respect of human rights, is crucial for the future stability of Iraq. The EU and its Member States will maintain their efforts, including in the framework of the Global Coalition against Da'esh, to support the Iraqi authorities in addressing the continued Da'esh terrorist threat, strengthening the justice sector and reforming the police. The EU will also continue to provide support to Iraq on civilian security sector reform through the EU Advisory Mission (EUAM Iraq).

4. In all processes, inclusive citizenship, respect for human rights and gender equality need to be promoted. The full participation of women, youth, civil society and all components of Iraqi society, including ethnic and religious minorities, as well as the full protection of children's rights, need to be ensured at the national, regional and local level.

5. The EU notes with satisfaction the election of the President and the formation of the Kurdistan Regional Government after the holding of regional elections in September 2018. The EU welcomes the improved relations between the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and encourages both parties to maintain the dialogue based on the Constitution of Iraq. Joint work to improve governance and security coordination in the "disputed territories" is especially needed.
6. The EU is focused on the implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq (PCA), 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.
7. The EU welcomes the recent dialogue on migration based on Article 105 of the PCA and stresses the importance of working with the Iraqi authorities on strengthening cooperation and putting into practice their obligation on the return and readmission of own nationals in full respect of the rights, obligations and responsibilities of the parties arising from relevant International Law.
8. The EU fully supports the work being carried out by the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), and cooperation with the Iraqi authorities on the collection and analysis of evidence in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2379. The EU reaffirms its principled objection to the use of the death penalty. Progress in accountability with due process and respect for human rights for persons who have committed crimes in Iraq, including Foreign Terrorist Fighters, is a priority for the EU.
9. In view of the current tensions in the region, the EU underlines the importance for all countries in the region, and all international actors engaged in the region, to fully respect Iraq's sovereignty and its policy of constructive engagement with its neighbours. The EU expressly welcomes the Presidency and Government of Iraq's consistent pursuit of a balanced policy in the region, including its recent outreach efforts."

Central African Republic

The Council discussed the Central African Republic. Ministers reflected on how the EU could further strengthen its support to encourage further implementation of the peace agreement signed in Bangui on 6 February 2019.

They agreed to start working on plans for a possible civilian CSDP mission to support 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.

External aspects of migration

Foreign ministers discussed the external aspects of migration. Ministers agreed on the need to step up efforts to address the issue more effectively. In particular, they noted the need to increase financial resources, in particular for the EU Trust Fund for Africa.

Foreign ministers also discussed the importance of accelerating resettlements of persons in need of international protection. They also highlighted the need to make progress on the issue of disembarkation of migrants rescued at sea, which is the responsibility of Justice and Home Affairs ministers.

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

Informal exchange of views

Foreign ministers had an informal 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.

Foreign ministers conveyed their support, as well as 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 relations with the Republic of Moldova \(Background information, Council website\)](#)

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

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**FOREIGN AFFAIRS****Council conclusions on Turkish drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "Recalling the Council conclusions of 18 June 2019 and previous European Council conclusions, notably those of 20 June 2019, the Council deplores that, despite the European Union's repeated calls to cease its illegal activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey continued its drilling operations west of Cyprus and launched a second drilling operation northeast of Cyprus within Cypriot territorial waters. The Council reiterates the serious immediate negative impact that such illegal actions have across the range of EU-Turkey relations. The Council calls again on Turkey to refrain from such actions, act in a spirit of good neighbourliness and respect the sovereignty and sovereign rights of Cyprus in accordance with international law.
2. The Council, welcoming the invitation by the Government of Cyprus to negotiate with Turkey, notes that delimitation of exclusive economic zones and continental shelf should be addressed through dialogue and negotiation in good faith, in full respect of international law and in accordance with the principle of good neighbourly relations.
3. The EU remains fully committed to supporting the UN-led efforts to work with the parties with a view to creating the conditions conducive to resuming negotiations on a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. In this regard, the Council recalls that it remains crucial that Turkey commits and contributes to such a settlement, including its external aspects, within the UN framework in accordance with relevant UNSC Resolutions and in line with the principles on which the EU is founded and the *acquis*.
4. In light of Turkey's continued and new illegal drilling activities, the Council decides to suspend negotiations on the Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement and agrees not to hold the Association Council and further meetings of the EU-Turkey high-level dialogues for the time being. The Council endorses the Commission's proposal to reduce the pre-accession assistance to Turkey for 2020 and invites the European Investment Bank to review its lending activities in Turkey, notably with regard to sovereign-backed lending.

5. The Council remains seized of the matter and, in accordance with the European Council conclusions of 20 June, invites the High Representative and the Commission to continue work on options for targeted measures in light of Turkey's continued drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Council will closely monitor developments and will revert to this issue as appropriate."

Council conclusions on the EU's priorities at the 74th UN General Assembly

The Council today adopted conclusions on the EU's priorities at the 74th UN General Assembly (September 2019 – September 2020). These conclusions complements the Council conclusions on strengthening multilateralism which were adopted on 17 June 2019.

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.

Recognising the importance of the United Nations at the core of effective multilateralism, the EU and its member states will focus at the 74th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on three mutually reinforcing priorities: 1. Conflict prevention, peace and security, 2. A common positive agenda, 3. Engagement on global challenges.

