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President

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- 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.

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ITEMS DEBATED

Gulf region

The Council held a strategic discussion on the EU's approach to the Gulf and how to strengthen the EU's presence in the region.

Ministers acknowledged the key role that Gulf partners can play on foreign policy issues, such as the crisis in Afghanistan. They discussed the need to actively support and accompany the positive momentum in the region in areas that can help build confidence, while also contributing to the EU's global agenda (e.g. green transition, digital, trade). The Council also focused on the need to support socio-economic reforms and openly discuss issues where there is disagreement, for instance human rights.

The ministerial discussion will feed into preparations for a Joint Communication on a “Partnership with the Gulf”, that is due for adoption in the first quarter of 2022. An EU-Gulf Cooperation council will also take place early 2022.

Eastern Partnership

Foreign Affairs Ministers had an exchange of views on EU's relations with the Eastern Partnership (EaP), in preparation for the ministerial meeting that will take place in November and the EaP summit scheduled for December in Brussels.

Ministers discussed the difficult geopolitical context faced by some partner countries in the region, and agreed that the EU would keep pushing for fundamental values such as democracy, human rights, rule of law, and anti-corruption. At the same time the EU will remain focused on long-term socio-economic recovery, making sure it is sustainable and inclusive, delivering concrete results for the people.

The EU will also support partners with vaccines, vaccine certificates and the fight against disinformation.

Ethiopia

Over lunch the Foreign Affairs Council exchanged views on the situation in Ethiopia, in light of the latest developments in the country and in the Tigray region, one year after the beginning of the conflict.

The High Representative announced that the Council would prepare an adequate response, possibly including sanctions, to the upcoming United Nations report on Human Rights expected on 1st of November.

Ministers agreed to continue humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia and supported the upcoming mission of the EU Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, who will travel to Ethiopia together with the EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, Annette Weber, to convey a clear message on behalf of the EU on the need to finally implement a ceasefire and the start a political process including all actors.

Nicaragua

Over lunch the Foreign Affairs Council also exchanged views on the situation in Nicaragua. Since 2018 violent suppression of protest killed at least 328 people.

Ministers reflected in particular on the need to adjust EU policies in relation to the upcoming general elections in the country on 7 November 2021, for which the prospects of a credible and legitimate electoral process are very weak.

The EU will continue to insist on democracy, human rights and rule of law, such as the release of political prisoners or the return of international human rights organisations and the holding of free and fair elections.

Current affairs

The Foreign Affairs Council had a discussion on the deteriorating humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan. They concurred that an EU minimal presence in Kabul was necessary to support the Afghan people and ensure safe passage for Afghans at risk, but that this did not mean any EU recognition.

Tunisia was also discussed in light of the latest developments. Ministers stressed the importance of preserving the democratic acquis, respecting the separation of powers and resuming institutional normalcy. The recent appointment of a new government was considered to be a first positive step that the EU will keep monitoring closely.

Ministers then touched on Western Balkans, following up on the recent summit in Brdo and against the background of the recent tensions in the north of Kosovo. The EU will continue its strong political engagement with the region, follow up on the important foreign and security policy tasking from the summit, and facilitate the dialogue on the comprehensive normalisation of relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

With a view to the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), the Council discussed climate diplomacy. Ministers underlined the importance for all countries to submit mitigation plans and long-term zero-emission strategies without delay.

Ministers were then informed about the latest developments around Varosha, and expressed strong solidarity with Greece and Cyprus over the Turkish interventions against vessels operating in their exclusive economic zones. The High Representative underlined that the only durable solution to the issues is a Cyprus settlement in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the principles on which the EU is founded.

The Council also had a long discussion on Belarus and the issue of migrants being pushed towards the border of the EU. Ministers warned against the political use of migrants by the Belarusian regime and underlined that contacts with origin and transit countries would continue, as well as work on an appropriate EU response.

Before concluding the meeting the Council also touched on Mali. Ministers looked at the EU's financial and political leverages, including the possibility to consider restrictive measures, in support of the efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and in line with the conclusions adopted by the European Council in May against those hampering the transition agenda.

