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NOTE

From:	High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
To:	Political and Security Committee (PSC)
Subject:	Main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP (part II, point E, paragraph 25 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013) - 2014 - Draft Annual report from the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament

1. The Inter-Institutional Agreement (IIA) of 2 December 2013, part II, point E, paragraph 25, provides that each year, the High Representative shall consult the European Parliament on a forward-looking document, which will set out the main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP, including the financial implications for the general budget of the European Union, an evaluation of the measures launched in the year n -1 and an assessment of the coordination and complementarity of CFSP with the Union's other external financial instruments.
2. The Nicolaidis Group examined the report and agreed on 3 July 2015 via silence procedure that the PSC should be invited to approve the amended draft report as set out below.
3. In light of the above, the Political and Security Committee is invited to approve the draft report and forward it to the Council, via Coreper, for endorsement.

**Draft Annual Report from the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign
Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament**

Main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP

– 2014 –

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PART I: LOOKING BACK AT 2014

INTRODUCTION

2014 was a decisive year for the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Armed conflict, destruction and the loss of human lives in the European Union's neighbourhood called for swift and determined action and demonstrated the need for a truly united European Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Over the past year the EU used the entire range of its tools – CFSP and non-CFSP – to respond to these challenges, to tackle them in an integrated way and to alleviate their impact on the countries concerned as well as on Europe. The broader global changes driving the numerous and simultaneous crises we faced also highlight the need to forge a long-term strategy for the EU's external action.

In order to reflect this comprehensive approach, this report includes, when appropriate, references to non-CFSP policies and instruments, such as development cooperation, trade and humanitarian aid.

2014 saw a new leadership take office, which dedicated itself to even greater coordination between the European External Action Service, the European Commission services and Member States to maintain a global reach for the EU in supporting peace, democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

Throughout the year, the EU coupled diplomacy with new and existing Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions on the ground, humanitarian intervention in areas hit by crisis and development aid for those in need. We also worked closely with international, regional and local partners.

The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy contributes to global peace and security in a number of ways. First, the EU is directly involved in – and in some cases leads – international peace negotiations on behalf of the international community, for example between Belgrade and Pristina and in the Iran nuclear talks.

Second, the EU can assemble a wide range of tools – political and economic – to tackle important foreign policy challenges. In a world where security challenges are becoming ever more complex, the EU's approach to external action adds particular value by addressing all dimensions of a crisis, from its roots to its immediate manifestation. We see the benefits of such an approach in situations as diverse as EU action to address the crisis in Ukraine and in how it has dealt with countering piracy at the Horn of Africa.

Third, the EU works closely with – and materially supports – international and regional partners to deal with regional challenges where only collective efforts can deliver results, such as climate change, sustainable development, and disaster risk management and relief. 2014 was a crucial year in preparing the ground for negotiations within the UN framework towards post-2015 Development goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. To promote democracy, the European Union sent election observation teams to the Maldives, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Egypt, Kosovo¹, Mozambique and Tunisia. The EU also intensified cooperation with its regional and strategic partners to meet global threats and challenges.

1. Examples of EU engagement in the world

This report demonstrates the depth and breadth of EU engagement in the world. The following examples give a glimpse into the diverse fields of the Union's external action where the EU has made a difference.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Throughout 2014 the European Union focused its efforts on de-escalating the crisis in Ukraine and worked towards a lasting solution and supported numerous initiatives to that aim. The political initiatives went hand in hand with a large support package worth EUR 11.1 billion for the next seven years to help stabilise Ukraine's economic and financial situation, support a peaceful transition, encourage political and economic reforms and support inclusive development. To help Ukraine ensure its energy security, the EU brokered a deal enabling gas supplies to continue until the end of March 2015. An EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (CSDP Mission) was also officially launched in December 2014.

At the same time the EU adopted restrictive measures, with respect to the Russian illegal annexation of Crimea and the destabilisation of eastern parts of Ukraine.

Negotiations on a New Agreement between the EU and Russia as well as the Visa talks were suspended together with several EU-Russia cooperation programmes.

While the door for dialogue with Russia remained open, the High Representative for the Union's Foreign Affairs and Security Policy made it clear that the EU's commitment to international law and universal values are non-negotiable.

Southern Neighbourhood – Syria and Iraq

The EU condemns the atrocities and human rights violations and abuses perpetrated in Syria, particularly by the Assad regime as well as by ISIL/Da'esh, Jabhat al-Nusra and other terrorist groups. To respond to the urgent needs of the Syrian population, the EU spearheaded the international response with more than EUR 3 billion since the start of the conflict and the establishment of an EU regional Trust Fund ("Madad") to respond to the crisis was endorsed by Member States. This makes the EU the main world donor in addressing the consequences of this crisis.

It fully supported the efforts of the Joint Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States Lakhdar Brahimi and his successor, the United Nations Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura, to achieve a strategic de-escalation of violence as a basis for a broader political process.

Throughout 2014 the EU continued its policy of promoting a political solution to the conflict while also imposing and enforcing restrictive measures that target the Assad regime and its supporters as long as repression continues. The EU was also at the forefront of supporting the proposals for putting the declared Syrian chemical weapons under international control, leading to their eventual destruction.

In Iraq, the EU maintained its commitment to support the country. Above all we urged the Iraqi government to reach out to all Iraqi communities and push ahead with reconciliation and reforms. Faced with a challenging security environment, the EU cooperated closely with the UN and other international players on the ground.

The High Representative together with the European Commission and the Member States prepared the first EU comprehensive strategy on tackling the crises in Syria and Iraq and the threat posed by ISIL/Da'esh.

The strategy brings together EU and Member States initiatives and boosts their efficiency with a substantial funding package to address the following priorities: relief, stabilisation and development in the region, as well as countering the threat posed by terrorist groups. These measures target Syria and Iraq, but also Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.

Central African Republic

Throughout 2014, the EU played an active role alongside international partners in stabilising the Central African Republic (CAR) and putting it back on track towards a sustainable recovery.

As part of its comprehensive response to the crisis in the CAR, the EU mobilised all instruments at its disposal, including a military CSDP operation. On 1 April 2014, the Council launched the operation EUFOR RCA, to assist international efforts to provide a secure environment in the Capital Bangui and protect the populations most at risk. The EU organised a Mini-Summit on CAR in the margins of the EU-Africa Summit on 2 April, which gathered high-level participation, including UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

The EU and its Member States have substantially scaled up their humanitarian engagement in CAR in 2014 and worked closely with the UN and other agencies to maximise assistance on the ground. Given the persistence of communitarian tensions and the total breakdown of the social fabric of the country, the EU paid specific attention to fighting impunity and re-establishing the rule of law. It also focused on promoting dialogue, de-escalating tensions and confidence building between communities. This went hand in hand with the launch of an EU multi-donor development trust fund in support of the country.

Effective Multilateralism and Partnerships

In an ever more complex and connected world the EU's effectiveness in tackling global challenges depends on strong partnerships. Throughout 2014 the European Union has worked towards deepening relationships with like-minded partners around the globe, be that in the form of stronger bilateral, regional or multilateral ties.

The EU and UN are key partners on peace and security. The EU has continued to be a reliable and committed partner to the United Nations, whether in preventing and addressing crises, or defending human rights, justice, equality and equity, good governance, democracy and the rule of law.

The EU also has a clear vision and an influential voice in debates on the post-2015 agenda and the international negotiations towards a new global climate agreement in 2015.

2. Challenges ahead

The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy is set against the backdrop of a fragmented but interdependent global environment which is increasingly complex, ambiguous and unpredictable. These global shifts will require decisive action on behalf of the EU, based on unity and the ability to identify challenges early and plan ahead, but also to react swiftly to changing circumstances.

In 2015 the EU will continue to focus on stabilising the situation in its neighbourhood while promoting peace and prosperity around the globe. It will continue to actively engage in finding a peaceful and sustainable solution to the conflict in Ukraine. To its south, in addition to devoting its full attention to ending the suffering of the millions affected by the conflict in Syria and Iraq as well as the fear and violence spread by ISIL/Da'esh, the EU will also step up efforts to address the current crisis in Libya and deal with the migratory pressure.

More than a decade after the European Neighbourhood Policy was first adopted, the situation on the EU's borders has changed significantly. This is why 2015 will see a review of the European Neighbourhood Policy to ensure the EU's policies in its neighbourhood are tailored to the current situation on the ground, the EU's interests and the differentiated objectives and needs of countries in question.

This year is also crucial with respect to several international negotiations. The prospect of a nuclear deal with Iran provides a historic opportunity to address concerns about the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear enrichment and could lay the foundation for future cooperation with Iran in important policy fields. Negotiations on a new global climate agreement as well as the Post-2015 Global Development Framework, including Sustainable Development Goals will be essential steps towards a more sustainable future. The EU is at a crucial phase in negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the United States, which holds potential to boost jobs and growth on both sides of the Atlantic. TTIP also has an important geo-political and geo-economic dimension, by deepening the transatlantic bond in the midst of global uncertainty and protecting common standards. The year will also be decisive in charting the way ahead for the Union's external action as it considers how to align all its instruments and external policies in order to respond adequately to threats, challenges and opportunities in a changing global context. A new ambitious and operational European security and foreign policy strategy will be essential in this endeavour.

A. Overview of Activities by Regions

1. Southern Neighbourhood, Middle East Peace Process and Arabian Peninsula

1.1. North Africa

1.1.1. Algeria

The EU sent an Electoral Experts Mission (EEM) to the presidential elections in April to undertake a technical, less public assessment of the process, as would have been the case with a fully-fledged Elections Observation Mission. The Mission issued a series of recommendations, mainly focusing on transparency and traceability of the process.

During 2014, the dynamic of political dialogue and of meetings in the framework of the Association Agreement continued successfully. Minister Ramtane Lamamra met with Commissioner Stefan Füle in Brussels in April 2014. In the framework of the EU-Algeria Association Agreement, the Association Committee took place in March and the Association Council in May. A Protocol to enable Algeria's participation in EU programmes and agencies was initialled in the margins of the Association Council. Several thematic sub-committees and informal dialogues were also held throughout 2014. Moreover, negotiations for a European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan, which started in the second half 2013, continued with three more sessions in 2014. Algeria will benefit from an allocation of up to EUR 148 million for the period 2014-2017.

Algeria played a prominent role as mediator in the Malian crisis. The EU was associated to this effort and the EUSR for the Sahel, Reveyrand de Menthon, participated in the talks between the Malian authorities and rebel groups hosted by the Algerian government.

1.1.2. Morocco

During 2014, Morocco's already close relationship with the EU was further developed in an exhaustive range of issues. The EU maintained a high-level of political dialogue with Morocco and continued to support the gradual implementation of reforms undertaken by Morocco following the adoption of the new Constitution in 2012.

During 2014, Morocco and the EU resolved difficulties pertaining to modification of the entry price mechanism for fruits and vegetables, essentially affecting exports of Moroccan tomatoes into the EU. The first fishing permits to EU vessels were issued in September. Negotiations of the DCFTA (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement) are on stand-by pending the results of accompanying studies for certain sectors by the Moroccan authorities. Mobility partnership negotiations (parallel agreements on visa facilitation and readmission), have started in January 2015.

Both Commissioners Štefan Füle and Johannes Hahn visited Rabat respectively in May and December. The Association Council took place on 16 December 2014. In the coming years, the EU partnership with Morocco will continue to benefit from a significant allocation of funds (an average of EUR 809 million for the period 2014-2017), which maintains Morocco as one of the biggest recipient of EU financial and technical assistance in the Neighbourhood.

On Western Sahara, as in previous years, the EU expressed its support to the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and of his personal envoy Ambassador Christopher Ross to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution. Morocco is part of the UN Human Rights Council for 2014-2016.

1.1.3. Tunisia

Transparent, inclusive and credible parliamentary and presidential elections were successfully held in 2014, as recognised by the EU Election Observation Mission deployed from September 2014 to January 2015. These achievements received broad support and praise from the EU and the international community.

Bilateral relations EU-Tunisia progressed positively in 2014. On the occasion of the Association Council held on 14 April the Action Plan on a Privileged Partnership was agreed; in March, the political joint declaration on a Mobility Partnership on migration related issues was signed. With new authorities in place after the elections, the agenda of the bilateral relationship is expected to return to more regularity, and the main files to make progress (DCFTA, Mobility Partnership). Dialogue on security sector reform intensified in 2014 with a view to enhanced EU support in the future. The visits of European Council President Herman Van Rompuy in February, of Commissioner Štefan Füle in March and Commission Vice-President Michel Barnier in September, as well as of the Political and Security Committee ambassadors in June, demonstrated the EU's overall engagement towards Tunisia's transition.

1.1.4. Libya

The political and security situation in Libya significantly deteriorated in 2014. In May 2014 the EU appointed Bernardino León, until that time EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean region, as EU Special Envoy for Libya, in order to enhance EU support. Bernardino León was appointed UNSRSG in September 2014.

The EU's cooperation efforts – aiming at supporting the political transition – have been affected as a result of ongoing conflict. The escalation of violence forced the EU, alongside with most other international partners, to decide to temporarily re-locate its Delegation and EUBAM staff, a CSDP civilian mission providing technical assistance and training on border management.

Notwithstanding the difficulties, EU provided technical assistance in 2014, in particular in the areas of public administration, support to migrants and Internally Displaced People, security, education, media, civil society and reconciliation. The EU actively supports the mediation efforts of the UN Mission in Libya to find a peaceful solution and for unhampered continuation of Libya's political transition process. The EU deployed an Electoral Expert Mission to the election of the Constitution Drafting Assembly in February 2014.

The continued and marked decline in the political and security situation remains one of the main challenges for the EU. In line with international efforts, EU activity will need to remain coordinated and focus on support to achieve a political agreement/transition, improve the security situation and develop institutional capacity. The future direction of CSDP activity, as undertaken by EUBAM Libya, is subject to a strategic review by Member States in the relevant Council instances.

1.2. Middle East

1.2.1. Egypt

The EU is committed to work with Egypt as a key partner in the region. It appreciates the efforts made by the Egyptian government during 2014 to reach the cease-fire in Gaza and to host the subsequent donors' conference. Throughout 2014 the EU remained engaged with Egypt in accompanying its ongoing transition. High-level visits and regular contacts were conducted to stress the importance of inclusivity, economic support and concern regarding restrictions on human rights and fundamental freedoms for a successful and sustainable political transition towards a solid democratic system.

The EU sent an EU Expert Mission in January 2014 to observe the referendum of the new Constitution noting that the Constitutional process lacked inclusivity and space for dissenting opinion during both creation and campaign. In May, the EU conducted an Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the Presidential elections stating that they were held in a challenging political context and being critical of partial media coverage and very limited space for dissent. The Parliamentary elections still remain outstanding.

The formal EU-Egypt dialogue under the European Neighbourhood Policy further remained de-facto suspended. The Action Plan was extended to March 2015, pending negotiation of a new Action Plan. Consultations with the objective to revive the formal dialogue between the EU and Egypt took place in February and December 2014 with the aim to gradually resume sub-committee meetings and start negotiations on a new Action Plan in early 2015.

