



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from : The General Secretariat of the Council
to : COREPER/General Affairs Council

Subject : *European Council (16 September 2010)*
– *Draft conclusions*

In accordance with article 2(3)(a) of the Council's Rules of Procedure, delegations will find attached the draft conclusions prepared by the President of the European Council, in close cooperation with the member of the European Council representing the Member State holding the six-monthly Presidency of the Council and with the President of the Commission.

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The European Council discussed how to give new momentum to the Union's external relations, taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by the Lisbon Treaty. It looked ahead to a number of important events over the coming weeks and months and agreed on the best way to prepare for these events. It also decided on a number of concrete measures to more generally enhance the effectiveness of the Union's external policy. This should allow Europe to defend its interests and values more assertively and in a spirit of reciprocity. [Task Force on economic governance.]

I. RELATIONS WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS

A changing world: a challenge for the EU

1. Europe is facing many challenges in a rapidly changing world. Economic globalization, climate change, migration, terrorist threats, regional conflicts, all require a concerted international response. The recent economic and financial crisis has dramatically shown the extent to which the well-being, security and quality of life of Europeans depend on external developments. At the same time, the crisis has accelerated the shifts in interests and perceived influence of the key players on the global stage that were already underway, with the emergence of new centres of growth and dynamism, in particular in Asia and South America.
2. There is a growing need for the European Union to be an effective global actor, ready to share in the responsibility for global security and to take the lead in the definition of joint responses to common challenges. It can draw on its firmly-rooted belief in effective multilateralism and universal values and a unique range of instruments. The European Union remains the largest donor to countries in need, it is the first trading power in the world, and it has developed promising tools for crisis management, allowing the launching of a number of civil and military ESDP missions. It also plays a major stabilizing role in its neighbourhood.

3. The challenge for the European Union and its Member States is to act more strategically so that Europe's true weight can be brought to bear internationally. This requires a clearer identification of its strategic interests and objectives at a given moment and a more focussed reflection on the means to pursue them. It also calls for improving synergies between the European Union and national levels, for enhancing coordination between institutional actors, for better integrating all relevant instruments and policies and for using summit meetings with third countries more effectively.
4. The Lisbon Treaty provides new opportunities in that respect. The explicit role given to the European Council in identifying the strategic interests and objectives of the Union in the field of external relations, the creation of the new functions of President of the European Council and of High Representative, the establishment of the European External Action Service, and the confirmation of the major Commission role in the external field should help increase the coherence, effectiveness and visibility of the European Union's external action.
5. The EU's strategic partnerships with key players in the world provide a useful instrument for pursuing European objectives and interests. This will only work if they are two-way streets based on reciprocal interests and benefits and on the recognition that all actors have rights as well as duties. The full participation of emerging economies in the international system should allow its benefits to be spread in a balanced manner and its responsibilities to be shared evenly.

Orientations for upcoming events

6. The European Union will hold a number of important international meetings in the coming weeks. They require clear strategic guidance by the European Council and optimal preparation by the Council.

7. October will see summits with China and South Korea and the biannual Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), followed soon afterwards by a summit with India. They are a good opportunity to engage with key partners in a very dynamic part of the world. Issues such as the respective roles in achieving a sustainable recovery from the economic crisis and in seeking global solutions to universal challenges will be on the agenda. The European Union will also explore concrete ways of enhancing cooperation on major economic and political themes between Europe and Asia, with particular focus on market access and investment conditions, climate change, intellectual property rights, public procurement, exchange rate policy and labour standards. It will foster people to people relations and seek more open societies as a way of promoting good governance and human rights. The EU also intends to address pressing security issues such as non-proliferation and piracy.

8. Over the coming months there will be a number of other important external relations issues which will have to be addressed by the European Council.
 - a) An important event is the G20 summit that will take place in Seoul on 11 November. The input of the European Union has been decisive in enhancing the G20's role in international economic and financial issues. The meeting in Seoul will allow to review the global economic recovery and the commitments made by G20 members. In this respect, the recent agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the financial supervision and regulation package strengthens the EU's hand. The European Council will discuss the detailed preparation of Seoul at its October meeting.

