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President **Federica Mogherini**
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Policy

P R E S S

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10455/18

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CONTENTS¹

ITEMS DEBATED

Security and defence cooperation	4
EU-NATO cooperation.....	4
Yemen.....	5
Horn of Africa and the Red Sea	5
EU Global Strategy	6
Jordan.....	6

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

– EU priorities at the United Nations and 73rd United Nations General Assembly (September 2018 – September 2019).....	7
– Council Conclusions on Sahel/Mali.....	7
– Relations with Israel.....	8
– Sanctions against Myanmar/Burma.....	8
– Extension of mandate of EU Special Representatives.....	8
– Sanctions against Venezuela.....	9

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

– Common set of governance rules for PESCO projects	10
– Military requirements for military mobility within and beyond the EU.....	10
– Progress Catalogue 2018.....	10

¹ • Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
• Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
• Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

DEVELOPMENT

– EU cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries 11

ITEMS DEBATED

Security and defence cooperation

Foreign affairs and defence ministers discussed EU security and defence cooperation. They touched upon key defence initiatives, including the permanent structured cooperation (PESCO), military mobility, the initiatives proposed in the framework of the future multiannual financial framework, namely the European Defence Fund and the European Peace Facility, the fight against hybrid threats and the importance of strengthening EU's resilience to such threats and civilian capability development.

The Council adopted conclusions on security and defence. It also adopted a decision setting out governance rules for projects undertaken under PESCO, and approved the overarching high-level part of the military requirements for military mobility within and beyond the EU.

[Council conclusions on security and defence cooperation, \(press release, 25/06/2018\)](#)
[EU cooperation on security and defence \(background information\)](#)

EU-NATO cooperation

Ahead of the forthcoming NATO Summit (11-12 July), foreign ministers and defence ministers also exchanged views on EU-NATO cooperation with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg. Against the background of recent challenges in the transatlantic relationship, they underlined the continuing good collaboration on security and defence between the two organisations, in full complementarity. They highlighted the important progress made on the 74 concrete actions implementing the July 2016 Joint Declaration between the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO. They encouraged further cooperation, in particular on military mobility and on countering hybrid threats.

Yemen

Over lunch, EU foreign ministers discussed the latest developments in Yemen together with UN Special Envoy (UNSE) Martin Griffiths, who briefed them on his peace plan. Ministers exchanged views on ongoing EU efforts, including political outreach, and in particular the regional dialogue with Iran on Yemen, as well as humanitarian and development support. They explored ways to strengthen the UN-led process.

The Council adopted conclusions on Yemen against the background of the recent intensification of military operations in and around the port of Hodeidah, through which 70% of food imports to Yemen are shipped. More than 22 million people -80% of the population of the country - are in need of humanitarian or protection support.

The EU reiterated that there cannot be any military solution to the conflict and underlined its strong support for the UNSE Martin Griffiths, and his efforts to bring about an inclusive political solution.. The EU will maintain its engagement with all parties to the conflict and stands ready to increase its action in Yemen, including in delivering humanitarian aid across the country and in mobilising development assistance to fund projects in critical sectors.

The Council underlined that sustainable peace can only be achieved through negotiations with the meaningful participation of all relevant parties, including civil society, women and youth. The EU therefore supports the UNSE's efforts to restart the political process, and in particular his intention to renew inclusive political negotiations as soon as possible.

Horn of Africa and the Red Sea

The Council discussed and adopted conclusions on the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea. Foreign ministers highlighted the strategic importance of the region for the EU. They expressed their support to efforts aimed at the creation of an organised and inclusive regional forum for dialogue and cooperation around the Red Sea.

[Council conclusions on the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, \(press release, 25/06/2018\)](#)

EU Global Strategy

The Council reviewed the implementation of the EU Global Strategy based on the second progress report on its implementation. Ministers welcomed the important progress made and called for continued implementation in all priorities areas identified in the strategy.