At the Council meeting on 10 February, Conclusions were adopted deploring the deteriorating human rights' situation and recalling the August 2013 Conclusions focusing cooperation to the socio-economic sector and civil society and suspending export licenses for equipment which might be used for internal repression².

For 2014, the total funding available for Egypt was about EUR 185 million consisting of the country allocation (EUR 115 million) and Neighbourhood Investment Facility funds (approx. EUR 70 million).

The EU's initial Decision in March 2011 to impose restrictive measures against 19 individuals closely associated with the regime of former President Hosni Mubarak, was extended for another year in March 2014.

1.2.2. Jordan

The EU - Jordan high-level events and exchange of visits continued throughout the year (EU-Jordan Association Council; visits of Commissioner Štefan Füle and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP) to Jordan and of King Abdullah to Brussels). These confirmed a huge level of political and economic relations between the two sides, as well as the EU's appreciation for the support and the hospitality Jordan provided to the Syrian refugees and the EU's commitment for continued support to Jordan. Jordan is considered as a key partner in the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in the Middle East and beyond.

Jordan continued to be greatly affected by the ongoing crises in Syria and Iraq. In addition to the refugee influx, totalling more than 619,000 registered Syrian refugees by the end of 2014, the conflicts imply a loss of trade routes, markets and energy supply.

² The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in Egypt on 6 February (2014/2532(RSP)).

The EU continued to step up its support to Jordan, both through humanitarian aid and longer-term measures, to ensure that the refugee influx does not jeopardise the development gains achieved in recent years. Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, the EU has allocated more than EUR 300 million to support Jordan, with EUR 66 million in development support alone in 2014.

The most significant achievements in terms of implementation of the EU-Jordan Action Plan are within the fields of Migration & Mobility and Trade, with the signing of a Mobility Partnership and the end of exploratory talks for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).

1.2.3. Lebanon

The EU supports the government of Lebanon and is firmly committed to the security and stability of the country. Throughout the year, the EU and Lebanon maintained a high level of engagement, as evidenced by the visits of the HR/VP, the Commissioner for ENP and Enlargement Štefan Füle, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights Stavros Lambrinidis and the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator Gilles de Kerchove, to Beirut, as well as the visit of the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Tammam Salam, to Brussels. The dialogue under European Neighbourhood Policy continued with nine sub-committee meetings and the holding of an Association Committee.

The EU repeatedly stressed the need for Lebanon to meet its constitutional deadlines to hold both presidential and parliamentary elections. The year was marked by paralysis of the Lebanese national institutions; the EU issued local statements regretting these developments and called on the Government hold parliamentary elections swiftly and the Parliament to convene to elect a President.

By the end of the year, Lebanon hosted around 1.15 million of registered refugees from Syria, making it the country with the highest number of refugees per capita in the world. The EU is fully aware of the challenges posed by the impact of the continuous flow of refugees on the country's economy and social fabric and continued therefore to show its great appreciation for the support and generosity demonstrated by the authorities and the population towards all people fleeing neighbouring countries.

The Council Conclusions of 14 April commended Lebanon for continuing to keep its borders open and to provide safe haven for refugees from Syria. The Council Conclusions of 20 October and 15 December recognised the immense security challenges that the crisis in Syria poses to Lebanon and Jordan and confirmed the EU's determination to seek ways to further enhance its support to both countries in this regard. The conclusions furthermore commended the efforts of these countries, as well as those of Turkey in sheltering refugees from Syria.

The EU allocated more than EUR 182 million to Lebanon in 2014, more than triple the amount of the pre-crisis bilateral assistance. The EU took part in the meetings of the UN-Led International Support Group for Lebanon to mobilise support for Lebanon to cope with the consequences of the Syrian crisis.

In the face of Lebanon's critical security situation, including attacks on the Lebanese security forces, the EU advanced on shaping EU programmes to support the security sector and the Lebanese Armed Forces.

1.2.4. Syria

In its fourth year in 2014, the Syria crisis continued to have a devastating and lasting impact on Syria and across the region. The European Council of 20 August was "extremely dismayed by the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Iraq and in Syria as a result of the occupation of parts of their territory" by the "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL/(Da'esh).

The EU expressed its determination to contribute to countering the threat posed by ISIL/Da'esh and other terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria (in line with UNSCR 2170, August), as well as the threat posed by the foreign fighters (in line with UNSCR 2178, September). The Council of 20 October endorsed a Syria-Iraq Counter Terrorism/foreign fighters' strategy, and tasked the HR/VP to develop a comprehensive regional strategy for Syria and Iraq including the ISIL/Da'esh threat.

As regards the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), the European Council called on all sides to the conflict in Syria to respect the mission mandate and ensure the safety and freedom of movement of UN troops, including those from EU Member States, and condemned attacks on the Force and the detention of some of its members.

The EU condemned unreservedly the atrocities and human rights violations and abuses perpetrated in Syria, particularly by the Assad regime as well as those committed by ISIL/Da'esh, Jabhat al-Nusra and other terrorist groups, as reported by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry established by the UN Human Rights Council and continued calling for accountability.

The EU promotes a political solution to the conflict in Syria based on the principles of the Geneva communiqué of 2012. In this regard, the EU supported the efforts of the Joint Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States Lakhdar Brahimi until his resignation in May; and the Council on 15 December expressed commitment to fully support the efforts of his successor, the United Nations Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura, to achieve a strategic de-escalation of violence as a basis for a broader political process.

In response to the escalating needs of the affected Syrian population, the EU has spearheaded the international response with more than EUR 3 billion since the start of the conflict (around EUR 1.6 billion from the EU budget and nearly EUR 1.5 billion from EU Member States), making it the main world donor in addressing the consequences of this crisis.

The EU continued to call for the respect of International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law and the protection of civilians and safety of humanitarian personnel. It welcomed UNSCR 2139 (February), 2165 (July) and 2191 (December) fostering effective cross-border and cross-line assistance.

While promoting a political solution to the conflict, the EU continued its policy of imposing and enforcing restrictive measures³ targeting the Assad regime and its supporters as long as repression continues.

The EU supported the chemical weapons destruction mission of the UN and Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons politically, financially and logistically. This Joint Mission was formally closed on 30 September and the EU maintains pressure on Syria to ensure that the chemical weapons programme is completely and irreversibly dismantled.

1.2.5. Middle East Peace Process

In 2014 the EU contributed to the US-brokered Israeli-Palestinian negotiations including through the European offer of an unprecedented political, economic and security support to both parties in the context of a final status agreement and a Special Privileged Partnership. However, a suspension of the US brokered negotiations in April caused uncertainty about progress in the peace process, aggravated by an escalation of violence in the West Bank including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

Israeli military operation 'Protective Edge' marked the third conflict in Gaza in the last 6 years. It involved a large scale ground operation aimed at the destruction of tunnels between Gaza and Israel and the militants' rocket arsenal; it claimed some 2,300 lives, majority of them Palestinian civilians. The EU stressed the need for protection of civilians at all times.

³ http://www.eeas.europa.eu/statements-eeas/2014/141215_01_en.htm

In the framework of consequent international efforts to ensure a durable ceasefire and a fundamental change to the humanitarian, political and security situation in the Gaza Strip, the EU underlined the unsustainability of the status quo ante, condemned indiscriminate rocket fire at Israeli civilians by Hamas and other militant groups, condemned the loss of hundreds of civilian lives in Gaza, stressed the need for protection of civilians according to international humanitarian law, and strongly encouraged the Palestinian Authority to progressively assume all its government functions in Gaza. It also called for the dismantling of military groups in Gaza. The EU discussed with the parties its possible contribution ensuring a durable ceasefire and creating conditions towards the lifting of the closure regime, both through CFSP instruments such as the reactivation and extension of EUBAM Rafah and EUPOL COPPS missions and humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, including at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in September and in the Cairo 'Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza' in October.

The EU expressed its agreed positions in the Council Conclusions in November 2014 and called for a fundamental change of the political, security and economic situation in the Gaza Strip, including the end of the closure.

During her visit to the region in November, the HR/VP underlined the need for a credible political perspective for the Middle East Peace Process based on the two-State solution as well as its regional aspects and key importance of the Arab Peace Initiative.

The EU stands ready to work with international partners on an initiative to relaunch the peace process in line with its peace parameters expressed in the Council Conclusions of July 2014 and its longstanding position in favour of the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition.

Several factors increased tensions on the ground before the end of 2014: continued Israeli settlement expansion, houses demolitions and evictions; recurrent clashes at the Haram Al-Sharif/Temple Mount in East Jerusalem; a number of terrorist attacks on Israelis in Jerusalem and the West Bank; the disastrous humanitarian situation in Gaza; a lack of progress in Palestinian reconciliation and stalled Cairo negotiations on a durable Gaza ceasefire.

President Abbas undertook renewed activity in the UN aiming at a UNSC resolution requesting the end of the Israeli occupation with a deadline. In its November Conclusions the Council reaffirmed the willingness to play a major role and actively contribute to a negotiated solution of all final status issues. It called on the parties and on all major stakeholders, including the Quartet, the Arab League and the UNSC, to take the necessary steps toward that aim.

Dialogue between the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the EU continued in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy and on the basis of the priorities jointly agreed in the 2013 Action Plan. After the summer conflict in Gaza, the EU repeatedly underlined the need for a sustainable and comprehensive solution, including the lifting of the closure, the return of the PA to its governmental responsibilities in the Gaza Strip and the urgent resumption of credible peace negotiations.

This message, as well as the EU's continued commitment to Palestinian state building in view of a two state-solution, was reiterated by the HR/VP during the meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in September and of the International Donor Conference in Cairo in October.

Continued attention was paid to acts threatening the viability of a two-State solution, in particular the continued expansion of Israeli settlements, settler violence, demolitions – including of EU funded projects – evictions and forced transfers.

The EU reaffirmed the applicability of international human rights and humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian territory and called on Israel to fully meet its obligations under international law.

The EU participated as observer in the meeting of the High Contracting Parties of the IV Geneva Convention held in Geneva in December 2014.

While an upgrade of bilateral relations with Israel depends on effective progress in the MEPP as well as reinforced commitment to shared values, bilateral cooperation continued to develop on the basis of the 2005 EU-Israel Action Plan. No Association Committee or Council meetings were held in 2014, but there was a productive bilateral dialogue.

In 2014 there was progress in several areas of the Action Plan, such as the entry into force of the Comprehensive Aviation Agreement, the launch of Israel's participation in the Horizon 2020 programme and the signing of an agreement between the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the Israel Anti-Drug Authority.

At political level, relations with both partners were highlighted by visits of President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, of President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso and the first visit in her new mandate of High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the Commission Federica Mogherini.

The EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territory (EUPOL COPPS) has further pursued its strategic engagement in the Palestinian Authority security and justice sectors. The Mission continued capacity building with the Police at the operational level to strengthen its performance (e.g. community policing, crowd and riot control), its organisation (e.g. human resources management, training capacity) and its accountability. The mission continued to facilitate coordination between the Israeli and the Palestinian police through dedicated events. In the justice sector, the mission was engaged helping to clarify the roles and mandates of the justice sector institutions, through promoting a shared inter-institutional understanding and key legislative initiatives in this regard.

The Mission has also facilitated the adoption of the new Justice Sector Strategy 2014-2016. Institution building efforts and capacity building assistance have continued with key PA judicial authorities, including the High Judicial Council, the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General's Office and with the Palestinian Bar Association.

The activities of the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Rafah have centred on the Palestinian Authority Preparedness Project. The Project aims at helping the PA border agency in forming a vision, a concrete programme and in developing operational capacities for running the Rafah crossing by international standards (i.e. EU Schengen standards). The PA's preparedness to run the Rafah crossing is of direct interest to EUBAM Rafah as the mission and the PA border authorities are supposed to closely work together at the crossing point. In response to the latest Gaza crisis, both the EU BAM and EUPOL COPPS missions have reassessed their planning on a possible reactivation and extension— in scope and mandate - of their activities in the Gaza Strip in the context of the EU efforts to support Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on a durable ceasefire mediated by Egypt.

1.3. Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq

1.3.1. Gulf Cooperation Council and its Member States

Dialogue with the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) and with the GCC Secretariat was conducted on the occasion of the EU-GCC Joint Cooperation Committee and Political dialogue at Senior Officials' level in April 2014. The HR/VP visited Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait in January 2014. The EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting planned for 23 June in Luxembourg was postponed upon request from the GCC, and will be rescheduled in the first half of 2015. The incoming HR Federica Mogherini, in her capacity of Foreign Minister of Italy which was holding the EU Council rotating Presidency, held a meeting with the GCC Troika in New York in the margins of the UN General Assembly in September focused on EU-GCC relations, key regional issues and global issues. Several cooperation initiatives were conducted at regional and bilateral level, including political dialogues on Counter Terrorism with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The HR and her services continued to closely monitor the situation in Bahrain and welcomed the successful holding of municipal and parliamentary elections on 22 and 29 November 2014, hoping the new legislature would open a new chapter of Bahrain's political development by prioritizing reforms as the sole way to ensure sustainable development and stability in the kingdom. The EU continued to firmly condemn the use of violence and to call for genuine national reconciliation through inclusive dialogue, and for the full implementation of the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry and the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review.⁴

⁴ The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Bahrain, in particular the cases of Nabeel Rajab, Abdulhadi al-Khawaja and Ibrahim Sharif, on 6 February 2014 (P7 TA(2014)0109) focusing on the Human Rights situation in Bahrain.

In December 2014, a new Head of Delegation was accredited to the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi. The Delegation was established in the second half of 2013. The EU and the United Arab Emirates pursued their cooperation on Human Rights with the second and third meetings EU-UAE Human Rights informal working group, held on 28-29 April in Abu Dhabi and on 20 November in Brussels.

The EU, more broadly, closely monitored the human rights situation in the Gulf countries, seeking constructive engagement with local authorities while using in parallel the full range of diplomatic tools on a number of individual cases and horizontal issues, notably pertaining to the use of the death penalty.

Throughout 2014 progress was made in the negotiations of a visa waiver agreement between the EU and the United Arab Emirates.

1.3.2. Iran

International concerns about the Iranian nuclear programme remained at the centre of EU-Iran relations throughout 2014. The former HR Catherine Ashton, in her role as negotiator on behalf of the E3 +3 (France, Germany and the United Kingdom as well as China, Russia and the United States), based on a mandate of the UN Security Council, was actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to find a lasting and comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. Negotiations continued throughout the year. To ensure their continuity, on 5 December 2014, Catherine Ashton was appointed by the new HR Federica Mogherini as special advisor for facilitating the nuclear talks with Iran.

Following the adoption on 24 November 2013 of an interim six-month agreement, known as the Joint Plan of Action, talks continued to seek a comprehensive long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The objective of the negotiations remains to agree with Iran on verifiable guarantees about the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. A first meeting at Political Directors level was held in Vienna in February 2014 soon after the beginning of the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action, and negotiations continued at a steady pace. During talks at principals' level from 2-19 July 2014 in Vienna the Joint Plan of Action was extended until 24 November 2014. Several rounds of talks at political and expert level followed but a comprehensive deal could not yet be reached during a meeting at Ministerial level in Vienna from 18-24 November 2014 and an extension of the Geneva Joint Plan of Action until the end of June 2015 was agreed.