- b) The transatlantic relation constitutes a core element of the international system. The next European Union/United States summit will be held in November. The October European Council will agree on the core political messages the European Union representatives will bring to this major summit. Overcoming the economic crisis and moving ahead on global governance will be at the top of the agenda. Our objective is to fully exploit the relation's economic potential; in that respect the Transatlantic Economic Council should be an important driver of further growth. It is also to find a common approach to climate change and related technology and regulatory issues and explore means of closer cooperation on energy issues. Future cooperation in the field of peace, security and crisis management as well as EU/NATO relations could be another topic, also in the context of the upcoming summit of NATO. To that end the High Representative is invited to develop ideas on how the EU/NATO partnership could be further strengthened.
- c) The European Council will take stock of preparations for the Cancun conference at its October meeting and agree on the EU position. The European Union remains determined to reach an ambitious outcome and will play its part in that respect. It seeks to work with other players and in particular its strategic partners, to play a constructive role in the discussions. Cancun will not be the end point of the debate, but it will be important to agree on concrete deliverables for all participants in order not to lose momentum and stay on track for an ambitious and final settlement in South Africa in 2011.
- d) The European Council is fully aware that the European Union's global credibility also depends on its capacity of securing stability in its neighbourhood, particularly in the Western Balkans. The European perspective given to the Western Balkans has contributed much to strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of that region. The European Council will look at this subject in more detail at its December session.

- e) Energy has over the last few years played an increasingly important role in the European Union's agenda. It has become a key component of external relations and will play a major role, including at the upcoming summits with Russia and the Ukraine. The European Council has decided to hold a special meeting entirely devoted to the theme of energy on 4 February.

Better governance

9. Looking at concrete measures to more generally improve the functioning of the European Union's foreign policy, the European Council calls for a more integrated approach, ensuring that all relevant EU and national instruments and policies are fully and coherently mobilised in support of the European Union's strategic interests. The importance of issues like climate change, energy policy, trade¹ or Justice and Home Affairs issues in dealings with partners and at a multilateral level must be fully taken account of in preparations for summits and international events. The practice of holding orientation debates well before summits can help in that respect and should be further developed, with a particular emphasis on setting priorities and concrete tasking to relevant Council bodies and EU delegations.
10. Synergies need to be developed between the European Union's external relations and Member States bilateral relations with third countries, in order to ensure that what is done at the level of the European Union complements and reinforces what is done at the level of the Member States and vice versa. There should be more active and regular sharing of information and consultation on developments at the respective levels, on the basis of a running calendar of EU and Member States' summits with major strategic partners.

¹ In this connection, the European Council looks forward to the Commission's forthcoming communication on the EU's trade strategy

11. Close and regular coordination between all the different institutional actors involved in the definition and implementation of the European Union's external relations is necessary to ensure that EU representatives can defend coherent positions on the whole range of the strategic interests and objectives of the Union. The European External Action Service will have a particular role to play in that respect. The European Council invites its President to report back on efforts to that effect.
12. Much progress has been achieved in the preparation, at the level of the European Union, for multilateral summits. The European Council welcomes the practical arrangements reached between the President of the European Council and the President of the Commission on the EU representation in the G8 and G20 structures and invites them to continue to work towards improving the way in which the European Union projects its views in such fora. The G8 and the G20 will remain important fora for the definition of global responses to many of the challenges facing us; the European Council therefore lends its full support to the ambition of the incoming French chairmanship in 2011 to fully use the G20 and G8 to that end.
13. The European Union needs a clear picture of the particular issues related to relations with the individual partner States. The European Council therefore welcomes the work conducted so far by the High Representative and the Foreign Affairs Council on some of the strategic partners and asks them to pursue this task, evaluating the prospects of relations with all strategic partners, and setting out in particular our interests and possible leverage to achieve them. This will allow developing a medium-term planning setting out objectives to be reached over time with each summit concentrating on two or three core issues.
14. In this context, there should be a reflection on the frequency, format and output of those summits, which need to be better targeted towards reaching EU objectives. The European Council invites its President in cooperation with the President of the Commission to take any necessary initiatives in view of improving the process.

II. TASK FORCE ON ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

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