



Foreign Affairs Council 25 January 2021

The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) meeting will be chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep **Borrell**, starting at **09.00h**.

Under current affairs, the Council will take stock of the latest international developments. These should include: an update on the **EU strategy for sharing COVID-19 vaccines with third countries**, the detention of Alexey **Navalny** in Russia, **transatlantic relations**, **Iran** and the JCPOA, the security situation in the **Horn of Africa** and the **Gulf**, **EU-Turkey relations**, the **Regeni** case, the migration situation in **Bosnia-Herzegovina**, **Hong Kong**, and the situation in **Venezuela**.

At around 10.30h the **Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Motegi** is expected to join by video conference for an exchange of views focusing on the **Indo-Pacific vision of Japan**, and **regional security in Asia**.

As main agenda item, ministers will engage in a forward-thinking discussion related to **Climate and Energy Diplomacy**, focusing on the external dimension of the European Green Deal. The executive Vice President of the European Commission, Frans **Timmermans**, will participate in the debate.

Over an informal lunch, ministers will discuss possible future **EU-UK** cooperation in matters related to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (**CFSP**) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (**CSDP**).

Press conference: +/- 15.30 in a virtual format

[Foreign Affairs Council meeting page](#)

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

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

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**, during which ministers will have the opportunity to be updated on recent developments that are most pressing in the international agenda.

The High Representative will first inform ministers about the development of an **EU strategy for sharing COVID-19 vaccines** with third countries, and related EU efforts to ensure equitable and fair access to safe vaccines globally.

Ministers will exchange views on the recent detention of Russian opposition politician **Alexey Navalny** upon his return in Russia on **17 January 2021**, further to the EU declaration of 18 January.

The Council will also discuss **transatlantic relations**, with a view to future engagement with the new administration following the inauguration of Joseph Biden as the 46th President of the United States on 20 January. The High Representative will refer to the decisions taken by the US President in his first days in office, in particular the return to the Paris Agreement and the WHO. The EU's engagement with the incoming administration will be based on the Council conclusions and Joint Communication adopted last December, and should also touch on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (**JCPOA**).

The High Representative will then inform ministers about the outcome of the recent visit of the **Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Çavuşoğlu** to Brussels.

Upon request of Italy, the Council will be informed about the investigation into the murder of **Giulio Regeni**, an Italian Cambridge researcher tortured and killed in **Egypt**. Ministers will have an opportunity to discuss further engagement with Egypt, including on human rights.

An exchange of views is expected to be dedicated to the situation of migrants and refugees **in Bosnia-Herzegovina**, including on the various strands of EU action to address the immediate humanitarian situation in this regard.

Following up on the review of the July Council conclusions on **Hong Kong** at the December 2020 FAC, the High Representative and ministers will take stock of the latest developments against dissent and political pluralism in Hong Kong, recalling the concerns expressed in the latest EU declaration on the mass arrest of pro-democracy defenders of 7 January.

The wider security situation in the **Horn of Africa** and the **Gulf region** will also find space in the discussion on current affairs, including the concerning nuclear developments in Iran and continued EU support and commitment to preserve the JCPOA.

Finally ministers will express their views on **Venezuela** following the elections of 6 December 2020, and on the new **National Assembly** as the Council is due to adopt conclusions on this matter.

- [Russia: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the arrest of Alexei Navalny upon his return, 18 January 2021](#)
- [Council conclusions on European Union – United States relations, 7 December 2020](#)
- [EU-US: A new transatlantic agenda for global change, 2 December 2020](#)
- [Iran: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action \(JCPOA\), following latest Iranian activities, 11 January 2021](#)
- [BiH: Statement by the High Representative Josep Borrell on the migrant situation in Una-Sana Canton \(EEAS website\)](#)

- [Bosnia and Herzegovina: Statement by High Representative/Vice President Josep Borrell, Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson and Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Olivér Várhelyi, on the migration situation, 21 December 2020.](#)
- [Hong Kong: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the mass arrest of people involved in the July 2020 pro-democracy primary election, 7 January 2021.](#)
- [Venezuela: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union, 6 January 2021](#)

Informal video conference with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan

During the morning session, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan **Toshimitsu Motegi** will participate in the Foreign Affairs Council via video conference to exchange views on Japan's vision for the **Indo-Pacific region** and the possible **role of EU in the security of the region**.

- [EU-Japan leaders' video conference meeting, 26 May 2020](#)

Climate and Energy Diplomacy

Following up on the European Council conclusions of December 2020, and the leaders' renewed commitment to affirm EU's global leadership on climate action, the main agenda item will be a discussion on the way the EU wants to bring forward the **implementation of the European Green Deal in its external dimension**. The exchange of views will focus on how ministers envision the EU's climate and energy diplomacy in light of the short, medium and long term objectives of the **Paris Agreement**.

The discussion will likely encompass two main aspects: mapping the global climate ambition and efforts on the way to Glasgow COP26, and the role and geopolitical impact of energy transition on the pathway towards climate neutrality.

The executive Vice President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans, will participate in the debate.

- [European Council conclusions of 10-11 December 2020](#)
- [Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, 9 November 2020](#)
- [Council conclusions on Climate Diplomacy , 20 January 2020](#)

Informal lunch on EU-UK CFSP/CSDP Cooperation

Over an informal working lunch, ministers will be discussing the EU approach to matters related to **security and defence cooperation with the United Kingdom**, following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

Council Conclusions

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on **Venezuela, Climate and Energy Diplomacy**, and Gulf of Guinea pilot project for the **Coordinated Maritime Presences** concept.