An EU Council Decision also extended the sanctions relief measures as agreed in the Joint Plan of Action until 30 June 2015. This included the suspension of certain EU sanctions, to allow the provision of insurance and transport in relation to Iranian crude oil sales to its current customers, import of Iranian petrochemical products as well as trade in gold and precious metals with the Iranian government. The increase in thresholds for authorising financial transfers to and from Iran was also maintained. The core sanctions architecture remained intact.

The EU was encouraged by some steps that Iran took to improve relations with regional neighbours and the international community. Iran played a constructive role in the peaceful government transition in neighbouring Iraq. However, Iran's continuing involvement in the Syrian conflict and support to organizations such as Hezbollah, Hamas and the Houthis in Yemen, is a source of concern to the EU and regional and international partners.

Despite the hopeful signals in 2013 after the election of President Rouhani, for instance with the release of a number of prisoners of conscience, no progress on human rights was observed in 2014. During her visit to Teheran in March 2014, the HR/VP addressed human rights with the government and met with several women activists. The EU also continued to raise the human rights situation in Iran at bilateral and multilateral level and in public statements, be it as a general principle or in relation to individual cases. As was the case in previous years, the EU supported a UN General Assembly Resolution sponsored by Canada in 2014.⁵

1.3.3. Iraq

In June the security situation in Iraq rapidly deteriorated due to a large-scale assault and subsequent takeover of large swathes of Iraqi territory by ISIL/Da'esh. Since August the US-led 'Global Coalition to counter ISIL/Da'esh', which includes EU Member States and countries from the region, was formed to counter the ISIL/Da'esh threat and support the Iraqi government to regain ground and provide security to the population. In the context of the coalition, ISIL/Da'esh is subject to the arms embargo and assets freeze imposed by United Nations Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011), 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014).

The EU expressed its support to the coalition on several occasions. Furthermore, on 20 October the Council endorsed the EU Counter Terrorism / Foreign Fighters Strategy and called the HR/VP to develop an EU comprehensive regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat.⁶ The HR/VP participated to the meeting of the 'Global Coalition to counter ISIL/Da'esh' on 3 December at NATO Headquarters. The EU has repeatedly highlighted the need to promote a good coordination between EU's strategy and actions and the efforts by the global coalition.

⁵ Moreover, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the EU strategy towards Iran with strong references to the human rights in Iran (2014/2625(RSP))

⁶ The strategy was adopted on 6 February 2015.

The appointment of Haidar al-Abadi as new Prime Minister has raised hopes for a more inclusive political process than under the previous governments. The HR/VP had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister al-Abadi in Brussels on 3 December and visited Baghdad and Erbil at the end of December.

Before the escalation of the situation on the ground, the first meeting of the EU-Iraq Cooperation Council had been held at Ministerial level in Brussels in January 2014. This meeting followed on the first round of cooperation and subcommittee meetings of the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in late 2013. Pending ratification of the PCA (15 Member State still needed to ratify at the beginning of December 2014), some chapters of the agreement, in particular those relating to trade and some sectors of cooperation, are being applied provisionally. The crisis in Iraq has slowed down the implementation of the PCA but the EU and the Iraqi government have agreed to resume activities under the PCA in the first half of 2015.

In spite of the challenging security environment, the EU has maintained its commitments to Iraq and is cooperating closely with the UN (broadly speaking UNAMI for political matters and UNHCR, OCHA, UNOPS for humanitarian related matters) and other international players on the ground. The EU has insisted with the Iraqi government on the urgency of outreach to all Iraqi communities, reconciliation and reforms. In this light, the EU welcomed the agreement between the federal government and the Kurdish regional government on sharing of oil revenues as a confidence building step. Bilateral EU cooperation will focus on education, governance and access to energy for all.^{7 8}

⁷ A four-year cooperation programme for Iraq (2014-2017) of EUR 78 million was agreed between the Iraqi authorities and the EC in 2014. It will support the current political processes and bolster peace and stability. EU projects will focus on governance and rule of law, access to national public education and to energy for the poor and in remote areas.

⁸ The European Parliament has expressed firm condemnation of ISIL/Da'esh's actions on several occasions:

- European Parliament resolution of 12.02.2014 on the Humanitarian crisis in Iraq and Syria, in particular in the IS context (2015/2559(RSP))
- European Parliament resolution of 17.07.2014 on the situation in Iraq (2014/2716(RSP))
- European Parliament resolution of 18.09.2014 on the situation in Iraq and Syria, and the IS offensive, including the persecution of minorities (2014/2843(RSP))
- European Parliament resolution of 27.11.2014 on Iraq: kidnapping and mistreatment of women (2014/2971(RSP))

1.3.4. Yemen

The international community – and the EU in particular – are important actors in supporting the transition process in Yemen, both politically and financially, notably through the Friends of Yemen and its local format in Sana’a, which accompanied and monitored the transition process in close collaboration with the UN special adviser Jamal Benomar and will continue to do so.

In line with the 2012 Transition Agreement brokered by the UN on the basis of a Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) started in March 2013 with the aim to conclude in September, was finally concluded in January 2014. The EU has since continuously supported the implementation of NDC recommendations - as per Council Conclusions of 10 February 2014 - in line with the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, and their translation into a new Constitution to be approved by referendum before parliamentary elections can complete the current transition. Unfortunately, progress on this front remained very slow and the military offensive by Houthis forces over the summer, building on popular discontent regarding the much-needed reform of fuel subsidies, epitomized the fragility of the transition.

The EU, as part of the Group of 10 gathering ambassadors of countries acting as guarantors of the transition, welcomed the conclusion of the Peace and National Partnership Agreement of 21 September, and has since repeatedly encouraged all actors to work towards its swift implementation, including its security annex, in particular through the Council Conclusions of 20 October 2014.

The EU also translated into EU law sanctions adopted by the UNSC under Resolution 2140 against spoilers deemed to have derailed the reform process by creating instability and insecurity in the country.

The EU repeatedly expressed great concern over the deteriorating security situation in the country, expressing steadfast support for the Yemeni authorities' struggle against terrorism.

The EU has also been closely monitoring the human rights situation in Yemen, notably the issue of the juvenile death penalty and the rights of children. The EU also contributed substantially through development and humanitarian assistance to the improvement of health systems, social protection, food security and nutrition and to resolving other pressing needs of the most vulnerable people in Yemen.

1.4. Regional co-operation

1.4.1. League of Arab States

In 2014 the EU and the League of Arab States (LAS) continued their close cooperation.

The third Foreign Affairs Ministerial meeting between both organisations took place in Athens on 11 June 2014. The adopted Ministerial Declaration addressed both horizontal (human rights, tolerance, terrorism) and political topics (Middle East Peace Process, Syria, Libya). Both organisations advanced their relations through the establishment of the Strategic Dialogue, which aims at introducing regular and institutionalised exchanges on political and security issues, including crisis management, humanitarian assistance, counter-terrorism, transnational organised crime and weapons of mass destruction. Also business dialogue was initiated, along with some other fields of cooperation, related to the implementation of the Joint Work Programme.

Contacts between the high ranking officials from both organisations intensified. Among other exchanges four Senior Official Meetings (SOMs) were held: in Cairo (February), Malta (May), Athens (June), Cairo (November), as well as a PSC Ambassadors visit to Cairo, along with the EU CTC in December.

Implementation of the EU-LAS Joint Work Programme of cooperation continued with activities held in the fields of human rights, election observation, women empowerment, energy, as well as seminars for junior and mid rank diplomats from the LAS General Secretariat.

1.4.2. Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

The new OIC Secretary General Iyad Madani from Saudi Arabia took office in January 2014. The OIC-EU high level consultation meeting took place in Brussels in September, and both organisations agreed on setting a common ground for partnerships in different cooperation areas, including: a dialogue between the Muslim world and the EU, protection of Muslim minorities in the EU, counter-terrorism, security, radicalism, Islamophobia and other challenges that both organisations may face in the future. In November the OIC Independent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) delegation paid a first time visit to the EU institutions to discuss human rights' related topics.

The OIC – EU partnership is supposed to produce a broad cooperation, from the inter-religious dialogue to economic and political themes. Engagement so far has proven to be a good path towards better mutual understanding.

1.4.3. Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

The functioning and institutionalisation of the UfM under the EU and Jordan Co-Presidencies was consolidated. The UfM continues to be a unique forum of 43 partners¹ which offers a joint platform for coordination of initiatives and cooperation in sectoral activities, organisation of ministerial dialogues and promotion of projects aiming at strengthening of the Euro-Mediterranean economic integration.

Three UfM Ministerial meetings took place in 2014: on industrial cooperation (February), on environment and climate change (May) and on digital economy (September). The UfM held also six Senior Official Meetings (SOMs): three in Brussels (February, June and September), two in Barcelona (April and December) and one in Naples (October).

2. Russia, Eastern Neighbourhood and Central Asia

2.1. Russian Federation

The EU's relations with Russia in 2014 were dominated by the issue of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and continuing destabilisation of Ukraine, including aggression by Russian forces on Ukrainian soil and continued support to separatists by Russia.

The 32nd EU-Russia Summit took place in a restricted format on 28 January in Brussels, focusing on Ukraine and the Eastern Partnership (EaP). On that occasion President Putin, while stating that Russia had no problem of principle with the EaP, raised concerns regarding effects on the Russian economy of the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. It was agreed to hold technical consultations to explain how the EU's Association Agreements with several EaP partner countries will bring benefits to all partners, Russia included. The Summit also discussed the joint vision of a Common Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok, which could help overcome current differences, provided the sides could first agree on a New EU-Russia Agreement, better compliance with WTO and other commitments, and more constructive cooperation in our Common Neighbourhood. A joint statement of 28 January 2014 on combating terrorism was adopted⁹.

Further to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation which followed the military operation of Russian forces in Crimea, the European Council decided in March on a graduated approach of restrictive measures (incl. visa bans and asset freezes) on certain Russian and Ukrainian individuals responsible for the violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Negotiations on a New Agreement and the Visa Dialogue as well as preparations for the Summit foreseen for June were suspended.¹⁰

Unfortunately Russia did not respond to repeated EU's calls to stop escalation and destabilisation of eastern Ukraine through the flow of arms, equipment and "volunteers", which fuelled the conflict, created the context in which the MH 17 tragedy occurred in July and culminated in August with the direct involvement of Russian military assets and forces in the conflict.

⁹ http://eu-un.europa.eu/articles/en/article_14531_en.htm

¹⁰ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141372.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141707.pdf

Further to the European Council Conclusions of 16 July and 30 August, and a statement of 11 September,¹¹ sectorial restrictive measures were taken against Russia in areas including access to capital markets, defence, dual-use goods and sensitive technologies, including those in the energy sector.

Furthermore several EU-Russia cooperation programmes were suspended. The European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development also suspended the signing of new financing operations in Russia. At the end of the year the list of Russian and Ukrainian individuals and entities subject to a travel ban and an asset freeze stood at 132 persons, including persons providing support to or benefitting Russian decision-makers, and 28 entities.

Russia took retaliatory measures including a ban on the import of certain foods from the EU and several non-EU countries and also imposed a travel ban inter alia on representatives of many Member States as well as Members of the European Parliament without disclosing who were affected.

¹¹ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/143990.pdf
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/144868.pdf

Trilateral talks between the EU, Russia and Ukraine on gas deliveries and prices were initiated to avoid disruption of supply to - and of gas transit through - Ukraine. Following a series of talks on these issues, the EU on 30 October brokered a deal between Russia and Ukraine enabling gas supplies to continue until the end of March 2015. Among its main points were the settling of Ukrainian gas debt based on a preliminary price, the final price/debt to be determined through pending arbitration, and the agreement on modalities for new gas deliveries. In addition the European Commission worked with International Financial Institutions to ensure that Ukraine had the necessary financial means to honour its part of the agreement. The parties also agreed to ensure safe gas transit through Ukraine to the European Union. Alleging EU opposition, Russia in December declared a stop to the "South Stream" project which would have routed gas deliveries to the EU through Bulgaria and Serbia, bypassing Ukraine as transit country. An alternative pipeline through Turkey was suggested during President Putin's visit to Ankara, with the aim to carry Russian gas to the EU with Greece as entry point.

Since November 2013, the Commission has engaged in a bilateral consultation process with Russia – extended in June 2014 to include Ukraine – on the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive FTA, Some 10 meetings at technical and political levels have taken place to address concerns raised by Russia (tariffs, SPS, TBT, energy and customs) regarding the impact on the Russian economy of the DCFTA.

At a ministerial meeting on 12 September 2014, an agreement was reached to postpone the provisional application of the DCFTA and extend EU Autonomous Trade Measures in favour of Ukraine until the end of 2015; for its part Russia maintains its trade preferences to Ukraine in the framework of the CIS FTA.

The EU welcomed the September Minsk Memorandum and Protocol agreed in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group, as a step towards a sustainable political solution of the crisis, which needs to be based on the respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Despite the adverse circumstances EU-Russia communication channels remained open and political dialogue continued in 2014 on issues high on the EU's foreign policy agenda, such as Syria, Iran, the broader Middle East and Afghanistan. The EU also continued cooperation with Russia on global issues such as counter-terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, illegal trafficking and energy security.

The human rights situation in Russia remained a source of deep concern in 2014, characterised by further steps to restrict press freedom and civil society activities in particular on-line, and incapacitate the opposition, including by attempting to close down NGOs on the basis of administrative or judicial court cases.¹² The EU's concerns in this regard were raised both publicly and in political dialogue¹³. The biannual EU-Russia Human Rights Consultations were not held in 2014.

2.2. Eastern Partnership: multilateral relations

A new geopolitical context since February 2014 put into question the principles worked out after the Cold War and reflected in the Paris Charter in 1990. The aggression by the Russian armed forces on Ukrainian soil as well as other measures by Russia against partner countries and even EU Member States tested strength and resilience of the Eastern Partnership and our resolve to move forward together.

¹² EU Statement of 22 October on the Freedom of Association and Freedom of Expression in the Russian Federation:
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/council_europe/press_corner/all_news/news/2014/20141022_en.htm;

European Parliament resolution of 23 October on the closing-down of the NGO 'Memorial' in Russia, 2014/2903(RSP):

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P8-TA-2014-0039>

¹³ The European Parliament on 2 April adopted a recommendation to the Council on establishing common visa restrictions for Russian officials involved in the Sergei Magnitsky case (2014/2016(INI)) P7_TA(2014)0258.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2014-0258+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

Progress continued to be made in the Eastern Partnership following the Vilnius Summit of November 2013. 2014 saw the signature of the most ambitious contractual relations with third countries (AA/DCFTAs) between the EU and Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. All three agreements started to be provisionally applied this year. In the case of Ukraine, the provisional application of Agreement's title on trade and related matters, including the establishment of a free trade area was postponed till January 2016.

In the area of CSDP, the Framework Agreement on participation in EU crisis management operations with Georgia came into force in March.