[Implementing the EU Global Strategy - Year 2 \(pdf\)](#)

[EU Global Strategy \(website\)](#)

Jordan

The Council discussed Jordan, following the visit by the High Representative Federica Mogherini on 9-10 June 2018. Ministers expressed their strong support to Jordan, one of the countries most affected by the crisis in Syria, hosting more than 657 000 Syrian refugees (9% of the Jordanian population).

Ministers took stock of relations between the EU and Jordan, including socio-economic cooperation under the EU-Jordan partnership. They expressed the importance of maintaining the high level of support to the country which faces a critical time both politically and economically. They highlighted the importance to support the new government in continuing on the path of economic and social reforms.

[European Union response to the Syria refugee crisis in Jordan \(EEAS website\)](#)

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EU priorities at the United Nations and 73rd United Nations General Assembly (September 2018 – September 2019)

The Council adopted the EU priorities at the UN and at the 73rd UN General Assembly. The conclusions highlight how in today's volatile and unpredictable world, the EU will engage to boost multilateralism.

The key EU priority will be to support the UN through a period of change, translating the EU commitment to multilateralism into a proactive multilateral agenda. For the 73rd UNGA, the EU will focus on peace and conflict prevention, a common positive agenda with the promotion and protection of human rights at the heart of multilateralism, as well as an expanding global engagement in issues such as climate action, the environment, migration, counterterrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The conclusions also highlight that partnerships and outreach are essential to deliver a strong multilateralism at the country level, where it matters the most. The conclusions underscore the importance of an overarching EU-UN strategic partnership.

[EU priorities at the United Nations and the 73rd United Nations General Assembly \(September 2018 – September 2019\)](#)

[EU at the UN General Assembly](#)

Council Conclusions on Sahel/Mali

The Council adopted [conclusions on the Sahel/Mali](#). The Council reiterated the EU's strategic and comprehensive engagement towards the Sahel region. The Council reaffirmed that the EU will continue to support the stabilisation efforts of the G5 Sahel countries as a basis for the development of the Sahel. The Council also called for enhanced coordination with all international actors involved to tackle the root causes of the multiple challenges in the region and promote its sustainable and inclusive development.

In relation to the situation in Mali, the Council underlined the need for consistent progress in the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. The Council reaffirmed the EU's commitment to support Mali in the forthcoming electoral process and to accompany Mali in its efforts to improve the security and the development of the north and centre of the country.

Relations with Israel

The Council adopted the decision on the signing and provisional application of a Protocol to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the EU and Israel to take account of the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the EU.

Sanctions against Myanmar/Burma

[The Council placed 7 individuals under restrictive measures](#) in light of the situation in Myanmar/Burma. These sanctions consist of an asset freeze and a travel ban.

The individuals subject to sanctions are Myanmar/Burma army (Tatmadaw), border guard and police officials, listed because of their involvement in or association with atrocities and serious human rights violations committed against the Rohingya population in Rakhine State in the second half of 2017. These violations include unlawful killings, sexual violence and the systematic burning of Rohingya houses and buildings.

On 26 April 2018, the Council extended and strengthened the EU's arms embargo on Myanmar/Burma and prohibited the provision of military training to, and military cooperation with, the Myanmar/Burma army. It also adopted a legal framework for targeted restrictive measures against certain persons from the Myanmar armed forces (Tatmadaw) and the border guard police, making it possible, should crimes continue to go unpunished, to impose individual sanctions.

[Council conclusions on Myanmar/Burma, 26 February 2018](#)

[EU relations with Myanmar \(Factsheet\)](#)

Extension of mandate of EU Special Representatives

The Council extended the mandates of six EU Special Representatives (EUSRs):

- Lars-Gunnar Wigemark's mandate as EUSR in Bosnia and Herzegovina is extended for 14 months, until 31 August 2019. Lars-Gunnar Wigemark was appointed EUSR in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) on 1 March 2015.
- Peter Burian's mandate as EUSR for Central Asia is extended for 20 months, until 29 February 2020. Peter Burian was appointed EUSR for Central Asia on 15 April 2015.

