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**I/A ITEM NOTE**

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from: General Secretariat of the Council  
to: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council  
No. prev. doc.: 17226/11 +COR1, 10207/12, 17205/12  
Subject: Finalisation of the CCA review process: the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) arrangements

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1. Discussions on the need to review the EU Emergency and Crisis Coordination Arrangements (CCA) started in 2009 and resulted in more flexible arrangements (doc.11949/2/10 REV 2). At the end of this initial review process it was also agreed by Member States that a more in-depth analysis of the arrangements was needed, particularly to take account of the post-Lisbon Treaty context.

2. On 3 December 2010, COREPER approved the creation of the Friends of the Presidency (FoP) working group for the review of the CCA.
3. On 24 November 2011, COREPER welcomed the Presidency Note which closed the work of the FoP working group on the first phase of the CCA review (doc. 17226/11+COR 1) and confirmed the mandate of the FoP working group for the second phase of the CCA review process in 2012 to develop proposals that incorporate all relevant EU level actors and crisis coordination tools, taking into account the guidelines laid down in the Presidency Note.
4. On 30 May 2012, COREPER approved the Concept Note on "Arrangements for Crisis Coordination at EU political level" (doc.10207/12). COREPER also reconfirmed the mandate of the FoP working group until the end of 2012 with a view to finalise the review process.
5. Given that the CCA review process could not be completed by the end of 2012, COREPER confirmed the prolongation of the mandate of the FoP working group until the end of June 2013 with a view to presenting to COREPER and Council for approval the complete revised arrangements.
6. On 27 February 2013, COREPER endorsed the additional mandate to the FoP on the review of the CCA to include also the proposal on the implementation of the Solidarity Clause, thus changing the name of the working group to FoP on the CCA review and the Solidarity Clause Implementation (FoP CCA/SCI).
7. On 4 June 2013, the FoP CCA/SCI completed the CCA review process by reviewing and agreeing at its level the document setting-up the new architecture (cf. annex). In the process, the FoP working group decided to change the name of the CCA to "EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) arrangements" to better reflect the new approach. The new arrangements are based on the principles agreed by COREPER in May 2012 (doc. 10207/12).

8. On this basis, COREPER is invited to recommend to the Council to:
- approve the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) arrangements as set out in the annex;
  - welcome the finalisation of the CCA review process, on the understanding that the Commission and the EEAS will provide the required Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis (ISAA) support;
  - task the FoP CCA/SCI to pursue the work on the IPCR implementing measures in addition to its current mandate on the Solidarity Clause Implementation. The FoP working group will be renamed FoP on the Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements and the Solidarity Clause Implementation (FoP IPCR/SCI).

## EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) Arrangements

### I. General context and key principles

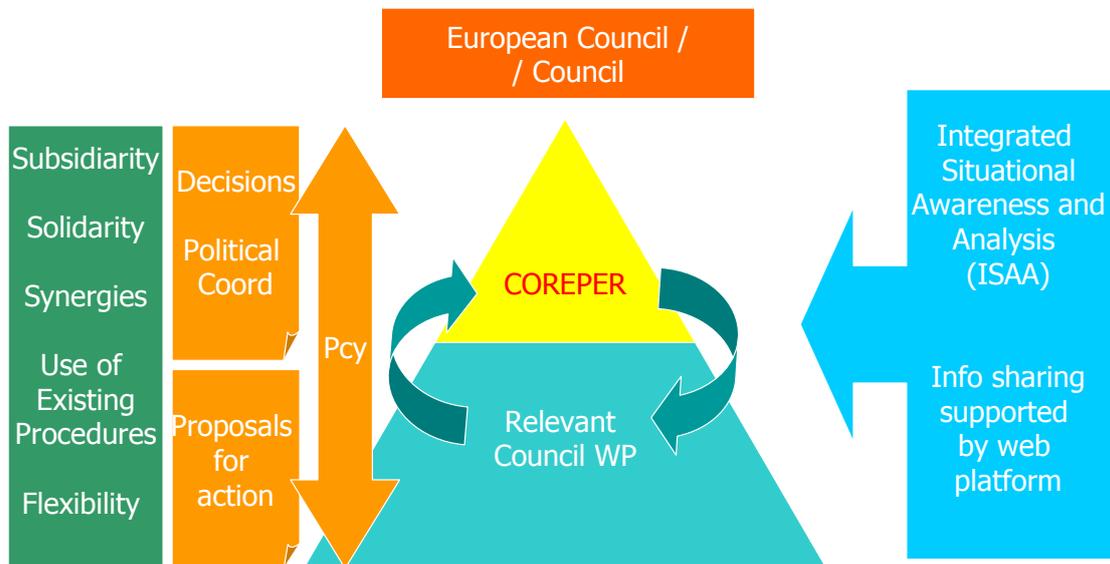
1. Some major emergencies or crises, whether inside or outside the EU, are of such a wide-ranging impact or political significance, that they require timely policy coordination and response at EU political level.<sup>1</sup> This could result from the number of affected or involved Member States, or the cross-sectoral nature of the crisis, the imminence thereof, or from time constraints, or a combination of these factors. This need, which led in 2006 to the creation of the EU Emergency and Crisis Coordination Arrangements, is still valid today.
2. Since 2006, in coping with a number of crises, the EU has gained experience and developed a stronger capacity to respond quickly to crisis situations requiring coordination at EU political level. Many aspects of the of the initial framework (exercises, training and activation of the CCA "awareness mode" and use of the CCA Webpage) also contributed to increase the resilience of the EU and its institutions.
3. Council working parties and COREPER can be convened in a more timely manner today if needed. Therefore, in order to allow a swift and efficient action during a crisis, these arrangements will draw on the well-known regular Council procedures instead of having recourse to pre-defined ad hoc groups.
4. The new arrangements defined herein are designed to be flexible and scalable, allowing to tailor the involvement of the political level and the required support in relation to the crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> References to "crisis" or "crisis situations" throughout this document cover crises as indicated in this paragraph.

5. They take fully into account the new context, lessons drawn from past experience and exercises, and the analysis conducted during the review process. They provide the Presidency and the Council with the necessary tools and an Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis (ISAA) support capability to decide on a case-by-case basis on the steps to be taken and on what format should be used to support political coordination and prepare policy options for Council decision making throughout the crisis situation. This includes also an appropriate coordination of a rapid and effective communication strategy.
6. The key principle of subsidiarity continues to apply. These arrangements do not infringe on existing competencies. They do not replace the existing sector-specific mechanisms or arrangements.
7. It will be crucial to fully exploit potential synergies between stakeholders and existing means, structures and capabilities at EU level, avoiding duplication of existing structures and the creation of new permanent structures.
8. Responding at EU political level in a coherent, efficient and timely way to such crises requires one single set of arrangements. The IPCR will also support the arrangements for the implementation of the Solidarity Clause once a decision is adopted by the Council in compliance with article 222 of the TFEU. The IPCR process, including its activation, is detailed in section II and III of the document.

# Decision Making and Support



## II. Coordination and decision-making at EU Political level

9. The Presidency has a central role to play to ensure political control and strategic direction over all stages of the IPCR process. The new mechanism detailed herewith provide it with the necessary tools and flexibility to decide on the most appropriate way to prepare rapid consultations and to develop possible proposals for action to be decided on by the Council.
10. In fulfilling its role under this framework, the Presidency will consult the affected Member States and those Member States expressing concerns. The Presidency will be advised and supported by the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC), the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS), within their respective roles and responsibilities. The Presidency may also seek expertise from relevant EU Agencies, Member States and others.