Major progress was achieved in the field of visa liberalisation with the Republic of Moldova with entry into force of the visa free regime in April. The visa facilitation agreement and readmission agreement entered into force on 1 January 2014 between EU and Armenia and on 1 September 2014 between EU and Azerbaijan. Both countries began enjoying the benefits of the Agreements. The EU began negotiations on Visa Facilitation Agreement with Belarus.

At the same time, the supportive work of multilateral platforms continued, providing assistance to partner countries in advancing their reforms. Active contributions, support and expertise for seminars and training programmes were offered by partner countries, EU Member States, EU institutions and international organisations. International financing institutions also provided assistance via various channels.

In 2014, activities of the Platform on Democracy, Good Governance and Stability focused mainly on cooperation in the area of CSDP, public administration reform, fight against corruption, asylum and migration, improving the functioning of the judiciary and the safe management of state borders (Integrated Border Management). The implementation of the activities of the Platform was supported by the Council of Europe under a facility to cover activities in the area of judicial reform, fight against corruption and cooperation against cybercrime.

The Panel on cooperation with regard to CSDP continued to benefit from a high visibility among the partner European countries. In 2014, CSDP Panel meetings focused on security and defence issues and engaged in activities and projects in cooperation with the European Security and Defence College, the EEAS, the European Commission services and some EU member states. More than a dozen of projects included joint CSDP courses and training programmes for officials from partner countries and Member States on crisis management capability development, various workshops including on EU Battle Groups, a joint field visit to EUMM Georgia, CSDP orientation courses organised in partner countries, briefings on mainstreaming of human rights and gender issues in CSDP missions as well as outreach conference with civil society.

In the field of Integrated Border Management, the implementation of projects in the framework of the Flagship Initiative continued to achieve the Eastern Partnership objectives, namely increasing the security and effectiveness of checks at border crossings and improving the overall effectiveness of partner countries' border agencies and customs officers. The new FRONTEX led capacity building programme to assist partners in this endeavour was launched.

The Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-Made Disasters Flagship Initiative (PPRD) continued its support in building up the participating countries' capacity for disaster prevention, preparedness and response at local, national and regional levels. The implementation of the Electronic Risk Atlas in each country is under way. A second phase of the PPRD project started in November 2014 with the objective to further strengthen partner countries' civil protection capacities for disaster prevention, preparedness and response, and to bring the Partner Countries progressively closer to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

The fourth informal EaP dialogue held in Baku on 11-12 September with energy as a sector component allowed the Foreign Ministers to discuss foreign policy issues of common interest: the impact of the wider neighbourhood on the EaP region, Iran, MEPP and UNGA priorities with a special focus on so called Islamic State.

2.3. Black Sea Synergy

During 2014, the regional cooperation in the Black Sea continued to progress in its sectoral cooperation, such as the environment, maritime affairs and fisheries, research and innovation, cross border cooperation and civil society.

In 2014, the EEAS and Commission services undertook a review of the Black Sea Synergy designed to highlight the progress in cooperation in the Black Sea region over the past five years and outline considerations which will influence the future development of the Synergy. The review revealed the practical utility via concrete projects, the potential and the added value of this EU regional policy approach.

2.4. Eastern Partnership: bilateral relations

2.4.1. Ukraine

The EU has been following the political situation in Ukraine closely and has been deeply engaged in seeking a solution to the crisis which developed after months of civic protests following the Ukrainian government's decision in 2013 to suspend preparations to sign the Association Agreement at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius.

The HR/VP and the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy visited Kyiv on multiple occasions in 2014, as did Foreign Ministers from many EU Member States and members of the European Parliament in a near-constant demonstration of this engagement. In meetings with the authorities, opposition leaders and representatives of civil society, the EU's efforts have been focused on facilitating dialogue and assisting efforts to stabilise the political situation.

The Council on 10 February 2014 underlined its concern notably over reported abuses of human rights and cases of violence, intimidation and missing persons, expressing its readiness to react quickly to any deterioration on the ground. The HR convened an extraordinary session of the Council on 20 February 2014, where in light of the deteriorating situation, the EU decided notably to introduce targeted sanctions. Subsequently, the Council on 5 March also adopted EU sanctions focused on the freezing and recovery of misappropriated Ukrainian state funds.

A second extraordinary meeting of the Council on 3 March 2014 condemned the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces as well as the authorisation given by the Federation Council of Russia on 1 March for the use of the armed forces on the territory of Ukraine. The EU called on Russia to immediately withdraw its armed forces to the areas of their permanent stationing, in accordance with the Agreement on the Status and Conditions of the Black Sea Fleet stationing on the territory of Ukraine of 1997. The EU also commended the measured response demonstrated by Ukraine. The Council decided to suspend bilateral talks with the Russian Federation on visa matters and discussions on the new (EU-Russia) Agreement as well as preparations for participation in the G8 Summit in Sochi.

In a statement by Heads of State and Government following an extraordinary meeting on 6 March, the EU underlined that a solution to the crisis must be found through negotiations between the governments of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, including through potential multilateral mechanisms and outlined three steps of actions if destabilising actions by Russia continued.

In the absence of Russia taking de-escalatory steps, on 17 March the EU adopted restrictive measures against persons responsible for actions which undermine or threaten the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine as well as persons and entities associated with them. During the following months, in light of the negative security developments on the ground, the list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures, as well as grounds for their listings, were expanded several times.

The European Council of 20 March 2014 further condemned the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation. In line with the EU's policy of not recognising the illegal annexation, as set out in the European Council Conclusions of 20 March 2014, the EU has taken a number of measures during 2014 in support of its position, including restrictive measures.

Following a meeting of the Council on 14 April, the EU condemned the actions undertaken by armed individuals in cities of eastern Ukraine and called on Russia to repudiate lawless acts in eastern Ukraine and pull back its troops from the Ukrainian border.

In its conclusions of 12 May, the Council noted that the tragic events in Odessa of 2 May with many dead and injured must be thoroughly investigated and all those responsible brought to justice. The Council encourages the coverage of this investigation by the Council of Europe's International Advisory Panel as a way to ensure its independence and transparency.

Against a background of continuing violence in eastern Ukraine, the Council on 23 June called on all sides to agree and honour a ceasefire and called on Russia to support the peace plan and adopt measures to stop the flow of illegal fighters, arms and equipment over the border into Ukraine, as well as to use its influence on separatists to stop the violence and lay down their arms. The Council also expressed its concern about the rapidly deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine and Crimea.

Further to European Council Conclusions of 16 July and 30 August, sectorial restrictive measures were taken against Russia, in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, in areas including access to capital markets, defence, dual-use goods and certain sensitive technologies for the oil sector.

The measures were a reaction to the increased inflow of fighters and weapons into eastern Ukraine from the territory of the Russian Federation and the increasingly intensive fighting in which Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17 was downed over Donetsk with the loss of almost 300 lives. In addition, the Council on 15 December and the European Council on 18 December further tightened the Union's policy of non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol.

There was an intense high-level political dialogue during 2014 with both the HR/VP and the Commissioner for Enlargement and the Neighbourhood Policy travelling to Kyiv in the period of civic protests in the beginning of the year and following the change of the government. On 13 May, a joint meeting between the European Commission and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine took place. EU took part in meetings aiming to bring about a sustainable political solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, including in April in Geneva, in August in Minsk and in Milan in October. On 15 August, the Council stated that the EU would actively support any meeting format conducive to creating a new political impetus. In this context, the EU welcomed the September Minsk Memorandum and Protocol agreed in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group, as a step towards a sustainable political solution of the crisis, which needs to be based on the respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The EU has also supported and complemented the work of other international actors involved in finding a political lasting solution to the crisis in and around Ukraine (OSCE, Council of Europe, and the UN). It lent strong support to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) which is the biggest OSCE field operation in recent years.

The EU considered the holding of "presidential and parliamentary elections" in Donetsk and Luhansk "People's Republics" on 2 November outside the Ukrainian legal framework and in breach with the letter and spirit of the Minsk agreements as illegal and illegitimate and stressed that it would not recognise them. In this context, the EU decided to reinforce EU restrictive measures against separatists operating in eastern Ukraine, as requested by the Council on 17 November.

The EU and its Member States expressed their shock and deep sadness at the downing of the Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17 in Donetsk on 17 July and called for those responsible to be held accountable and brought to justice. The EU urged Russia to actively use its influence over illegally armed groups in order to achieve full access to the site and cooperation to recover remains and possessions and with the independent investigation.

On 21 March the political provisions of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement were signed in the margins of an extraordinary summit. On 27 June, the remaining parts (DCFTA) of the Association Agreement were also signed. The European Parliament gave its consent on 17 September on the same day as the Association Agreement ratification in the Verkhovna Rada, enabling the provisional application of the relevant provisions of the Association Agreement as of 1 November. On 29 September, the Council decided delaying until 1 January 2016 the provisional application of the Agreement's title on trade and related matters, including the establishment of a free trade area. The first EU-Ukraine Association Council under the new Association Agreement took place on 15 December 2014. It reconfirmed the common objective to build a democratic, stable and prosperous country. The HR/VP's visit to Kyiv in mid-December also stressed the importance of the EU-Ukraine cooperation on the reform agenda for Ukraine.

The EU consistently throughout 2014 underscored the need to accelerate the implementation of reforms in Ukraine. The EU and its Member States proclaim its readiness to further facilitate and support Ukraine's reform process, together with other donors and in line with IMF conditionality. In its Conclusions of 17 November, the Council called for a broad national consensus to be sought in view of intensifying much needed political and economic reforms in Ukraine, including constitutional reform, decentralisation, reform of the judiciary, law enforcement, fight against corruption, ensuring the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, as well as a reform of the energy sector. These reforms will be crucial to restore confidence and transparency in the business sector.

Ukrainian authorities continue to conduct reforms despite the difficult security environment. Election legislation was improved, but the need for a comprehensive reform in this area remains to be addressed. The early Presidential elections held in Ukraine on 25 May and strongly supported by the EU were characterised by a high turnout and the clear resolve of the Ukrainian authorities to hold a genuine democratic exercise in line with international commitments and respecting fundamental freedoms, despite a hostile security environment in two eastern regions, according to OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The October early-parliamentary elections were welcomed by the EU as an important step in Ukraine's aspirations to consolidate its democratic development in line with its international commitments.

During the year, Ukraine fulfilled the benchmarks under the first phase of the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan and passed to its second phase.

The EU is committed to support the reform process in Ukraine; thus, in March, the EU approved a EUR 11 billion support package for Ukraine over the next few years. EUR 1.6 billion were already disbursed this year in loans and grants from or guaranteed by the EU budget, in addition to EUR 1.8 billion signed in 2014 by the EIB and the EBRD. In reaction to the crisis, the EU mobilised EUR 10 million under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) to address unforeseen needs for electoral observation, the crucial challenges of the monitoring of the situation on the ground and the important call for a dialogue process on key reforms.

More than 1 million Ukrainians are registered as internally displaced persons. In reaction to the degradation of the situation for the civilian population affected by the conflict, in 2014, the EU mobilised over EUR 32.5 million focusing supporting the winterisation process, humanitarian needs of the population, peacebuilding actions and early recovery. In its conclusions of 17 November the Council underlined the necessity to continue to mobilise EU and international assistance.

The Support Group for Ukraine was created on 10 April as part of EU's commitment to assist Ukraine on the reform path. On 23 June, Council approved the concept for a mission under the CSDP to assist Ukraine in the reform of the civilian security sector, including police and the rule of law. The CSDP Mission (EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine) was officially launched on 1 December 2014.

2.4.2. Belarus

Throughout 2014, the EU consistently reiterated its commitment to the policy of critical engagement with Belarus, including through dialogue and participation in the Eastern Partnership. The EU has recalled that the development of bilateral relations under the Eastern Partnership is conditional on progress towards respect by Belarus for the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The EU reiterated its willingness to assist Belarus to meet its obligations in this regard.

In 2014, Belarus took a number of positive steps: the release of a prominent political prisoner, Bialiatycki; active participation in the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership; intensive consultations with the EU on modernisation issues; the organisation of several seminars with the involvement of civil society; the improvement of relations with the diplomatic corps in Minsk; the launch of negotiations on Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements with the EU, and an interest to start negotiations on a Mobility Partnership. Belarus also adopted a constructive stance on developments in Ukraine and the situation in the region, in particular by hosting the talks which resulted in the signature of the Minsk Agreement. This included concrete steps to stabilise Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, and Georgia economically as well as politically.

All these steps contributed to creating a more positive atmosphere between the EU and Belarus.

In response to Belarus' positive steps, the EU prepared a list of possible additional concrete measures to deepen its policy of critical engagement with Belarus (discussions on this list started in the Council in December 2014).

The EU also regularly expressed its concern about the lack of respect for human rights, the rule of law and democratic principles in Belarus during 2014. In this context, the HR made specific statements regretting the implementation of three death sentences in Belarus. The EU, in its contacts with interlocutors in the Belarusian administration, continuously raised the importance of releasing and rehabilitating all political prisoners, as well as concerns regarding cases of harassment of human rights defenders, civil society and opposition activists. The EU co-sponsored the resolution at the Human Rights Council which extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Belarus for a further year.

Following an annual review, the Council on 30 October extended the EU's restrictive measures against Belarus (until 31 October 2015). The review updated the list of persons and entities targeted as the Council considered there were no longer grounds for maintaining restrictions against several persons and entities. The total of persons subject to sanctions was 201 while 18 entities remained subject to an asset freeze. No new names were added to the list.

In January 2014, negotiations on Visa Facilitation and Readmission agreements were launched. The Belarusian side indicated that the target was to sign those agreements at the next EaP summit in Riga in 2015. Two rounds of negotiations took place during 2014.

In January 2014, the EEAS and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus agreed to launch an Interim Phase for consultations on modernisation related topics. The aim of this Interim Phase is to determine the best form of future cooperation between the EU and the Belarusian Government on modernisation issues (as stated in the Declaration of the Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summit).¹⁴ During four rounds of consultations almost all topics have been tackled and should be finalised in 2015. Belarus is keen to receive EU guidance and transfer of know-how on all topics covered and is interested in concrete assistance for projects.

2.4.3. Republic of Moldova

EU-Republic of Moldova relations deepened substantially in 2014. Two historical achievements were the entry into force of the visa free regime on 28 April 2014, and the signature of the all-encompassing new Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), on 27 June 2014. Republic of Moldova speedily ratified the Agreement on 2 July and as of 1 September large parts of the Agreement, including the DCFTA, started being provisionally applied. Ratification of the Agreement by Member States is currently underway while the European Parliament gave its consent to conclusion in a non-legislative resolution approved on 13 November.

The institutional structures of the Agreement became operational at the end of the year and the first Association Council was envisaged to be held in the first quarter of 2015. The focus of bilateral relations in the near future should be on the implementation of the Agreement which demands considerable reforms and legal approximation to the EU acquis from the Republic of Moldova. An Association Agenda indicating priorities for reform has been adopted in June.

¹⁴ The identified areas for EU-Belarus cooperation on modernisation issues during the Interim Phase were the following: 1) Promotion of trade and investment; 2) Economic governance; 3) Privatisation and enterprise development; 4) Social reforms; 5) Sectoral areas: education, energy, transport, environment, regional development; 6) Improvement of the judiciary system, electoral reforms, protection of human rights.