[Full text of the Council conclusions](#)

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

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

Sanctions against North Korea

The Council reviewed its autonomous list of those subject to restrictive measures under the sanctions regime against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). It confirmed the sanctions in place, which consist of a travel ban and an asset freeze, on the listed individuals and entities.

The individuals and entities listed are under sanctions for contributing to the DPRK's nuclear-related, ballistic-missile-related or other weapons of mass destruction-related programmes or for sanctions evasion. The total number of persons listed by the EU autonomously is 57. In addition, the EU has frozen the assets of 9 entities as part of its own sanctions regime. It has also transposed all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which impose sanctions on 80 persons and 75 entities currently listed by the UN.

The EU's sanctions against the DPRK are the toughest against any country. They were adopted in response to its nuclear weapon and ballistic missile development activities, which are in breach of numerous UNSC resolutions. The EU not only transposes the sanctions imposed by the UN, but also has its own autonomous sanctions regime on the DPRK, which complements and reinforces the sanctions adopted by the UN.

The EU has repeatedly expressed its strong conviction that lasting peace and denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula must be achieved by peaceful means, and that the diplomatic process must be continued as the only way towards realising that goal.

The ultimate goal, shared by the entire international community and as expressed by the United Nations Security Council, remains the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

This decision was adopted by the Council following the annual review of the sanctions. The legal acts are published in the Official Journal of 16 July 2019.

[EU restrictive measures against North Korea](#)

[EU-Democratic People's Republic of Korea \(DPRK\) relations, factsheet](#)

Joint EU-ACP declaration on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Council authorised the opening of negotiations on a joint political declaration of the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Union on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation. The intention is to adopt it in connection with the SDGs Summit in New York on 24-25 September 2019.

[SDG Summit](#)

EU-Cuba relations

The Council adopted the EU's position in view of the second EU-Cuba Joint Council that will take place on 9 September in Havana. It will be co-chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini and Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez.

The objective of Joint Council is to review progress on implementation of PDCA. The EU and Cuba will take stock of their political dialogues, including the political dialogue on human rights. They will discuss future cooperation, trade and investment, including ways to respond to the full activation of the Helms-Burton (LIBERTAD) Act by the United States. They will review their cooperation on regional and global issues, such as Venezuela, Nicaragua, EU-CELAC or climate change. They will also discuss recent developments in Cuba et in the EU.

[EU-Cuba Joint Council, first meeting, 15 September 2019](#)

Military requirements

The Council approved the update of the military requirements for military mobility within and beyond the EU. This is a step in the implementation of the EU action plan on military mobility, following the gap analysis performed by EU services. The update covers the technical and geographical parameters of the military requirements and was developed in close consultation with NATO.

The update of the Military Requirements will allow the process to move forward with the expected definition of dual-use transport infrastructure requirements by the end of 2019. The overall progress achieved so far was reported to the Council and the European Parliament in the beginning of June 2019 with the first joint progress report by the High Representative and the Commission on the implementation of the action plan on military mobility.

[Joint progress report on the implementation of the action plan on military mobility, June 2019](#)

ASEAN Regional Forum statement on aviation partnership

The Council approved the adoption of an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) statement on aviation partnership. The draft statement recognises the importance of safe and secure air transport in strengthening ARF Participants' cooperation and ASEAN economic integration.

It aims to encourage implementing practices consistent with international norms and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) in the realm of aviation.

The statement is expected to be adopted in Bangkok, Thailand, at the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting of 2 August 2019.

ASEAN Regional Forum statement on "Promoting women, peace and security at the ASEAN Regional Forum"

The Council approved the adoption of an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) statement on "Promoting women, peace and security at the ASEAN Regional Forum". The statement aims to promote meaningful participation of women, women's organisations and networks in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict state building.

The statement is expected to be adopted in Bangkok, Thailand, at the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting of 2 August 2019.

Sanctions on South Sudan

The Council transposed an amendment adopted by the UN concerning one person listed under the South Sudan sanctions framework.

EU relations with the Philippines

The Council adopted the position to be taken on behalf of the EU in the Joint Committee established by the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between the EU and the Philippines, regarding the adoption of decisions on the rules of procedure of the Joint Committee and of terms of reference of the specialised sub-committees.

EU relations with Côte d'Ivoire

The Council adopted the position to be taken by the EU in the Côte d'Ivoire-EU EPA Committee regarding adoption of Protocol 1 concerning the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods for administrative cooperation (rules of origin).

TRANSPORT**Preparation of the 40th ICAO Assembly**

The Council endorsed the text of six Working Papers and one Information paper to be submitted by Finland on behalf of the European Union and its Member States to the 40th Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), which will be held from 26 September to 4 October 2019 in Montréal. ([10716/19](#))

ENERGY**Modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty**

The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to enter into negotiations on the modernisation of the Energy Charter Treaty ([10738/19](#)). The Council also adopted negotiating directives ([10745/19 ADD 1](#)). In parallel, the representatives of the governments of the member states that are parties to the Energy Charter Treaty adopted a decision authorising the Commission to enter into negotiations for the elements falling under the competence of the member states. Several member states and the Commission submitted statements ([10738/19 ADD1](#)).

See also the [press release](#).