11. The IPCR is organised in a COREPER context, relying on regular Council procedures. The Presidency will decide, in light of the characteristics of the crisis, its possible consequences, and the related political needs, on the appropriateness of convening meetings of the relevant Council Working Parties<sup>2</sup> (e.g. PSC, COSI, etc.) and/or COREPER. Any Member State can request the Presidency to do so and as a consequence to activate the IPCR.
12. The Presidency or, the GSC, Commission and EEAS in full agreement and associating the Presidency, can also decide to activate the IPCR in “information sharing” mode for a limited time, in order to prepare the ground for a possible full activation. This does not imply a full activation per se.
13. Depending on the crisis, timely consultations or decisions at Council or European Council level could be needed. To this end, the office of the President of the European Council will be fully involved from the earliest stages of the political coordination process.
14. In order to ensure the strategic direction over the whole process so that all supporting elements and the political decision-making are fully aligned, the Presidency will gather an informal roundtable with the support and advice of the GSC. The Commission and the EEAS will advise the Presidency on their respective areas of competence. Other relevant stakeholders and/or experts (e.g. from the Member States) and the EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator (CTC) will be invited to participate as appropriate. The office of the President of the European Council will be fully involved. Under the Presidency’s leadership, the round table will prepare, develop and update proposals for action, where needed, to be discussed in the Council as required.

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<sup>2</sup> The six-monthly Presidency will coordinate with the HR's representatives chairing the relevant Council preparatory bodies, as well as the Chairman of the Military Committee where appropriate, who have the responsibility to convene meetings of those bodies.

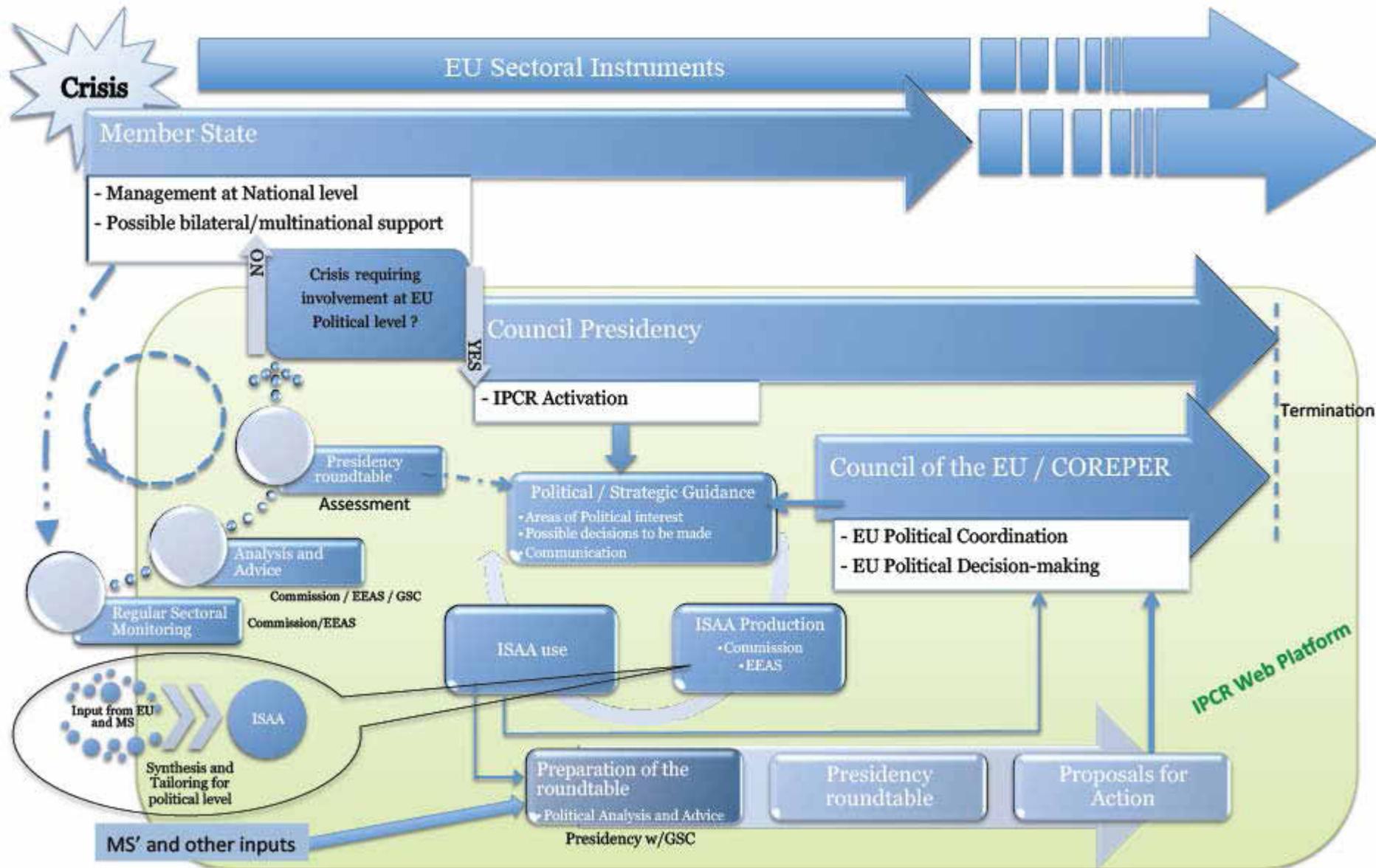
15. The ISAA support capability (cf. section IV) will contribute to inform discussions in the roundtable, and later in the COREPER / Council meetings. The overall process is supported by a dedicated Web Platform (cf. section IV) that facilitates a timely exchange of information.
16. The termination will follow a similar procedure as the activation. The decision on the need for the IPCR to be deactivated will be taken by the Presidency, in consultation with the affected Member States and those Member States expressing concerns.