During 2014 a high level of regular engagement continued, including visits from President Herman Van Rompuy in May and President José Manuel Barroso in June. An unprecedented meeting between Members of the European Commission and the Government of the Republic of Moldova took place in May, as well as two meetings of the Group for the European Action of the Republic of Moldova (in February and September).

Commissioner Johannes Hahn decided to visit Chisinau on 6 November, this being his first visit abroad as the new Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement negotiations.

The country continued the reform process, although some delays were observed especially during the pre-electoral period in key areas such as justice sector reform and in particular the reform of the Prosecutor's Office. Parliamentary elections were held on 30 November and they were assessed as free and fair by international observers, although the exclusion of one political party few days before the day of elections raised some concerns.

Following the signature of the Association Agreement, Russia has intensified the scope of economic retaliation measures targeted against imports from the Republic of Moldova, such as bans on meat and fruit. The EU had already eliminated import quotas for wine on 1 January 2014 following the Russian ban on Moldovan wines from September 2013.

In the wake of the bans introduced in July 2014, Republic of Moldova asked for additional access to the EU market (beyond that already granted in the DCFTA). The European Commission proposed, on 1 September, to grant additional duty-free access to apples, plums and table grapes from Republic of Moldova. The duty-free import quota entered into force on 30 December.

In 2014 Republic of Moldova received a EUR 30 million 'more for more' aid allocation, aiming to support DCFTA implementation, in addition to its EUR 101 million bilateral assistance budget.

The 2014 bilateral assistance focuses on support to agriculture and rural development and public finance policy reforms. The choice of sectors is in line with the Single Support Framework to the Republic of Moldova, the multiannual programming document which was adopted in June 2014. On the occasion of his visit to Chisinau in November, Commissioner Johannes Hahn signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the government in Chisinau based on the priorities and allocations foreseen in the Single Support Framework.

Significant efforts and resources continued being deployed to implement agreements concluded in the past years between the EU and the Republic of Moldova in the areas of aviation, agriculture, civil protection, participation in EU agencies and programmes, and in CSDP operations.

The EU continued its engagement in the confidence-building and settlement processes between the Republic of Moldova and its breakaway region of Transnistria. However, during 2014 the 5+2 settlement talks have stalled, with the talks cancelled for three times upon request of the Transnistrian representatives. Only two talks under this format took place during 2014 (in February and June); they continued to focus on technical rather than political aspects of the settlement process.

The EU Border Assistance Mission to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine continued its work in assisting, training and advising the two countries' border guard and customs services, reinforcing their capacity to tackle customs fraud, detect cases of smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and carry out effective border and customs controls and border surveillance.

2.4.4. Georgia

Relations between the EU and Georgia were very intensive in 2014, and included a record number of high-level meetings: The Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili visited Brussels for the first time on 3-4 February 2014. The Prime Minister came back on 21 May for the Georgia Government meeting with the College of Commissioners chaired by then European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and again on 27 June for the AA/DCFTA signature as well as on 17 November for the first EU-Georgia Association Council. President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy visited Georgia on 14 May and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso came to Georgia on 12-13 June. Commissioner Štefan Füle visited Georgia on 3-4 March and on 18 July, Commissioner Günther Oettinger visited Georgia on 20 February. Additionally, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on 20-21 November took place in Batumi.

Georgia and the EU signed the AA/DCFTA in an unprecedented speed on 27 June in Brussels following its initialling in November 2013 at the Vilnius Summit. The Agreement establishes the political association and deepens the economic integration with the EU. Georgia ratified the Association Agreement on 18 July and large parts of the AA/DCFTA are provisionally applied as of 1 September 2014. Ratification of the Agreement by Member States is currently underway while the European Parliament gave its consent to conclusion in a non-legislative resolution approved on 18 December. The institutional structures of the Agreement meanwhile became operational and the first Association Council was held on 17 November. The EU and Georgia have jointly agreed the Association Agenda on 26 June which replaced the 2006 ENP Action Plan and provides a jointly agreed set of priorities for AA/DCFTA implementation.

Throughout 2014 Georgia made great progress on the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan that aims at introducing a visa free regime between the EU and Georgia.

The signature of a treaty on Alliance and Strategic Partnership between the Russian Federation and the breakaway territories of Abkhazia (and subsequently between the Russian Federation and South Ossetia) was severely criticised by the Georgian government as going against Georgia's territorial integrity and being a further step of the Russian Federation to take control of the breakaway regions. This concern was shared by the EU, as expressed in statements and in the EU's bilateral contacts with the Russian Federation.

Georgian engagement with the breakaway territories remains important, and steps, though modest, have been taken by the government to implement its strategy for engagement. The EU welcomes these steps and encourages a more proactive approach to engagement with the breakaway territories. In parallel, the bilateral discussions between the Georgian authorities and the Russian Federation have continued and shown progress on trade, transport and cultural issues. These steps are welcomed by the EU. However, both sides' positions remain unchanged on the fundamental issues of Georgia's European orientation, Russia's role in the 2008 war, and its recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Following the signature of the Russian Federations - Abkhaz treaty and the reported intention to sign a treaty between Russia and South Ossetia, no new date has been set for bilateral talks, but informal contacts continue.

The EU remains committed to Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty and to a peaceful resolution of the conflicts, providing continued support through the work of the "EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia"(EUSR) and the "EU Monitoring Mission" (EUMM). The EUMM mandate was prolonged for two years at the end of 2014.

In September 2008 following the EU-mediated Six Point Agreement which ended the August war, the European Union deployed an unarmed civilian monitoring mission (EUMM) in Georgia. Although the security situation has improved since that time, there is continued noncompliance with the cease-fire agreement, particularly the non-withdrawal of Russian troops to positions held prior to the outbreak of hostilities. The situation further deteriorated in November 2014 with the signing of the Russian Abkhazian Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Alliance.

EUMM does not have any executive or coercive capacity. Its core tasks - monitoring and contribution to confidence-building - remained unchanged in 2014. EUMM continued to initiate significant confidence-building measures and established an "EU Confidence Building Fund" in 2014. These measures aim at undercutting the link between the incidents and conflicts and creating a more transparent security arrangement.

Although EUMM's mandate is valid throughout all of Georgia, its full implementation has been continually hindered by a number of factors. Denial of access to Abkhazia and South Ossetia remains a serious obstacle and has limited EUMM's ability to fulfil its task. After the deployment of Russian Federation Border Guards in 2009, the Administrative Boundary Lines (ABL) between Tbilisi Controlled Territories and Abkhazia and South Ossetia are gradually being transformed into "borders". This negative development has continued in 2014. The EU remained committed to support developments on the status and humanitarian situation of IDPs from the conflict areas.

EUMM's Georgia was initially deployed for a period of one year. The last renewal of its mandate took place in December 2014 prolonging it until 14 December 2016.

Georgia participates in 2 EU CSDP missions with 2 experts in EUTM Mali and 156 troops in EUFOR RCA, making it the second largest contributor to the operation (prolonged for another 3 months as from November).

2.4.5. Azerbaijan

Commission President José Manuel Barroso visited Azerbaijan on 14 June 2014 during which he signed the EU-Azerbaijan Protocol on participation of Azerbaijan in EU programmes and agencies. Commissioners Štefan Füle and Günther Oettinger participated at the 4th informal Eastern Partnership ministerial dialogue on energy security and foreign relations in Baku on 8-9 September 2014. Commission Vice President Šefcovic visited Baku on 28 November 2014. On 20 September 2014 at the Sangachal Terminal near Baku the ground-breaking ceremony of the Southern Gas Corridor took place. Azerbaijan has committed itself to become a reliable energy partner for the EU to diversify the EU's energy supply.

A downward trend on the respect for human rights continued in 2014. A significant number of statements and recommendations regarding the deteriorating situation of human rights were issued by the international community, including Council of Europe, OSCE, and the EU. Azerbaijan has not aligned with any EU Common Foreign and Security Policy common positions in 2014.

The EU-Azerbaijan visa facilitation agreement and readmission agreement entered into force on 1 September 2014 and implementation outcomes will be monitored during joint committees. There is ongoing work to move towards a Strategic Modernisation Partnership.

2.4.6. Armenia

In 2014, the EU and Armenia began work to review the scope and legal basis for future bilateral cooperation. Armenia signed its accession instrument to the Eurasian Economic Union on 10 October 2014 and joined it formally on 2 January 2015.

Moreover, the EU-Armenia bilateral political dialogue continued with the same intensity and frequency of meetings despite Armenia's policy shift of 2013, including a wide range of encounters from expert to minister level.

The EU-Armenia visa facilitation agreement and the readmission agreement entered into force on 1 January 2014 and were implemented in a general satisfactory manner. Moreover, the possibility of Armenia's participation in EU Agencies and Programmes was opened, Armenia receiving access to the EU world leading programmes in the fields of culture, education, environment, and science, and Armenian civil servants the possibility to be integrated into EU agencies such as aviation security, medicine and environment, and this on all levels.

The EU continued in 2014 to help improve and implement Armenia's national human rights action plan, and agreed in principle with Armenia on sectoral budget support for human right. In general, the EU continued to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms in Armenia. While Armenia continued to address some of these issues, further work remained necessary, especially as regards the implementation and enforcement of relevant legislation, the fight against corruption, gender equality, and reform of the judicial system.

2.4.7. The Nagorno Karabakh conflict

EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the conflict in Georgia, Herbert Salber, paid two visits to Armenia and Azerbaijan following his appointment on 1 July 2014 and held numerous meetings with the Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group concerning the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The EU has issued two statements on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, one on the escalation of violence in August and another on the downing of a military helicopter in November. The EU – through the Foreign Policy Initiative – continued funding and engaging in confidence (peace) building activities (through the European Partnership for the Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (EPNK) project) across the conflict divide, complementing the efforts of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

2.5. Central Asia

2.5.1. Regional relations

The EU continued with its longstanding commitment to dialogue with Central Asia through its representatives and envoys. In the beginning of the year the EUSR, Patricia Flor, continued to engage on dialogue between the EU and Central Asia. In April, following the resignation of the EU Special Representative, Janos Herman was appointed as Special Envoy to Central Asia, with the task of ensuring continued EU high-level engagement in the region. In this capacity he paid a number of visits to Central Asia to meet the Presidents, Ministers, EU Ambassadors and civil society, focusing primarily on issues related to water and energy issues, security and regional cooperation. The Special Envoy also hosted the annual EU – China consultations on Central Asia in Brussels and travelled to Washington DC and Moscow to discuss topical issues.

The EEAS and the Commission services prepared a Progress Report on the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia. This bi-annual exercise was particularly timely, allowing capturing changes in the regional context and the wider geopolitical environment notably in terms of security (ISAF withdrawal, Ukrainian crisis, terrorist threat).

The EU-Central Asia dialogue promoted regional cooperation and effective project implementation under initiatives, such as rule of law, education, water and environmental governance.

The Rule of Law platform, coordinated by Germany and France, supported technical workshops at national and regional levels, notably on assisting justice reforms in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. A working group on Judicial Capacity met in April 2014 in Brussels. These events contributed to a successful 4th Conference of Ministers of Justice in October 2014 in Astana, dedicated to experience sharing on judicial reform, access to justice and right and freedoms of individuals.

As part of the Education Initiative, a seminar on the quality of vocational education and teachers training was held in Istanbul, and a seminar on Labour Market needs and best practices in vocational education and training and higher education took place in Bishkek.

In the spirit of the relevant international conventions and in line with its "Water Diplomacy", the EU pursued diplomatic efforts to defuse water disputes and promote a regional cooperative solution to the challenges linked to the management of water and energy resources in Central Asia.

2.5.2. Bilateral relations

In September 2014, negotiations of an Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) with Kazakhstan were concluded. Once signed, ratified and implemented, this agreement, a first for the Central Asia region, will facilitate stronger political, economic and strategic relations, the flow of trade, services and investment between Kazakhstan and the EU, and contribute to Kazakhstan's political, rule of law and economic reforms.

The EU welcomed the release of Roza Tulateyeva, an imprisoned labour activist, on 19 November, and continued to show its concern in other similar human rights violation cases.

Political dialogue with the **Kyrgyz Republic** focused on EU support for democratisation and rule of law reforms, including the sensitive issue of EU support for general elections in 2015. The EU expressed concerns regarding legislation qualifying NGOs receiving funding from international organisations and foreign governments as "foreign agents" and on draft legislation on "the formation of a positive attitude towards non-traditional forms of sexual relations". Preparations for entry to the Eurasian Economic Union in January 2015, disruption of energy supply and Macro-Financial Assistance offered by the EU figured prominently in EU-Kyrgyzstan dialogue. In March, delegates of the Council's working party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST) paid a visit to the Kyrgyz Republic.

Political dialogue with **Tajikistan** centred on political and administrative reforms, rule of law and human rights, trade and economic relations. The EU stressed the necessity to ensure inclusive and transparent elections and long-term political stability in the country. The EU closely followed the case of Mr Alexander Sodiqov, a student at the University of Toronto, who was detained in June while carrying out research in Tajikistan. The EU welcomed Mr. Sodiqov's release in July, and his subsequent departure from the country.

In **Turkmenistan**, the EU continued promoting human rights and socio-economic as well as the development of a legal framework for a trans-Caspian gas pipeline.

Turkmenistan hosted a CIS Summit and an Energy Charter high-level conference, thus showing its willingness to contribute to stabilisation and peaceful relations in the region, including on energy and water issues.

After supporting rapprochement with the ILO on child and forced labour, the EU continued its facilitation efforts in support of closer ties between **Uzbekistan** and other international actors such as the UN agencies, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Discussions between the UN and Uzbekistan contributed towards the finalisation of a National Action Plan on Human Rights, while negotiations with the EIB have brought the two sides closer to an agreement on the conclusion of a Framework Agreement. Further to the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding with UNICRI, an EU-funded regional Centre of Excellence on CBRN materials is due to be opened shortly in Tashkent to enhance regional cooperation and mitigate risks. The EU continued its work on key security issues, including the High Level Dialogue on Security in Central Asia .

3. Western Balkans

The Western Balkans, the enlargement strategy and Stabilisation and Association Process remained a key policy of the European Union in 2014, and continue to contribute to mutual benefits of peace, democracy, security and prosperity in Europe. In its Conclusions in December 2014, the Council reaffirmed its unequivocal commitment to the region's European perspective. It also highlighted the need for fair and rigorous conditionality, in the framework of the Copenhagen political criteria and the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), which remains the common framework for relations with the Western Balkans up to their accession.

Inclusive regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are essential elements of this process.

Significant progress was achieved in the region throughout 2014 with further progress by Belgrade and Pristina on the implementation of the agreements reached in the EU-facilitated dialogue, the start of accession negotiations with Serbia, the initialling of the EU-only Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and Kosovo¹⁵, the continued accessions negotiations with Montenegro and the granting of candidate status to Albania.

The HR/VP visited Bosnia and Herzegovina in March and December and Serbia in April. The EU welcomed the successful conduct of elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo.

The EU launched its renewed approach towards Bosnia and Herzegovina in December aimed at moving forward the country's European perspective.

