



Foreign Affairs Council **11 April 2022**

The Foreign Affairs Council, chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, **Josep Borrell**, will start at **9.30**.

The Council will start with a discussion on the latest developments with regard to the ongoing **Russian aggression against Ukraine**.

Ministers will then exchange views on the **Global Gateway**, the new European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport sectors, and provide guidance to ensure the initiative pursues a geopolitical and global approach to connectivity.

Over lunch, EU foreign affairs ministers will hold an informal exchange with the Norwegian Foreign Minister **Anniken Huitfeldt**, and the Icelandic Foreign Minister **Thórdís Kolbrún Reykjörd Gylfadóttir**.

Under **current affairs**, the Council will be informed about the situation in **Mali**, the latest developments in **the Western Balkans, Libya** and **Yemen**.

Under AOB, the Czech foreign affairs minister will inform his colleagues about the Prague High-level dialogue on the Indo-Pacific that the incoming Czech Presidency will host on 13 and 14 June.

Doorstep High Representative: +/- 8.15

Press conference: at the end of the meeting at +/- 16.15 in hybrid format

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[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](#)

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

Russian aggression against Ukraine

The Foreign Affairs Council will discuss the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine with a focus on the EU's political, financial, material and humanitarian support to Ukraine, coordination on the diplomatic and multilateral tracks, deterrence measures and efforts to reinforce strategic communication and to counter disinformation. It will also highlight the importance of accountability and international justice and discuss peace and stability of the wider region, as well as rising food insecurity in other regions of the world caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, especially in Africa, the Western Balkans, the Middle East and Latin America.

The Russian Armed Forces increased its shelling of cities, targeting civilian infrastructure and residential areas. The direst situation remains in Mariupol, where about 100,000 civilians are trapped in the midst of fight. The number of internally displaced people has now exceeded 7 million and refugees - 4 million.

On 24 March a UN General Assembly resolution condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine was adopted with 140 votes in favour and 5 against (38 abstentions). On 7 April the UN General Assembly decided on the suspension of Russia in the Human Rights Council with 93 votes in favour and 24 against (58 abstentions).

In the week preceding the Foreign Affairs Council, the EU has adopted a [fifth package of economic and individual sanctions](#) in response to Russia's military aggression against Ukraine.

At the FAC itself, ministers are also expected to give green light for a third set of assistance measures under the European Peace Facility, thereby increasing support for the Ukrainian armed forces.

Based on the decision by High Representative Josep Borrell, 19 members of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the EU in Brussels have been declared personae non-gratae for engaging in activities contrary to their diplomatic status.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine grossly violates international law and is causing massive loss of life and injury to civilians. Russia is directing attacks against the civilian population and is targeting civilian objects, including hospitals, medical facilities, schools and shelters. These war crimes must stop immediately. Those responsible, and their accomplices, must be held accountable in accordance with international law, including for the appalling atrocities that Russian Armed Forces committed in a number of occupied Ukrainian towns, such as Bucha. The siege of Mariupol and other Ukrainian cities, and the denial of humanitarian access by Russian military forces are unacceptable as they violated international humanitarian law. Russian forces must immediately provide for safe pathways to other parts of Ukraine, as well as humanitarian aid to be delivered to Mariupol and other besieged cities.

Russia must immediately stop its military aggression in the territory of Ukraine, immediately and unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

- [EU adopts fifth round of sanctions against Russia over its military aggression against Ukraine, 8 April 2022](#)
- [European Council conclusions on the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, 24 March 2022](#)
- [Ukraine: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on Russian atrocities committed in Bucha and other Ukrainian towns](#)
- [EU response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine \(background information\)](#)

The Global Gateway

The Foreign Affairs Council will hold an exchange of views on the Global Gateway, and provide guidance to ensure that this initiative pursue a geopolitical and global approach to connectivity.

The discussion will focus in particular on strategic priorities and sectors, and is intended to help identify the risks or potential missing links in existing global connectivity routes and value chains of key EU interest (e.g. critical raw materials, digital, transport or energy), with a view to reducing EU dependencies while ensuring that Europe remain a globally connected continent. Global Gateway could also play a key role in the reconstruction of Ukraine's post-war infrastructure.

Ministers are also expected to touch on the governance and communication of the Global Gateway, as well as on how it could support and further the EU's cooperation with G7 and other like-minded actors in ensuring secure, resilient and sustainable connectivity.

The Global Gateway initiative is the new European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy, and transport sectors and to strengthen health, education and research systems across the world. It was set out in a Joint Communication by the European Commission and the EU High Representative in December 2021, in response to the July 2021 Council conclusions on "A Globally Connected Europe".

The initiative brings together the EU foreign policy and external relations priorities and the financial and development tools under the new Multiannual Financial Framework into a positive offer of investment into infrastructure and the associated norms, standards and regulatory frameworks. It aims to mobilise up to EUR 300 billion of investment by 2027, in a partnership between the EU institutions, member states, financial institutions, including the European Investment Bank (EIB) mobilising the private sector, making the Team Europe approach the principal means of delivering on the Global Gateway.

The Global Gateway aims to deliver sustainable and high-quality projects, taking into account the needs of partner countries and ensuring lasting benefits for local communities.

The recent EU-African Union Summit (Brussels, 17-18 February) and the Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific (Paris, February) have identified specific components that usher in the implementation of the Global Gateway through precise geographic and thematic priorities in different regions. The Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package committed to at least €150 billion in investments by 2027. Already the Economic and Investment Plans for the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership and Southern Neighbourhood include concrete connectivity initiatives. The Global Gateway is also a key part on discussions on connectivity within the G7.

- [European Council Conclusions, 12 July 2021](#)
- [Global Gateway \(European Commission\)](#)
- [Joint Communication by the European Commission and the EU High Representative](#)

Current Affairs

The Foreign Affairs Council will have a discussion on current affairs during which ministers will be able to exchange views on recent events and on fast-moving developments in external relations.

The High Representative will provide the Council with an update on **Mali**. Ministers will have an opportunity to discuss the situation in the country and to politically endorse the decision taken in PSC on 30 March to temporally and reversibly suspend trainings provided by EUTM and EUCAP Mali to constituted units from the armed forces and the National Guard, as well as some assistance measures under the European Peace Facility. The lack of progress in the transition process, together with the presence of Russian-affiliated forces in the country and mounting reports of human rights violations and killings of civilians by Malian armed forces and foreign-fighters, required a re-evaluation of the EU presence. Ministers are expected to discuss the recent alleged exactions perpetrated by Malian armed forces and Wagner in Central Mali.

Ministers will touch upon the **Western Balkans** in the context of relations and cooperation with the EU. The strategic engagement with the region, complementing to the enlargement process, is even more important in the evolving geopolitical context following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The Council will also be informed about the institutional crisis in **Libya**. The current political stalemate puts at risk the progress achieved over the past year and further delays the prospect of renewing the legitimacy of Libyan institutions through elections.

The Swedish foreign affairs minister will then inform the Council about her recent trip to **Yemen** where she delivered EU messages and about ongoing peace efforts. The High Representative will share the impressions from his third trip to the Gulf.

Informal lunch with the ministers of foreign affairs of Iceland and Norway

EU ministers of foreign affairs will have an opportunity to exchange views with the Norwegian Foreign Minister Anniken Huitfeldt, and the Icelandic Foreign Minister Thórdís Kolbrún Reykjörd Gylfadóttir. The exchange is expected to focus on the Russian aggression against Ukraine.