- Alexander Rondos' mandate as EUSR for the Horn of Africa is extended for 20 months, until 29 February 2020. Alexander Rondos was appointed EUSR for the Horn of Africa on 1 January 2012.
- Nataliya Apostolova's mandate as EUSR in Kosovo is extended for 20 months, until 29 February 2020. Nataliya Apostolova was appointed EUSR in Kosovo on 4 August 2016.
- Ángel Losada Fernández's mandate as EUSR for the Sahel is extended for 20 months, until 29 February 2020. Losada was appointed as EUSR on 1 November 2015.
- Toivo Klaar's mandate as EUSR for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia is extended for 20 months, until 29 February 2020. Mr Klaar was appointed for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia on 13 November 2017.

EUSRs promote the EU's policies and interests in certain regions and countries as well as issues of particular concern or interest for the EU. They play an active role in efforts to consolidate peace, stability and the rule of law. The first EU Special Representatives were appointed in 1996. Currently, eight EUSRs support the work of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini. These are the six mentioned above and special representatives for Human Rights and the Middle East peace process.

Sanctions against Venezuela

The Council decided to put [11 individuals holding official positions under restrictive measures](#). The persons listed are responsible for human rights violations and for undermining democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela. The measures include a travel ban and an asset freeze.

This decision is a direct follow-up to the Council conclusions adopted on 28 May 2018, which called for additional targeted and reversible restrictive measures that do not harm the Venezuelan population in response to the recent presidential elections held in Venezuela.

This decision brings to 18 the total number of individuals under sanctions in view of the situation in Venezuela. The restrictive measures aim to help foster democratic shared solutions that can bring political stability to the country and allow it to address the pressing needs of the population.

[Council conclusions on Venezuela, \(press release, 28 May 2018\)](#)

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Common set of governance rules for PESCO projects

The Council adopted a [Council Decision establishing the common set of governance rules for the Permanent Structured Cooperation \(PESCO\) projects](#), with the votes of the PESCO participating member states (only member states participating in PESCO vote).

Among the important elements are the roles and responsibilities of the project members, project coordinators and observers as well as the role of the PESCO secretariat. This Council Decision may be adapted, if necessary, in particular in order to take account of the general conditions for the participation of third States in individual projects.

Military requirements for military mobility within and beyond the EU

The Council approved the overarching high-level part of the military requirements for military mobility within and beyond the EU, covering key issues like aim, scope and principles. For the rest of the requirements, a phased approach will be followed in the approval process: the technical specifications on transport infrastructures are expected by early July; and the geographical identification of the needed infrastructure no later than the third quarter of 2018.

Progress Catalogue 2018

The Council approved the progress catalogue 2018.

In the framework of the implementation of the EU Global Strategy, the EU Military Committee conducted a comprehensive military capability planning process (the "headline goal process") in order to strengthen military Common and Security Defence Policy (CSDP).

The headline goal process identified the necessary military contribution to the current politically agreed EU CSDP level of ambition and, via the Progress Catalogue 2018, precisely assessed the operational and political risk caused by the current EU military capability shortfalls. This process was for the first time conducted by using the same taxonomy as NATO. The progress catalogue 2018 proposes the high impact capability goals to be achieved in short and medium term by all EU MS and co-operative initiatives, in order to facilitate an efficient and realistic fulfilment of the EU CSDP military level of ambition in a phased approach.

DEVELOPMENT

EU cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries

The Council adopted [conclusions on EU cooperation with cities and local authorities in third countries](#). The continued rapid pace of urbanisation, in particular in Asia and Africa where some cities are expected to increase in size by 200% by 2030, poses serious challenges. This implies that the fulfilment of EU policy objectives can only be achieved through strengthened partnerships with cities and relevant local authorities in third countries.

The Council strongly underlines that sustainable urban development as well as inclusive, balanced, integrated territorial and urban policies are essential for achieving Sustainable Development Goals. The Council calls upon the Commission to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at local level and to make full use of the policy framework and all available instruments to effectively optimise the benefits of intensified and innovative cooperation with cities and local authorities in partner countries.