¹⁵ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

The Belgrade-Pristina dialogue continued to make substantial progress although the electoral processes in Serbia (March 2014) and Kosovo (June 2014) and the political stalemate leading to the delay in the formation of a coalition government in Kosovo affected the pace of the discussions. The HR/VP continued to facilitate the normalisation process between Serbia and Kosovo and promote the implementation of the agreements reached within the Dialogue in the first months until the early elections in Serbia and Kosovo.

Three meetings at high level were held at the beginning of 2014, the last one on 31 March. In the following period, work on implementation continued at a steady if slower pace. Concrete results were achieved in a number of areas, such as Integrated Border Management (IBM), energy, freedom of movement, customs.

Good progress was made in regional cooperation: in June 2014 Kosovo was accepted as full participant in the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) and in October it joined the civilian part of the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre (RACVIAC).

There is still quite a bit of work to be done on the implementation of the Agreement on the principles governing the normalisation of their relations, and in particular in the setting up of the Association/Community of Municipalities, in the finalisation of the agreements on telecoms and on energy as well as on the implementation of agreements on justice structures and civil protection forces. The removal and then the new setting up of barricades (the so-called Peace Park) on the main bridge in Mitrovica north by the Serbian side, caused a serious heightening of tensions. The two sides formed a specific working group to address jointly the future of the bridge and tasked the EU office to prepare a technical assessment of the bridge.

The EU and Serbia opened a new phase in their relations with the first inter-governmental conference on 21 January 2014 which officially kick-started the accession negotiation process. This was a result of the country's consistent reform progress and its continued commitment to the normalisation of the relations with Kosovo. EU accession negotiations with Serbia are now underway. The 'screening process', which began in autumn 2013, was completed in March 2015.

The early general election in Serbia resulted in the formation of a new government led by Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić.

Under the new government, Serbia remained committed to intensive reforms and maintained a constructive approach on regional cooperation. However, the country should give particular attention to making up for delays in the presentation of the action plans in Chapters 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights) and 24 (Justice, Freedom and Security). The Council called on Serbia to progressively align with EU Common Foreign and Security Policy in line with the Negotiating Framework .

Following a Decision by the Council in June 2013, acknowledging Kosovo's efforts in the normalisation of its relations with Serbia which resulted in the Brussels Agreement, the Commission concluded negotiations on an EU-only Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between the EU and Kosovo in May 2014. The text of the EU-only SAA was initialled in July 2014. The visa liberalisation dialogue with Kosovo continued in 2014, yet further reforms needed to be implemented.

Following a strategic review of EULEX KOSOVO in 2013, discussions with Member States on the future of the mission continued throughout the first months of 2014 leading to a new mandate with a two years term, adopted in June 2014.¹⁶ In parallel to the discussions on its future, the mission continued to implement its mandate including its support to the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue.

In the context of the milestone agreement of April 2013, the mission successfully facilitated in the course of 2014 the integration of 287 former Serbian Ministry of the Interior (MUP) Police officers into the Kosovo Police (KP) structure and actively supported the establishment of a KP Regional Command North that is reflecting the ethnic composition in the northern municipalities.

EULEX also supported the implementation of the IBM Technical Agreement. All six IBM Crossing Points are working well since their establishment and a breakthrough could be reached in September 2014 when the parties agreed to the establishment of permanent crossing points.

The political stalemate in Kosovo, which lasted from the 8 June parliamentary elections to the formation of a new government on 9 December, severely hampered the mission in delivering on its mandate. Therefore only limited progress could be achieved throughout the last six months of 2014. EULEX in close co-operation with the EUSR/EUO is preparing to engage with the incoming local authorities, encouraging them to fulfil their commitments in the area of rule of law in particular with regard to the Compact on the Rule of Law Objectives signed in November 2012.

¹⁶ Reflecting progress achieved and the new reality on the ground, not least the breakthrough in the normalisation process, the new mandate of the mission encompassed three strategic changes with [1] a 'normally no new cases' policy being implemented, [2] a transfer of all judicial institutions in Kosovo being transferred to local leadership and [3] the embedding of EULEX judges and prosecutors into the local judicial system. As a further consequence of the new mandate, a reconfiguration process was introduced, bringing EULEX from 1250 to 800 international and 1000 to 800 local staff.

Investigations of the Special Investigative Task Force (SITF) into the findings set forth in the report by Special Rapporteur Dick Marty regarding serious allegations of war crimes and organized crime activity by former leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army in the period between 1998 and 2000 continued throughout the year. The former Lead Prosecutor, Ambassador Clint Williamson, presented his investigative findings at a press conference on 29 July, at the same time announcing his end of tour for August.¹⁷

The HR/VP continued engagement with **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (BiH) leadership. In the aftermath of the wide-spread socio-economic protests in BiH (February), the HR/VP visited the country on 11 March and urged its leadership to respond rapidly to the deteriorating socio-economic situation. On this basis, the EU-led initiative Compact for Growth and Jobs was developed, in close coordination with the EU's international partners, including the International Financial Institutions.

Following presidential and general elections at various levels on the 12 October, the EU launched a renewed approach towards BiH aimed at moving the country forward on the EU path.

The HR/VP, together with Commissioner Johannes Hahn, visited Sarajevo on 5 December to discuss the renewed approach with the BiH leadership and institutions, who expressed willingness to engage with the EU in this regard. Subsequently, the Council adopted the Conclusions outlining the next steps in this renewed EU engagement to provide guidance to the new efforts.

¹⁷ His successor, Mr. David Schwendiman, a US State Department official will start his assignment in early 2015.

Operation Althea continued to focus on capacity-building and training as main effort while retaining the mandate and resources to intervene in support of the safe and secure environment. The Operation has normally up to 600 troops in country, but was reinforced with situational awareness assets over the election period in the second half of 2014. A limited reinforcement will continue to be in the country in the first half of 2015. In November 2014, the executive mandate of the mission was extended by the UNSCR 1283 for another year.

Early general elections and regular presidential elections in the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** were held in April 2014. The ODIHR assessed that the elections were competitive and efficiently administered, but marked by a few incidents while, more importantly, partisan media coverage and a lack of a clear distinction between State and party activities did not provide a level playing field.

In October, the Commission reiterated its recommendation to open accession negotiations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In its 16 December conclusions the Council welcomed the fact that the EU agenda remained the country's strategic priority and that it had achieved a high level of alignment with the legislative acquis. The Council took note of the recommendation to open accession negotiations and underlined the importance of the need for more constructive political dialogue. It expressed serious concerns about increasing politicisation of state institutions and growing shortcomings with regard to the independence of the judiciary and media freedoms and noted that failure to deliver on these issues has damaged the sustainability of reforms. The Council urged the authorities to take decisive action to rapidly address these concerns.

The Council also recalled that maintaining good neighbourly relations, including a negotiated and mutually accepted solution to the name issue under the auspices of the UN remained essential. It indicated that it would revert to the issue of opening accession negotiations in 2015, on the basis of an update by the Commission on the further implementation of reforms in the context of the High Level Accession Dialogue and on tangible steps taken to promote good neighbourly relations and reach a negotiated and mutually acceptable solution to the name issue.

In **Albania**, the coalition government led by Prime Minister Edi Rama continued to pursue its reform agenda, with a major focus on the five key priorities (public administration reform, judiciary, fight against corruption, fight against organised crime, human rights including the protection of minorities) identified for the opening of accession negotiations.

More concretely, Albania took further steps towards the reform of the judiciary by engaging with the Venice Commission in view of enhancing the independence and accountability of the judicial system. The government showed political will to act decisively in the prevention and fight against corruption, by strengthening the legislative framework and appointing a National Anti-Corruption Coordinator. The fight against organised crime showed a positive trend in a number of areas, with an intensification of law enforcement activities, notably on drug seizures.

In the light of these efforts, and on the basis of a report presented by the Commission, on 24 June the Council decided to grant Albania the status of candidate country. The decision was endorsed by the European Council on 27 June. In its 16 December conclusions, the Council welcomed the progress made by Albania that led to the granting of candidate status. However, it noted in paragraphs 43 and 44 of the conclusions that important challenges lie ahead and invited Albania to intensify its reform efforts and act decisively to address these five key priorities for the opening of the accession negotiations. The Council underlined in particular the need for Albania, among others, to pursue a comprehensive reform of the judiciary, to reinforce the protection of human rights and anti-discrimination policies, including the equal treatment of all minorities and access to rights for persons belonging to them, as well as to implement property rights.

Since June, however, the internal political scene in Albania has deteriorated. On 10 July, the opposition Democratic Party (DP) announced a boycott of parliamentary works following physical confrontations of majority and opposition MPs. The boycott was formally ended nearly six months later, on 24 December 2014, after government and opposition agreed on a four-point resolution brokered by Members of the European Parliament Knut Fleckenstein and Eduard Kukan. The resolution emphasizes that Albania needs a constructive and stable dialogue between the opposition and the ruling majority, so that the country's European ambitions can be fulfilled. The smooth implementation in the months to come of the political agreement contained in the resolution remains to be seen and will be key for successfully addressing Albania's EU agenda.

With regard to regional cooperation, Albania continued to play a positive and constructive role and to actively participate in all the relevant regional initiatives, including the South-East European Cooperation Process, whose Chairmanship-in-Office Albania took over in June. Albania's continued constructive engagement in good neighbourly relations remains essential. In addition, the Council welcomed Albania's full alignment with EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy.

The EU continued accession negotiations with **Montenegro**. By the end of 2014, sixteen chapters had been opened, of which two had also been provisionally closed. Montenegro continued to make progress in the accession negotiations as well as with regard to the implementation of reforms aimed to ensure the independence and increased efficiency of the judiciary, even though progress in the area of judiciary and fundamental rights had been uneven.

The Council underlined in its conclusions of 16 December 2014 that Montenegro needs to further intensify its efforts in the area of rule of law. The country should give particular attention to making up for delays in the implementation of the action plans in the rule of law area, to strengthening institutional capacity, and to further developing a solid track record of investigations, prosecutions and convictions with respect to the fight against corruption and organised crime.

With regard to regional cooperation, Montenegro continued to play an active role in further developing regional cooperation and to fully align with the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, thereby contributing to the overall stability in the region.

4. Turkey and Western Europe

4.1. Turkey

Turkey, both as a candidate country and as a key partner, continued to be an important interlocutor for the EU, considering its dynamic economy and strategic location. The EU recognised the important humanitarian support provided by Turkey to well over one million refugees fleeing the violence in Syria and Iraq. Turkey continued to be active in its wider neighbourhood remaining a key regional player in the Middle East, the Western Balkans, Afghanistan/Pakistan, the Southern Caucasus, and the Horn of Africa. In this context, the HR remained committed to further developing and enhancing the political dialogue between the EU and Turkey on foreign policy issues of common interest as well as on counter-terrorism, also given the very serious developments in the region, in particular in Syria and Iraq. This dialogue should be used to develop closer cooperation against ISIL/Da'esh and its funding networks, as well as to enhance the cooperation to stem the flow of foreign fighters, while continuing to recognise the importance of supporting Turkey to tackle its domestic terrorism threats.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan paid a visit to Brussels in January 2014 in his capacity of Prime Minister at that time. Commissioner Štefan Füle visited Turkey in June 2014 and Commission President José Manuel Barroso in September 2014. The HR/VP together with Commissioners Johannes Hahn and Christos Stylianides paid a joint visit to Turkey in December 2014 in order to step up engagement. The EU counter-terrorism coordinator visited Turkey twice in 2014. The EU continued to encourage Turkey to develop its foreign policy as a complement to and in coordination with the EU, and to progressively align with EU Common Foreign and Security Policy.

The EU appreciated the strong Turkish engagement in CSDP missions, particularly EUFOR Althea and EULEX Kosovo. The first working visit of the EU Military Staff to Turkey took place in January.

The Council reaffirmed the importance it attaches to EU relations with Turkey and welcomed the expression of the Turkish government to EU accession. In this context, the Council recalled that Turkey will be able to accelerate the pace of negotiations by advancing in the fulfilment of benchmarks, meeting the requirements of the Negotiating Framework and respecting its contractual obligations towards the EU.

The EU should remain the anchor for reforms in Turkey, especially in the areas of rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms. During 2014, several reforms were adopted or implemented, but there is a need for further sustained efforts towards fully meeting the Copenhagen criteria. In its Conclusions of 16 December 2014, the Council urged Turkey to work on reforms which should provide for adequate checks and balances fully guaranteeing freedom, including freedom of thought, expression and of the media, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including rights of women, children and persons belonging to minorities, freedom of religion and property rights, and to enhance the implementation of all the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. The Council remained concerned at the undue interference by the executive in the judiciary, frequent changes to key legislation without due consultation of stakeholders. It also regretted that the response by the government to the alleged cases of corruption in December 2013 cast serious doubts over the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, and demonstrated an increasing intolerance of political opposition, public protest and critical media. In this regard, police raids and the detention of a number of journalists and media representatives in 2014 in Turkey called into question the respect for freedom of the media, which is a core principle of democracy.

The Council recalled that progress in accession negotiations depends on respecting rule of law and fundamental rights. All these issues were stressed by several EU statements by the HR/VP, Commissioners and the European Parliament.¹⁸

The EU strongly supported the renewed efforts towards a peaceful settlement of the Kurdish issue and encourages further engagement by all parties to move the process forward.

The EU welcomed the entry into force in October of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement, as well as the findings of the report of the Commission on progress made by Turkey in fulfilling the requirements of the visa liberalisation roadmap. Progress in the dialogue on visa liberalisation will be founded on a performance based approach and conditioned on effective and consistent implementation by Turkey of the requirements in the visa roadmap vis-à-vis the EU and its Member States.

¹⁸ The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the 2013 progress report on Turkey on 12 March 2014 (P7_TA (2014)0235); another resolution on the freedom of expression in Turkey was adopted on 15 January 2015.

While regretting the unilateral statement made by Turkey in this regard, the Council expected full and effective implementation by Turkey of both the readmission agreement and the visa roadmap vis-à-vis all EU Member States, including non-discriminatory visa-free access to the Turkish territory for the citizens of all EU Member States. In its Conclusions of 16 December 2014, the Council reiterated that Turkey needs to commit itself unequivocally to good neighbourly relations and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice. In this context, the Union expressed once again serious concern, and urged Turkey to avoid any kind of threat or action directed against a Member State, or source of friction or actions, which damage good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The EU calls on Turkey to stop blocking the accession of Member States to international organisations and mechanism. Moreover, the EU stressed again all the sovereign rights of EU Member States. These include, inter alia, the right to enter into bilateral agreements and to explore and exploit natural resources in accordance with the EU acquis and international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. It also stressed the need to respect the sovereignty of Member States over their territorial sea and airspace. The Council recalled that the European Council, in its conclusions of 24 October 2014, expressed serious concern about the renewed tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean and urged Turkey to show restraint and to respect Cyprus' sovereignty over its territorial sea and Cyprus' sovereign rights in its exclusive economic zone.¹⁹

¹⁹ The European Parliament also passed a resolution on the Turkish actions creating tensions in the exclusive economic zone of Cyprus in November 2014 (P8_TA (2014)0052, adopted on 13 November 2014).