### **III. The IPCR process**

17. Each crisis might have different features requiring appropriate handling within the Council. The IPCR is based on a progressive approach, as illustrated in the diagram below, which includes in particular the following main steps (described in Annex I), which may not necessarily be sequential:
  - Situation monitoring and alerting: alert messages contribute to raising awareness for developing crises and provide updates on major developments during crises.
  - Sector-specific input: the existing, regular sectoral situation reports provide indications to the Presidency on the crisis and its possible evolution;
  - Activation: the Presidency evaluates the need for political coordination, information exchange or decision-making at EU level. On this basis, the Presidency can decide to activate the IPCR and provide initial guidance on the areas requiring COREPER or Council involvement;
  - Information gathering and exchange: at that stage, the ISAA support capability will start working to produce a situation report tailored to the needs of the political (i.e. COREPER or Council) level, thus allowing a strategic overview of the situation and an informed debate on the agenda items defined by the Presidency;

- Preparatory measures for EU political involvement: the Presidency will also gather an informal roundtable as defined in paragraph 14;
- Political coordination and Decision-making: COREPER / Council ensure oversight and coordination at political level as described in section II;
- Impact monitoring: the ISAA support capability will provide information on the evolution of the crisis and on the impact of the political decisions taken. This feedback loop will support an evolutive process and an involvement of the political level that is commensurate with the needs;

18. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) detailed separately will identify the key actions to be taken, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the relevant actors.



#### **IV. Required support to the Presidency and to Council decision making**

19. The overall new IPCR architecture comprises a number of supporting elements that are essential in order to ensure an informed decision-making in the Council and an effective political coordination at EU level.
20. The supporting elements need to provide products and services that are tailored to the needs of the Political Decision making level, under the guidance of the Presidency following the activation of the IPCR.
21. In line with the overall IPCR, these supporting elements are designed to be flexible and scalable, thus allowing proportionality.
22. In order to support decision-making at EU political level, such supporting elements need to provide products and services that are:
  - covering the key sectors affected by the crisis;
  - integrated, bringing together the different dimensions of a crisis in a coherent way;
  - at the appropriate level of granularity needed to support the political coordination and decision-making process;
  - delivered in a timely manner, allowing sufficient time ahead of formal discussions.
23. As a result, these supporting elements shall include:
  - i. Flash Reports: very concise reports (couple of pages typically) that give an overview of the situation or very short updates, to be produced regularly throughout the crisis;
  - ii. Situation Reports: concise (approx. 5 pages) but more detailed reports, meant at providing a sound basis for political decision-making;
  - iii. Alerts: broadcasted messages (SMS, e-mails, or faxes) that would cover information on a critical event in the development of the crisis or on important procedural steps;The key features of the typical products and, as appropriate, templates, will be included in the SOPs.

