

Background brief*Brussels, 18 October 2025*

Foreign Affairs Council

20 October 2025, Luxembourg

PRESS
— — —
EN

Chair: Kaja Kallas, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Starting time: 9.15

Media opportunities:

- [Doorstep of the High Representative](#): +/- 7.30
- [Press conference](#) on FAC: +/- 14.45

* * *

Main agenda topics:

The October Foreign Affairs Council will start at 9.15 in Luxembourg, and be chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, **Kaja Kallas**.

After an exchange with the **Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Andrii Sybiha**, the Council will discuss the latest developments related to the **Russian aggression against Ukraine**.

The Council will then exchange views on the relations between the European Union and the **Indo Pacific region**.

Over a working lunch, EU Foreign Affairs Ministers will discuss the **situation in the Middle East**. Under current affairs, they will be informed about: the **Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Sudan**.

Lastly, member states will raise few 'any other business' points in relation to: **EU-CELAC relations**; the attack by the Belarusian regime on the European Humanities University, and the upcoming **OSCE Ministerial Council** that will take place in Vienna on 4-5 December 2025.

* * *

In the margins of the Council:

The Foreign Affairs Council will be followed by the **Ministerial Meeting on Cross-regional Security and Connectivity**.

* * *

[Foreign Affairs Council 20 October 2025 – meeting page](#)

[High quality photo and video material of the event](#)

[Press conferences, doorsteps and other public events in video streaming](#)

Russian aggression against Ukraine

The discussion on the Russian aggression against Ukraine will be preceded by an intervention of the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Andrii Sybiha**, who will join the meeting in person to provide an overview of the situation on the ground, Ukraine's most urgent priorities and ongoing diplomatic developments.

During the ensuing EU27 discussion, the Council will hold a strategic discussion on **all strands** of EU's support to Ukraine.

The High Representative will debrief from her mission to Kyiv this week. The discussion will focus on how to build on the existing EU security commitments to further reinforce the EU's contribution to security guarantees, both immediately and in the long-term. This includes further enhancing **military support** to Ukraine and its defence industry, financial support, how to reinforce Ukraine's resilience, as well as energy in the context of recent Russian attacks on energy infrastructure and winterisation.

The Council will also discuss **increasing pressure on Russia** including the 19th sanctions package, measures to disrupt the shadow fleet, and tackling Russian hybrid activities. The High Representative may also refer to the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine.

As stated in the text supported by 26 Heads of State or Government on 12 August 2025, the Leaders of the European Union welcome efforts towards ending Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and achieving a just and lasting peace and security for Ukraine.

A just and lasting peace that brings stability and security must respect international law, including the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and that international borders must not be changed by force.

The people of Ukraine must have the freedom to decide their future. The path to peace in Ukraine cannot be decided without Ukraine. Meaningful negotiations can only take place in the context of a ceasefire or reduction of hostilities.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has wider implications for European and international security. EU leaders share the conviction that a diplomatic solution must protect Ukraine's and Europe's vital security interests.

The European Union, in coordination with the US and other like-minded partners, will continue to provide political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine as Ukraine is exercising its inherent right of self-defence. It will also continue to uphold and impose restrictive measures against the Russian Federation.

A Ukraine capable of defending itself effectively is an integral part of any future security guarantees. The European Union and member states are ready to further contribute to security guarantees based on their respective competences and capabilities, in line with international law, and in full respect of the security and defence policy of certain member states and taking into account the security and defence interests of all member states.

The EU underlines the inherent right of Ukraine to choose its own destiny and will continue supporting Ukraine on its path towards EU membership.

[Ukraine: press remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Kaja Kallas at the joint press conference with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, EEAS website 13 October 2025](#)

[Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the unprovoked violation of the EU's airspace by Russia, 10 September 2025](#)

[European Union Leaders' Statement on Ukraine of 12 August 2025](#)

[Text on Ukraine supported by 26 Head of State or Government on the occasion of the European Council on 26 June 2025](#)

[EU response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine \(background information\)](#)

[EU solidarity with Ukraine \(background information\)](#)

EU–Indo-Pacific relations

The Foreign Affairs Council will exchange views on the relations between the EU and the Indo-Pacific region and is expected to approve two sets of **conclusions on India and the Indo-Pacific**.

The Council meeting is taking place a week after the Global Gateway Forum 2025, and ahead of the **fourth EU–Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum**, that will take place on 20-21 November 2025. The Ministerial Forum will provide a high-level platform to deepen political and results-oriented cooperation with partners in the Indo-Pacific region, and is expected to focus on: security, economic resilience, and the green transition.

The High Representative will refer to the 2021 EU strategy on the Indo-Pacific region and the progress achieved so far in its implementation. The ensuing discussion will focus on boosting this partnership even further and how to consolidate the EU as a partner of choice for the region.