In its Conclusions of December 2014 the Council also noted with deep regret that Turkey, despite repeated calls, continued refusing to fulfil its obligation of full, non-discriminatory implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement towards all Member States, the fulfilment of which could provide a significant boost to the negotiation process. In the absence of progress on this issue, the Council will maintain its measures from 2006, which will have a continuous effect on the overall progress of the negotiations.

The Council welcomed the engagement by the parties to the settlement of the Cyprus problem, as demonstrated in the joint declaration of 11 February 2014. As emphasised by the Negotiating Framework, the Council expected Turkey to actively support the negotiations aimed at a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the Union is founded.

Turkey's commitment and contribution in concrete terms to such a comprehensive settlement is crucial. Under the circumstances prevailing at the time, the Council considered it more important than ever to ensure a positive climate so that negotiations for a comprehensive Cyprus settlement could resume, with a view to achieving progress. As stated in its conclusions of March 2014, the European Council stands ready to play its part in supporting the negotiations.

4.2. Western Europe

The EU's relations with the non-EU Western Europe countries are based on comprehensive cooperation agreements such as the European Economic Area Agreement (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) or Schengen agreement (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland).

In the CFSP area, EU cooperation with the European Economic Area/European Free Trade Association states was further deepened in 2014 through their alignment with a large number of CFSP declarations as well as through cooperation in certain joint actions. The EU also had regular political dialogues at different levels and in different contexts; with an increase of more informal ones in the margin of important international events.

There is very good and close cooperation between the EU and **Norway** in the field of foreign policy, notably on the Middle East (where Norway is the Chair of the Ad-hoc Liaison Committee), Syria, Ukraine and Arctic issues. It is also involved in peace talks in Colombia (co-facilitator with Cuba). Regular dialogues have been taking place in 2014 at all levels. Norway, as **Iceland**, is a strong supporter of the EU's observer status in the Arctic Council. Norway remains a key partner in the area of energy security, crisis settlement, development aid and promotion of human rights.

Cooperation continued with **Switzerland** in areas such as the South Caucasus, the democratic process in North Africa, the Middle East Peace Process and Iran. Swiss chairmanship-in-office of the OSCE in 2014 coincided with the Ukraine crisis which led to increased exchanges at all levels. In May 2014, President and Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter presented an OSCE Roadmap on Ukraine to the Council. There was also high-level EU participation at Swiss-hosted conferences on Syria, and at the Iran talks in Geneva. No formalised political dialogue exists, but an informal political dialogue takes place at Political Director level. Although there is no alignment agreement between the EU and Switzerland, Switzerland continued to frequently adopt positions and measures similar to those of the EU. As regards the EU's restrictive measures in respect of undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine and in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, Switzerland did not fully align itself, and limited itself to preventing circumvention of the EU's measures.

Cooperation with Switzerland beyond CSFP covered a wide range of areas. Of particular importance in 2014 was the management of the fall-out from the popular vote “against mass immigration” of February 2014 which risks having implications for the whole of EU-Swiss relations, and the launch of negotiations on an institutional framework agreement in May 2014 which continued throughout the remainder of 2014.

In December 2014 the Council adopted a mandate to open negotiations with **Andorra, Monaco and San Marino** on one or several Association Agreement(s) to provide for their participation in the EU's Single Market and possible cooperation in other areas. The Council also adopted Conclusions which commended the EU's foreign policy cooperation with them and expressed readiness to explore possibilities to strengthen it.

Concerning CSDP cooperation, **Norway** participated in EUNAVFOR Atalanta with staff officers at Operational Headquarters level, EULEX Kosovo (2 experts), EUPOL COPPS (1 expert), EUCAP Nestor (2 experts) and was invited to EUAM Ukraine. It is also part of the Nordic Battle Group. **Switzerland** participated in the EU military operation EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina (with 21 persons) and in the civilian missions in Kosovo (EULEX) (with 6 persons), Mali (1 media analyst), and Libya (6 persons). Switzerland furthermore expressed interest in participating in EUAM Ukraine. Both Norway and Switzerland are also important partners in capability development.

Iceland suspended its accession negotiations. It continued its CFSP dialogue with the EU in the framework of the European Economic Area.

5. Asia and the Pacific

5.1. Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

The year 2014 was important for deepening cooperation between Asia and Europe within the ASEM framework. The Tenth ASEM Summit under the theme of 'Responsible Partnership for Sustainable Growth and Security' was held in Milan on 16-17 October, chaired by the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy. It allowed for a frank discussion among leaders of ASEM partner countries on topics of global importance, including connectivity, climate change, sustainable development, economic and financial challenges, as well as on regional and international issues such as human rights and maritime security, the fight against terrorism, including ISIL, and against global pandemics such as Ebola. The discussion led to a substantial Chair Statement.³¹

The ASEM family enlarged to 53, with Croatia and Kazakhstan joining ASEM at the Summit as new partners. Two ASEM meetings were held at Ministerial level, both in Europe – ASEM Finance Ministers (Milan, September) and ASEM Culture Ministers (Rotterdam, October). A number of other initiatives and conferences also took place, testifying to the dynamism and relevance of the ASEM process, as it starts to prepare to celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2016.

5.2. East Asia

5.2.1. China

The year 2014 was marked by the historic visit of President Xi Jinping to the EU institutions – the first ever by a Chinese President - on 31 March. It was preceded by the 4th round of the EU-China High Level Strategic Dialogue between the HR/VP and State Councillor Yang Jiechi in January. Other high level meetings included a meeting between President Herman Van Rompuy and President José Manuel Barroso and Premier Li Keqiang in the margins of the ASEM Summit in Milan on 15 October. The HR/VP also met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in the margins of the ASEAN Regional Forum in Nay Pyi Taw in August. After taking office, President Jean-Claude Juncker had a bilateral meeting with President Xi Jinping in the margins of the G20 Summit in Brisbane on 16 November, and President Donald Tusk had a phone conversation with him on 3 December. Good progress was achieved on the implementation of the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation, not least in the areas of foreign policy, security and defence. A joint naval counter-piracy exercise took place in March. The 1st round of the EU-China Security and Defence Dialogue and the first High Level Seminar on Defence and Security were held in China in October and December. The EU-China informal political Dialogue on the Middle East and North Africa was launched. EU-China dialogues were held on Central Asia and on Africa, and a meeting of the EU-China Cyber Taskforce also took place. The EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, met Chinese Vice Minister Li Baodong in March in Brussels, and the 33rd round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue took place on 8-9 December in Brussels.

Concerns regarding the human rights situation were addressed by HR/VP statements regarding the treatment of human rights defenders and their relatives in China (1st February), the death of Human Rights Defender Cao Shunli (15 March), a recent wave of arrests and detentions in China (28 May), the situation in Xinjiang (31 July), as well as the indictment of an Uighur Academic, Professor Ilham Tohti (6 August) and his sentencing (23 September).

The EU and China continued to consult each other regularly on major international issues at the multilateral and bilateral levels, with China supporting the HR role in the E3+3 talks with Iran and playing a constructive role on North Korea. The EU and China have good practical cooperation on counter-piracy with regular contacts between the EU's Atalanta mission and the Chinese Navy.

On climate change, bilateral relations intensified in view of UNFCCC COP 21 in Paris. A major EU project on supporting greenhouse gas emissions trading in China started in early 2014.

5.2.2. Hong Kong SAR

In May, Hong Kong's Chief Executive C.Y. Leung paid a visit to the EU institutions and held meetings with Presidents Herman Van Rompuy and José Manuel Barroso. In the context of the introduction of universal suffrage for the election of the Hong Kong Chief Executive in 2017, the EU publicly confirmed its strong attachment to the deeper democratisation of Hong Kong. The EU has been closely monitoring progress on this issue, including in the light of demonstrations that took place. The EU has been encouraging all parties to work in a spirit of compromise for a constructive solution within the framework of the Basic Law and the principle of "One Country – Two Systems", towards a fair electoral system which allows a high degree of political participation by the people of Hong Kong.

5.2.3. Taiwan

The first-ever meetings between top-level officials in charge of bilateral relations in Mainland China and in Taiwan were welcomed by the EEAS, Cross-Strait rapprochement continued in 2014 with practical cooperation and confidence-building measures. The EU and Taiwan also continued their economic and technical cooperation for the benefit of both sides.

5.2.4. Japan

Twin negotiations for a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) – a framework agreement on political, sectoral and global cooperation – and a Free Trade Agreement with Japan (FTA) continued in 2014. Three rounds of SPA negotiations and five rounds of FTA negotiations took place in 2014. The FTA negotiations passed the one-year review by Member States in June. Once completed, the two agreements will bring about a significant upgrade of the relationship, lifting it onto a higher, more strategic plane.

The 22nd EU-Japan Summit was held in Brussels on 7 May 2014. It provided political momentum to the twin negotiations, as well as to an enhanced EU-Japan security partnership, with the launch of new dialogues on space and cyber issues as well as with the identification of some concrete areas for cooperation between Japan and ongoing CSDP operations, notably in Africa. Leaders also exchanged views on topics such as Ukraine, the security situation in East Asia, the Middle East and the international climate negotiations.

Presidents Herman Van Rompuy and José Manuel Barroso, and Prime Minister Shinzō Abe also met in the margins of the Nuclear Security Summit in March, the G7 Summit in June and the ASEM Summit in October 2014. Prime Minister Abe also encountered incoming Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in the margins of the November 2014 G20 Summit.

The move towards a closer bilateral security partnership was also demonstrated by the visit to Japan of the Chairman of the EU Military Committee in March who notably met Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera, and a first-ever joint naval anti-piracy exercise between EU the NAVFOR ATALANTA and assets of the Japanese Naval Self Defence Forces in the Gulf of Aden in October.

5.2.5. Republic of Korea

The EU and the Republic of Korea's Strategic Partnership continued to develop further in 2014. The Republic of Korea enjoys a unique status of having three key EU agreements in place covering all three pillars of bilateral cooperation, i.e. political, trade and security. As a complement to the Framework Agreement (which entered into force in June 2014) and the Free Trade Agreement, a Framework Participation Agreement on Crisis Management was signed by the HR in Seoul in May 2014. In June, Vice-President Neelie Kroes and Choi Mun-kee, Minister for Science, ICT and Future Planning signed a joint declaration promoting R&D cooperation in the area of ICT.

Cooperation on regional and global issues also intensified. The dynamism of this partnership is also mirrored by the expanding number of dialogues covering a wide range of policy and sectorial issues, e.g. international cooperation and development, cyber-related issues, Asian regional affairs, non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, MENA and Gulf countries.

5.2.6. Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The EU's relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continued to be guided by a critical engagement approach. During 2014, the EU kept following closely the situation in the region and in DPRK in particular, with a number of DPRK policies posing serious concerns, in particular on proliferation and on violation of human rights. The EU raised these issues both bilaterally and in multilateral fora.²⁰ The EU co-initiated a resolution in the Human Rights Council (adopted on 28 March) and one in the UN General Assembly's Third Committee (adopted on 18 November) that drew on the findings of the UN Commission of Inquiry which reported on the systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations, including crimes against humanity, being committed in the country.

The Resolution adopted by UN General Assembly's Third Committee was subsequently approved by the UN General Assembly in December with strong cross-regional support and broke new ground by encouraging the UN Security Council to take appropriate action, including through consideration of referral of the situation in the DPRK to the International Criminal Court, and consideration of the scope for effective targeted sanctions against those who appear to be most responsible for crimes against humanity.

The EU kept monitoring the situation in relation to proliferation and overall tensions on the Peninsula, condemning the launch of ballistic missiles in violation of UN Security Council resolutions and urging the DPRK to refrain from any action that could further increase regional tensions. The EU continued to implement UNSC sanctions and its own autonomous sanctions regime, updating the list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures when necessary.

²⁰ The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) on 17 April 2014.

Communication channels with the DPRK were kept open, and several meetings at senior level with DPRK officials were held in Brussels. A mission to the DPRK in early November 2014 to hold a political dialogue session was postponed due to entry restrictions imposed by the DPRK in response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The EU continues to stand ready to pursue and deepen discussions on political and human rights issues.

5.2.7. Mongolia

Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou visited Ulaan Baatar in September to mark the 25th anniversary of EU-Mongolia relations. Development aid for 2014-2020 doubled (EUR 65 million) and has been aligned with Mongolia's development strategy in the areas of export diversification, education and vocational training. Mongolia has also become a beneficiary of the EU's new enhanced General Scheme of Preferences (GSP+) system. First steps were undertaken to expand political dialogue, including on human rights. Cooperation in trade continued with support for export diversification, a stable and predictable business environment, co-operation on raw materials, and trade-related assistance. Co-operation expanded to new areas such as agriculture and rural development; science and innovation; as well as people-to-people exchanges.

5.3. Southeast Asia

5.3.1. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

In 2014, EU-ASEAN cooperation was further strengthened, through the implementation of the Brunei Plan of Action 2013-17. Working towards a more ambitious EU-ASEAN political partnership, several high-level visits and meetings took place that confirmed the positive momentum. The 20th EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting took place in Brussels on 23 July and in October, in the margins of the ASEM Summit in Milan, EU and ASEAN leaders had an informal meeting. Both sides agreed to work towards the upgrading of the partnership to a strategic one and tasked their Senior Officials to develop a roadmap for this goal.

In the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN and the EU, together with other partners, continued to address regional and international security issues. The HR took part in the 21st ARF Ministerial in Myanmar on 10 August, setting out the EU's stance on the nature of the main security challenges affecting the region and on the need for comprehensive and rules-based solutions. She also reiterated the EU's ambition to take part in the East Asia Summit.

5.3.2. Myanmar/Burma

Support for Myanmar/Burma's democratic transition remained an EU priority in 2014 with particular focus on the challenges of inter-communal violence, the peace process between the government and ethnic groups as well as the constitutional review and the 2015 elections.

The 1st EU-Myanmar Human Rights Dialogue, co-chaired by EU Special Representative for Human Rights Stavros Lambrinidis, was held on 20 May 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw. The discussion included discrimination, hate speech, inter-communal violence in Rakhine State and in other parts of Myanmar, political prisoners, land rights as well as freedom of expression. In the margins of ARF Ministerial meeting in August 2014, the HR/VP met with President Thein Sein and opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The EU was the main sponsor of the UN General Assembly resolution on the situation of the human rights in Myanmar/Burma, which was adopted by consensus at the end of 2014.

5.3.3. Thailand

The military took power on 22 May 2014. On 23 June 2014 the Council adopted Conclusions concerning the situation in Thailand, calling on the military leadership to restore, as a matter of urgency, the legitimate democratic process and the Constitution. The EU also reconsidered its engagement: official visits to and from Thailand were suspended and the EU and its Member States decided not to sign the Partnership Agreement with Thailand until a democratically elected government is in place. Other agreements will, as appropriate, also be affected. Only an early and credible roadmap for a return to constitutional rule and the holding of credible and inclusive elections will allow for the EU's continued support.