Council conclusions

The Council approved conclusions on Bosnia and Herzegovina / EUFOR Operation Althea.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Restrictive measures on arms in Central African Republic

The Council adopted a decision and a regulation amending the current restrictive measures against the Central African Republic and in view of its situation. The amendments are a transposition of UN Resolution [2588 \(2021\)](#), that extends the exemptions to the arms embargo and broadens the scope of the restrictive measures.

Staff Regulation of the European Union Satellite Centre

The Council adopted a decision concerning the Staff Regulations of the European Union Satellite Centre (SATCEN), which will be aligned with the Staff Regulations of Officials, the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the EU, and the Staff Regulation of the European Defence Agency. The SATCEN Staff Regulation will provide for the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the European Union to rule on disputes between the SATCEN and its staff members.

Restrictive measures in Burundi

The Council adopted a decision regarding restrictive measures in view of the situation in Burundi. The sanctions regime was renewed for one year, until 31 October 2022. The Council decided that the persons and entities subject to restrictive measures should continue to be included in the list.

African Union - European Union Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting

The Council approved a draft joint communique prepared by the EU and African Union (AU). The joint communique analyses various matters, including investments human capital (education, science, technology and skills development), strengthening resilience, peace, security and governance, migration and mobility. Furthermore, it includes a section about the mobilisation of investments for African structural sustainable transformation and cooperation on the global scene. The AU and the EU will constantly monitor the implementation of the proposals.

Budget European Security and Defence College

The Council adopted a decision establishing the European Security and Defence College, budget, which is EUR 1 975 752,04. The financial reference amount refers to the period from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.

Barents Euro-Arctic Council Tromsø Declaration

The Council approved the text of the draft Barents Euro-Arctic Council Tromsø declaration. The declaration underlines the importance of regional cooperation for stability and people-to-people contacts, notes the serious challenges of climate change and recognises the importance of developing viable Barents communities.

EU POSITIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) - EU coordination

The Council approved the text of an information note and endorsed the recommended EU position contained in it, so that the Information Note can be used as the basis for the interventions of the representatives of the EU member states which are members of the ICAO council at the ICAO council's 224th session (12291/21 + ADD 1).

EU - Jordan partnership and EU position regarding the definition of "origination products"

The Council decided that to amend the Protocol 3 of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, which concerns the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods of administrative cooperation. Furthermore, minor technical changes may be agreed upon by the Union representatives in the Association council without further decision of the Council.

Extension validity of the EU-Egypt Partnership Priorities

The Council adopted a decision ([12252/21](#)) regarding the association between the European Communities and their member states, and the Arab Republic of Egypt. The validity of the EU - Egypt partnership priorities will be extended until new updated partnership priorities are adopted by the association council.

Extension validity of the EU-Algeria Partnership Priorities

The Council adopted a decision ([12251/21](#)) regarding the association between the European Communities and their member states, and the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. The validity of the EU - Algeria partnership priorities will be extended until new updated partnership priorities are adopted by the association council.

Extension validity of the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities

The Council adopted a decision ([12261/21](#)) regarding the association between the European Communities and their member states, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The validity of the EU - Jordan partnership priorities will be extended until new updated partnership priorities are adopted by the association council.

Extension validity of the EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities

The Council adopted a decision ([12263/21](#)) regarding the association between the European Communities and their member states, and the Republic of Lebanon. The validity of the EU - Lebanon partnership priorities will be extended until new updated joint documents are adopted by the association council.

Extension validity of the EU-Tunisia Strategic Priorities

The Council adopted a decision ([12255/21](#)) regarding the association between the European Communities and their member states, and the Republic of Tunisia. The validity of the EU - Tunisia strategic priorities will be extended until new updated strategic priorities are adopted by the association council.

TRANSPORT

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) High level conference on COVID-19

The Council approved the text of a draft ministerial declaration for the ICAO High Level Conference on COVID-19, with respect to areas of EU exclusive competence. It also agreed that if adjustments of the text are required in order to ensure the consensus of all participating States, the text may be adapted accordingly provided that the changes do not affect the substance and the intent of the text (12323/21; 12408/21).