Situation in the Middle East

Over a working lunch, the Foreign Affairs Council will exchange views on the situation in the Middle East, in light of the agreement on the first phase of the **Comprehensive Plan to end the Gaza Conflict** put forward by President Trump on 29 September, and the agreement to enter the first phase of its implementation on 10 October, which includes a ceasefire.

As a follow up to the 9 October Paris meeting, attended by High Representative Kallas, and the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit of 13 October attended by the President of the European Council Antonio Costa, the Council will discuss the **possible role of the EU in the implementation of the plan**. Various strands will be touched upon: reconstruction and humanitarian aid, security and governance.

The Council is also likely to address its attention the situation in the **West Bank** and the settlement activity, as well as the **EU support to the Palestinian Authority**. Ministers are expected to refer to prospects for a two-state solution.

In its statement of 10 October, the EU welcomed the agreement on the first phase of the Comprehensive Plan to end the Gaza conflict, and called on all parties to fully implement the agreement without delay, allowing for the establishment of a lasting ceasefire, the release of the hostages, and the unimpeded access and sustained distribution of humanitarian assistance at scale into and throughout Gaza.

In that statement the EU commended the diplomatic efforts led by the US and supported, among others, by Egypt, Jordan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates in negotiating this breakthrough, and confirmed its readiness to contribute to the implementation of the plan through the variety of the tools at its disposal, based on the EU's longstanding engagement and substantial support for peace in the region.

The EU will continue to support the rapid, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid, and stands ready to contribute to Gaza's stabilisation and reconstruction, including the full use of the EU's CSDP missions EUBAM Rafah and EUPOL COPPS. The EU will continue to support the Palestinian Authority, including in its ongoing reform, and in view of its return to Gaza, and also through the Palestine Donor Group.

The EU remains firmly committed to a lasting and sustainable peace based on the two-state solution, and is ready to contribute to all efforts towards this solution and calls on all parties to refrain from actions that undermine its viability.

[Statement by President António Costa following his participation in the Sharm El-Sheikh Summit, 13 October 2025](#)

[Israel/Palestine: statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the Comprehensive Plan to end the Gaza Conflict, 10 October 2025](#)

[Israel/Palestine: statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on Gaza, 2 October 2025](#)

[European Council conclusions on the Middle East, 26 June 2025](#)

[EU position on the situation in the Middle East \(background information\)](#)

[EU humanitarian support for Palestinians \(background information\)](#)

Current affairs

Under current affairs, the Council will be informed about the situation in **Sudan** and the follow up to the Ministerial Meeting on Coordinating Efforts for De-Escalation in the country, held in New York on 24 September 2025. The Council is expected to also approve conclusions on Sudan.

The High Representative will then refer to the **Republic of Moldova**, as a follow-up to the parliamentary elections of 28 September 2025.

Lastly, the High Representative will refer to the situation in **Georgia** and update Ministers about the latest developments, including the municipal elections that took place on 4 October 2025 and the ongoing democratic backsliding.

[Sudan: Co-chairs' statement on the occasion of the ministerial meeting on coordinating efforts for de-escalation, 24 September 2025 \(EEAS website\)](#)

[Moldova \(background information\)](#)

[Georgia \(background information\)](#)

Any other business

Under 'Any other business':

- Spain will raise **EU-CELAC relations**
- Lithuania will brief the Council on Lukashenka regime's attack on European Humanities University
- Finland will inform on the upcoming **OSCE Ministerial Council** that will take place in Vienna on 4-5 December 2025

* * *

In the margins of the Council meeting

EU-Iraq Cooperation Council

On 19 October 2025, the EU and Iraq will hold the fourth meeting of their Cooperation Council.

[EU-Iraq Cooperation Council](#)

Ministerial Meeting on Cross-regional Security and Connectivity

In the afternoon of 20 October, the High Representative will convene the **Ministerial Meeting on Cross-regional Security and Connectivity** together with Commissioners Kos and Síkela.

The meeting will gather Ministers of the EU, Eastern Partnership, Black Sea and Central Asian countries, with the objective of jointly advancing on a cross-regional connectivity agenda and reinforcing regional stability. The Ministerial meeting will consist of two sessions.

The first session starting at 15.00 will be devoted to **security, stability and resilience in the Black Sea region**, and feature the participation of EU member states, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Türkiye and Ukraine. Participants will address the altered geopolitical context and the need for stability in the Black Sea region.

The second session starting at 18.00 will gather EU member states, Eastern Partnership, Black Sea and Central Asian countries, and discuss shared **opportunities and challenges of cross-regional connectivity cooperation**.

EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council

On 21 October 2025, the EU and Uzbekistan will hold the 18th meeting of their Cooperation Council.

[EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council](#)

* * *