## **Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis (ISAA) support capability**

24. In order to ensure an effective response to the crises and coordination at EU political level, the decision-making process shall be supported by Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis (ISAA). This is a key requirement expressed by the Member States as the pivotal element underpinning this mechanism. The supporting elements described in paragraphs 23.(i) and 23.(ii) are an integral part of ISAA.
25. Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis is developed by the Commission and the EEAS within their respective roles and responsibilities. It is of great importance that it is also fed by relevant information and analysis provided by the Member States (e.g. from relevant national crisis centres), particularly through the IPCR Web Platform, and by EU Agencies.
26. Upon activation of a crisis page on the IPCR Web Platform (see below), this support is available on a permanent basis. It is provided to the Presidency and Council in a timely manner throughout the whole crisis situation, including while a crisis is emerging, allowing for pro-active crisis management. Depending on the evolution of the crisis, the Presidency can request to step up Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis support. Regular monitoring from the sectoral EU sources will continue.
27. The ISAA support capability allows to:
- collect and share information regarding the current situation, analysis conducted by the EU and the Member States, decisions and measures taken or to be taken by stakeholders, the need for political coordination at EU level expressed by stakeholders;
  - process the above mentioned information and produce an integrated overview of the situation;
  - produce integrated analysis, including on the possible evolution and consequences of the situation.

Therefore, ISAA will constitute an information-sharing instrument providing also input to Member States, and supporting Commission and EEAS in their activities.

28. An Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis initial model will cover the functioning and organisation, the modalities to integrate information provided by Member States and the respective roles and responsibilities.
29. Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis will have to be developed within existing means and capabilities. There will be limitations to the number of crises which could be handled in parallel and to the level of integration of the information and analysis provided.

### **Web-based communication and information exchange**

30. A Council-owned, dedicated and protected Web Platform serves as a key tool for the IPCR and as an electronic hub between all stakeholders.
31. The IPCR Web Platform is easily accessible to all stakeholders, both at Member States and EU level, ensuring timely and effective distribution and exchange of information relevant for EU political decision making. The Web Platform could be complemented by other existing channels for information classified above EU Restricted. It does not replace any of the existing sectoral web tools and fully respects ownership of information.
32. The Web Platform is permanently available, notably for relevant background information, exercises, lessons learned and training activities as well as more routine issues such as the dynamic update of lists of points of contact. In order to prevent information overload, information management and filtering will be ensured.
33. The IPCR Web Platform also features specific thematically-oriented forums (e.g. on communication, training and exercises, etc.) to be used in particular outside times of crisis for networking, information exchange, and collaboration purposes. It therefore contributes to develop a "IPCR culture" and to the overall preparedness effort.
34. Overall management of the Web Platform and technical support is ensured by the GSC, with the assistance and relevant back up of the Commission and the EEAS within their respective roles and responsibilities. The Presidency and the Member States are involved in structural changes to the page.

35. Short of a full activation of the IPCR, a crisis page can be activated for information and alert purposes as described in paragraph 12.

## **V. Further measures**

36. To strengthen further the capacity to respond quickly at EU political level to crises, preparedness measures and a communication strategy framework are needed. They will be updated and enhanced during the implementing phase, along with the SOPs.

### **Preparedness**

#### Training and Exercises - Lessons Identified/Learned

37. In order to enhance the knowledge and readiness to react quickly of all stakeholders, training on procedures and tools used in a crisis requiring coordination at EU political level will be organised as required. This will include trainings on the Web Platform.
38. Training can be complemented by specific exercises to be organised in a structured manner. They will be proposed by the Presidency and will involve the Member States on a voluntary basis.
39. Lessons from exercises and real life use of these arrangements will be identified. A structured process of lessons learned will be implemented.

### **Communication**

40. Communication to the public will be taken into account from the earliest stages of and throughout the political coordination process.
41. Coherence of the message will be of the essence and coordination procedures will be defined in order to allow all actors to adhere to a common communication strategy, on the basis of an agreed framework.

