

Background brief*Brussels, 19 November 2025*

Foreign Affairs Council

20 November 2025, Brussels

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

Starting time: 8:30

Media opportunities:

- Doorstep of the High Representative: +/- 8.00
- Press conference on FAC: +/- 16.00

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Main agenda topics:

The November Foreign Affairs Council will start with an exchange of views with the **Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine**, Andrii Sybiha. The Council will then have an internal discussion on the latest developments in the **Russian war of aggression against Ukraine**.

The Council will also discuss the situation in the **Middle East**.

In the afternoon session, EU Foreign Affairs Ministers will exchange views on the developments in **the Sahel** region and on the situation in **Sudan**.

Lastly, 'under any other business' the Council will be informed on the **10th Union of the Mediterranean Regional Forum**, **hybrid attacks by Belarus**, the **fight against organised crime**, and **chips and export controls**.

The Council will adopt two sets of Conclusions on the **Pact the Mediterranean** as well as the **International Digital Strategy**.

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Related events:

On 19 November 2025 there will be the **EU-Tajikistan Cooperation Council** in the afternoon, and an **informal dinner with the Western Balkans** partners in the evening.

On 20 November, EU ministers will hold an **informal lunch on EU-ASEAN relations** with ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries.

The **EU-Indo Pacific Ministerial Forum** will start on the evening of 20 November, followed by a ministerial meeting on 21 November.

The **Palestine Donor Group** will take place on 20 November.

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[Foreign Affairs Council 20 November 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 via VTC to provide an overview of the situation on the ground and Ukraine's most urgent priorities.

During the ensuing EU27 discussion, the High Representative is expected to focus on ways to **increase pressure on Russia**, notably through measures to disrupt the **shadow fleet** and consequently Russian energy revenues. The Council may also discuss the work towards **future restrictive measures**. In this context, the Council will be updated by the EU sanctions envoy, David O'Sullivan.

[Ukraine Facility: Council approves fifth payment of over €1.8 billion to Kyiv, 4 November 2025](#)

[Text on Ukraine supported by 26 Head of State and Government on the occasion of the European Council on 23 October 2025](#)

[19th package of sanctions against Russia: EU targets Russian energy, third-country banks and crypto providers, 23 October 2025](#)

[Russia's war against Ukraine \(background information\)](#)

[EU military support for Ukraine \(background information\)](#)

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

Situation in the Middle East

The Foreign Affairs Council will exchange views on the situation in the Middle East.

The discussion is expected to focus on security arrangements including the use of the EU's **CSDP missions** on the ground: EUBAM Rafah and EUPOL COPPS. This includes the redeployment of **EUBAM Rafah** as a third-party presence to support crossings at the Rafah Crossing Point once it reopens. On **EUPOL COPPS**, ministers are expected to exchange views on supporting the training of police officers for Gaza.

Additionally, the discussion will relate to the coordinated EU and Member States engagement in the **Civil Military Coordination Centre** (CMCC) with the aim to expand EU participation and increase EU political weight.

Governance and reconstruction will be at the heart of the meeting of the Palestine Donor Group, which will address the progress by the Palestinian Authority on its reform agenda, fiscal stability, economic recovery in the West Bank and reconstruction in Gaza.

[European Council conclusions, 23 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](#)

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

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

Sahel

The Foreign Affairs Council will exchange views on the situation in the Sahel, where the pervasiveness of security challenges, the dramatic humanitarian situation, the reshaping of regional and multilateral architecture and the rise of other foreign actors in the region, fuelled by a narrative of anti-Western and anti-European sentiment, have significantly changed the relations with the EU.

Against this background, EU ministers will be invited to **validate a new EU approach to the Sahel region**, taking into account the specificities of individual countries, and upholding EU interests in the region, particularly regarding security, migration and prosperity.

[European Council conclusions of 26 June 2025](#)

[Sahel: Council extends regional advisory and coordination cell until 31 January 2026, 8 July 2025](#)

[EU Regional Advisory and Coordination Cell for the Sahel \(RACC\) \(EEAS\)](#)

Sudan

The Council will discuss Sudan following the **seizure of El Fasher** by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The situation in the country has further deteriorated, with reports on ethnically targeted massacres by the RSF, and humanitarian support at the brink of collapse.

The Council is expected to **exchange on recent developments** and possible EU response to the human rights violations. Coordinated outreach to the supporters of the conflict parties and other regional actors as well as support to the dialogue among Sudanese civilian political groups is important.

[Sudan: Council approves conclusions on the ongoing conflict, 20 October 2025](#)

[Sudan: Joint statement by High Representative Kallas and Commissioner Lahbib on the seizure of El Fasher, 28 October 2025 \(European Commission website\)](#)

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

Other topics and decisions

Under ‘Any other business’:

- Spain will brief the Council on the upcoming Regional Forum of the **Union of the Mediterranean**.
- France will touch on its call for establishing a new EU framework for restrictive measures targeting **organised crime**.
- Lithuania will inform the Council about the recent **hybrid attacks originating in Belarus** that affected its territory.
- The Netherlands will update on **chips and export controls**

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Related events

EU-Tajikistan Cooperation Council

On 19 November 2025, the EU and the Republic of Tajikistan will hold the eleventh meeting of their Cooperation Council.

[EU-Tajikistan Cooperation Council](#)

Dinner with Western Balkans partners

On the evening of 19 November, EU foreign affairs ministers will hold an **informal dinner with** their counterparts from the **Western Balkans partners**.

Lunch on EU-ASEAN relations

On 20 November, EU foreign affairs ministers will hold an **informal lunch on EU-ASEAN relations** with ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries.

The focus of the discussion will be on how the EU and ASEAN can deepen cooperation on geopolitical resilience and security as well as prepare for the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations in 2027.

Palestine Donor Group

Following the Foreign Affairs Council on 20 November, the first meeting of the Palestine Donor Group will take place in Brussels and be co-chaired by the Commissioner for the Mediterranean Šuica, and the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian Authority Mustafa, with the participation of the High Representative Kaja Kallas. It will be a key forum to demonstrate the EU's support to the Palestinian Authority on key reforms and financial engagement by the Palestinian Authority's key stakeholders. The EU will seek political and financial engagement by international and regional partners in support of Gaza recovery and reconstruction. Participants are expected to discuss the progress of the Palestinian Authority on its ongoing reform agenda, its fiscal stability and role in the future governance of Gaza.

[Palestine Donor Group \(European Commission website\)](#)

EU-Indo Pacific Ministerial Forum

In the evening of 20 November, the High Representative will convene a dinner ahead of the fourth **Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum** (IPMF). The ministerial meeting will take place on 21 November under the theme 'Building together a resilient, prosperous and secure future'.

The meeting will bring together around 80 participants from the EU institutions and member states, Indo-Pacific countries, and regional organisations from across the Indo-Pacific region from the East coast of Africa to the Pacific Island states. It serves as a high-level platform to strengthen political dialogue and advance tangible, results-oriented cooperation across shared priorities.

The programme includes three parallel round table discussions on security priorities in the face of current geopolitical developments, shared prosperity, economic security, and digital connectivity, and common endeavours for a clean and sustainable future. The IPMF ends with a plenary session on the key outcomes and the way forward.

[EU-Indo Pacific Ministerial Forum](#)