5.3.4. Cambodia

The EU monitored carefully the human rights and democracy situation in Cambodia. Special attention was given to freedom of expression and of assembly. Land rights, legal and judicial reform have also remained central to the discussions between the EU and the government, including at the meeting of the EU-Cambodia Joint Committee from 10 to 13 March. On 22 July, the two main political parties reached an agreement that unblocked the stalemate and ended the opposition's boycott of the National Assembly. However, subsequent arrests linked to the negotiations on the National Election Committee and Electoral Law caused concern.

5.3.5. Indonesia

The presidential and legislative elections and the peaceful transfer of power reaffirmed Indonesia as a regional role model for democracy and tolerance.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Indonesia entered into force on 1 May. Discussions at Political Dialogue, Senior Officials Meeting as well as at the Human Rights Dialogue on the 12 November reflected the similar values, interests and outlook that underpin the relationship. President Herman Van Rompuy underlined in his meeting on 19 November in Jakarta with the new Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, the need to achieve a lasting ceasefire in Ukraine as well as the need to step up international efforts to prevent the spread of extremism and terrorism. President Van Rompuy commended the role Indonesia was playing on both fronts by its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and its condemnation of ISIL/Da'esh.

5.3.6. Philippines

In September, President Benigno Aquino met the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy as well as the President of the Commission José Manuel Barroso in Brussels. In July, the HR/VP met with the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines in Manila. During these meetings, both sides raised a broad range of issues including disaster risk reduction and developments regarding maritime security. Following the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro in March 2014, the EU continued to support the Mindanao Peace Process inter alia by supporting the International Monitoring Team through the civilian protection component and by supporting the Third Party Monitoring Team.

5.3.7. Vietnam

The positive momentum in bilateral relations since signing the EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in 2012 continued in 2014, evidenced by frequent high-level contacts and deepened cooperation in a wide range of areas beyond trade and development. High-level political consultations were held in Hanoi on 25 March on bilateral, regional and global issues, including EU-ASEAN matters, given Vietnam's role as coordinator for EU relations in ASEAN. This was followed by the 9th EU-Vietnam Joint Commission on 26 March, which provided the opportunity to take stock of the overall EU-Vietnam relationship and notably the advance implementation of the EU Vietnam partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The HR/VP and President José Manuel Barroso visited Vietnam on 12 and 25-26 August respectively, while Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng visited Brussels on 13-14 October, meeting Presidents Herman Van Rompuy, José Manuel Barroso and Martin Schulz.

5.3.8. Singapore

The President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, visited Singapore on 17-18 November. He called on the President of Singapore, Tony Tan and also met with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, reaffirming the close relations and good cooperation between Singapore and the EU.

An EU-Singapore Senior Officials' meeting was held in Singapore on 30 May. Singapore and the EU identified a number of areas for closer cooperation, including maritime security and highlighted areas of priority for cooperation between ASEAN and the EU.

5.3.9. Malaysia

The EU and Malaysia held a senior officials' meeting in June in Kuala Lumpur to advance dialogue on a wide range of issues, including the resumption of negotiations on the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation and regional security issues. The EU looked forward to the incoming Malaysian ASEAN Chairmanship in 2015. The EU continued to promote the abolition of the death penalty and the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) while the unprecedented implementation in 2014 of the Sedition Act (dating from 1948) was closely monitored.

5.3.10. Brunei

Negotiation on the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation continued in 2014. In May, the HR/VP issued a statement expressing concern about the consistency of Brunei's international human rights commitments with the entry into force in 2014 of the first stage of the new national Penal Code foreseeing more severe punishments. Such concerns were also raised by the EU and its Member States both in bilateral contacts as well as in the context of the UN Universal Periodic Review that took place in May 2014 in Geneva. The international commitments which the new Penal code seems to breach refer to the prohibition of torture, rights of the child, freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, and eliminations of discrimination against women.

5.4. South Asia

5.4.1. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

The EU, as an Observer, attended the SAARC Summit that took place in Kathmandu (Nepal) on 26-27 November 2014. The EU was represented at the level of Head of Delegation, who delivered a message from the HR/VP during the opening session. The message highlighted the great importance attributed by the EU to SAARC as an excellent opportunity to foster greater connectivity, integration and progress in the region and the EU's willingness to continue supporting the organisation in its future endeavours.

5.4.2. India

Efforts continued to strengthen the EU-India Strategic Partnership, which entered its second decade. 2014 was marked by a change in leadership on both sides. President Herman Van Rompuy and the new Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed on the side-lines of the November G-20 Summit of Brisbane, to hold a Summit in 2015. EU-India dialogue on political, security as well as regional and global issues took place at senior level during the Foreign Policy Consultations in January. The very first dialogue on non-proliferation and disarmament was held in Delhi in May. The overall state of play of our cooperation was reviewed at the 23rd Session of the EU-India Joint Commission held in New Delhi in June. The HR and EU senior officials continued to raise with their Indian counterparts the unresolved case of the two Italian marines, pending since February 2012. Commissioner for Climate Action Connie Hedegaard visited India in 2014, a key partner on the path towards the Climate Change agreement to be concluded in Paris in December 2015.

5.4.3. Nepal

The EU and Nepal strengthened their political and economic relations in 2014, including through the first ever visit of a Nepalese Prime Minister to the EU. Prime Minister Sushil Koirala met with Presidents Herman Van Rompuy and José Manuel Barroso. The EU continued to support Nepal's political and economic transition including as regards the Nepalese search for consensus in drafting the new constitution and the importance of further regional cooperation and integration in the South Asia region. In October, Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs visited Nepal and confirmed the tripling of development aid to the country and the EU's support for Nepal's aim to graduate to middle-income status by 2022.

5.4.4. Bhutan

The EU and Bhutan further strengthened their excellent relations including by the EU's support for the country's political transition, economic development and ambition to become donor-independent by 2020. In October, Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs visited Bhutan and announced the tripling of EU development aid.

5.4.5. Afghanistan

On 23 June, the Council adopted a new strategy for Afghanistan up to the end of 2016, focussing on the development of Afghanistan's institutions and highlighting the priorities of promoting peace, security and regional stability; reinforcing democracy; encouraging economic and human development; and fostering the rule of law and respect for human rights. The strategy pursues a comprehensive approach and provides the overarching framework for all EU instruments and the non-military engagement of Member States. The EUSR Franz-Michael Skjold Mellbin continued to play an important role strengthening EU presence on the ground and facilitated coordination with Member States in Kabul.

The security transition, including the withdrawal of ISAF troops, progressed as expected and was completed by the end of 2014. The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) resumed security responsibility across the country, including during the challenging electoral period. They have borne increasingly heavy casualties, particularly on the police side.

The overall security situation remained tense with increasing numbers of insurgent attacks, including in Kabul, and a 25% rise in the number of civilian casualties compared to 2013. The EU advocated for a solid security arrangement to allow for ISAF's follow-on Resolute Support Mission.

During the presidential elections, the EU closely cooperated with the UN, the US and other international partners. The EU supported the UN/US brokered deal that led to a complete audit of the vote and the establishment of a National Unity Government, avoiding a political crisis. On 29 September, Ashraf Ghani was inaugurated as President and via a Presidential Decree instated Abdullah Abdullah as Chief Executive Officer. The EU deployed an Election Assessment Team, composed of 15 international experts and headed by a Chief Observer, Thijs Berman MEP.

At the London conference in December, the EU welcomed the government's ambitious reform agenda including the first steps to address the acute revenue crisis, establish anti-corruption measures and the reform of the judiciary. President Ghani confirmed his intention to finalise the negotiations of the EU-Afghanistan Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development as soon as possible.

In 2014, the EU issued several public statements on major human rights violations which the EUSR coordinated with the EU Member States. The EU expressed concerns regarding the high number of civilian casualties due to insurgency attacks, and the fragile security situation. The EU also issued several statements underlining its strong and principled position against the death penalty.

During 2014, the EU Police Mission EUPOL Afghanistan contributed to the advancement of the institutional reform of the Afghan Ministry of Interior, the further professionalization of the Afghan National Police and improved linkages between police and criminal justice institutions. EUPOL supported the development of the National Police Strategy (2014-2018) and the National Police Plan, signed by the Afghan Minister of Interior. The completion of the new premises for the Police Staff and Crime Management Colleges marked a milestone in the transition to Afghan lead. In the justice sector, EUPOL played a significant role in the finalisation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code, adopted by the Parliament. The mission has been confronted with a volatile security situation in its areas of operation throughout 2014. A terrorist attack on a Kabul restaurant on 17 January left 21 civilians killed, including a Danish mission member and British member of the security team working for EUPOL. The Council extended the mission's mandate until end 2016 on 16 December 2014.

5.4.6. Pakistan

The EU continued to work closely with Pakistan in the framework of the EU-Pakistan 5-Year Engagement Plan adopted in 2012. A 2nd EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue was held on 25 March in Brussels between the HR and the Pakistani Foreign and Security Policy Advisor, Sartaj Aziz. On 24 June, a Joint Commission was held in Islamabad, immediately preceded by Sub-Groups on Human Rights and Trade. In the Joint Commission, it was agreed to initiate local dialogues on Energy and Human Rights. In June, Jacek Bylica, EU Special Representative for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, visited Pakistan to launch the EU-Pakistan non-proliferation dialogue. On 20 October, the 3rd meeting of the Joint Readmission Committee was held in Brussels to oversee the implementation of the EU-Pakistan Readmission Agreement (2010).

As from 1 January 2014, Pakistan began to benefit from preferential access to the EU market under the GSP+ regime, subject to effective implementation of 27 international core conventions in the fields of human rights, labour rights, environment protection and good governance.

The EU continued to work with Pakistan on addressing human rights issues through dialogue and cooperation. In addition to the Sub-Group on Human Rights, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, visited Pakistan for the first time on 26-29 October.²¹

5.4.7. Bangladesh

The EU continued cooperating with Bangladesh, the US and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to implement the Sustainability Compact agreed in July 2013, following the deadly collapse of the Rana Plaza commercial building, to improve labour conditions and health and safety standards in Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry. A high-level review meeting was held in Brussels on 20 October where urgent implementation of commitments in these areas was re-affirmed.

On 9 January, the HR issued a Declaration on behalf of the EU condemning the acts of violence in the run-up to the 5 January elections, and regretting the fact that favourable conditions for transparent, inclusive and credible elections did not materialise. She urged all parties to refrain from violence and to engage in genuine dialogue to agree on a mutually acceptable way forward to strengthen democratic accountability and to hold transparent, inclusive and credible elections. The circumstances surrounding the elections have contributed to a polarised political climate, restrictions on media freedom and shrinking space for civil society.

²¹ The European Parliament adopted three resolutions in 2014, focusing on Pakistan's regional role and political relations with the EU (2013/2168(INI)), recent cases of persecution (2014/2694(RSP)) and the blasphemy laws (2014/2969(RSP)).

As a response to the Bangladeshi "International Crimes Tribunal" issuing several death sentences to persons convicted for war crimes during the 1971 Liberation war, the EU reiterated its absolute opposition to capital punishment under all circumstances and called on the Bangladeshi authorities to establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, as a first step towards its abolition.²²

5.4.8. Sri Lanka

Reconciliation and human rights were the main focus of the EU's policy with regard to Sri Lanka. In its Conclusions of 21 March, the European Council recalled its commitment to accountability, reconciliation and universal human rights in Sri Lanka. It also called for the adoption of a resolution on Sri Lanka at the UN Human Rights Council that would provide for an international investigation into alleged war crimes by both sides during the war.

At the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2014, the EU Member States co-sponsored, with the US, a resolution urging the Sri Lankan government to make progress on reconciliation and to conduct investigations into alleged violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. The resolution also mandated the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to undertake a comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties in Sri Lanka. Like other international partners, the EU has called upon the government of Sri Lanka to lend its full cooperation to investigation to address accountability issues as an important step for fostering genuine reconciliation.

In 2014, the EU issued statements on the attacks against the Muslim Community (20 June), the appointment of the UN investigation team for Sri Lanka (1 July), and restrictions on NGOs and on freedom of expression (23 July).

²² The European Parliament adopted two resolutions on human rights violations in Bangladesh: Resolution on recent elections in Bangladesh (2014/2516(RSP)) and Resolution on human rights violations in Bangladesh (2014/2834(RSP)).

5.4.9. Maldives

The second democratic multiparty parliamentary elections in the country's history were organised on 22 March. They took place during a political crisis that had created uncertainty about the further democratisation in the Maldives. The EU Elections Observation Mission assessed the elections as well administered despite the interference by the Supreme Court and its actions against the Elections Commission in the weeks leading to the general elections. Since the presidential election in 2013 and the local and parliamentary elections of 2014, all powers (legislative, executive and judicial) are back in the hands of the political formation around the family of former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, which raises concerns on the future of democratic consolidation.²³

5.5. Pacific

5.5.1. Australia

Building on the visits of President José Manuel Barroso in September 2011 and of the HR/VP in October 2011, the EU and Australia continued exchanges and dialogues with a view to expanding cooperation on foreign affairs and security issues, crisis management, development assistance and global issues. On 16 November, the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Tony Abbott, during which they addressed bilateral issues (Framework Agreement, prospects of an FTA) and Ukraine, where there is close cooperation. The EEAS and Australia also signed an Agreement on diplomatic exchanges.

Following the adoption of the EU-Australia comprehensive Framework Agreement mandate in October 2011, negotiations resumed after a year-long break and were almost concluded by the end of the year.

²³ European Union Election Observation Mission Final Report, Maldives 2014.

The EU-Australia Security/Strategic Dialogue at Political Directors' level was held on 11 December in Canberra with an extensive agenda covering security issues in the Asia Pacific, Maritime Security, Russia/Ukraine, Iran, Syria/Iraq/ISIL/Da'esh, the Middle East Peace Process, Afghanistan, counter-terrorism, cyber security and cooperation in crisis management. The Chairman of the European Union Military Committee (CEUMC), General de Rousiers, made his first visit to Australia for high level discussions with the Department of Defence. The regular trilateral meeting (EU-AUS-NZ) on Pacific matters was held on 28th October. The EU and Australia also held their first Counter Terrorism Dialogue in November in Brussels on 6 November.

The EU and Australia have negotiated a Framework Participation Agreement (FPA) on the participation of Australia in EU crisis management operations.²⁴ Australia has been invited to participate in several CSDP missions and operations and, for the first time, took part in one, providing valuable legal expertise in the context of mission support to the Seychelles through EUCAP NESTOR.

5.5.2. New Zealand

Exchanges on matters of geopolitical importance and of mutual interest were held in the course of the year. On 25 March, Prime Minister John Key met with Presidents José Manuel Barroso and Herman Van Rompuy in The Hague in the margins of the Nuclear Security Summit, releasing a Joint Declaration on deepening the EU-New Zealand Partnership.

The Joint Declaration, inter alia, stated the agreement to reflect on options to progress the trade and economic relationship, including the parameters for the possible opening of negotiations to further liberalise trade and investment between the EU and New Zealand.

²⁴ The Agreement was signed on 22 April 2015.

On 24 June, the HR/VP held a meeting with Foreign Minister Murray McCully in Brussels, and on 30 July, in the margins of the Pacific Islands Forum in Palau, they announced the conclusion of the negotiations for the first comprehensive legally binding treaty, the Partnership Agreement on Relations and Cooperation (PARC).

On 16 November, President Jean-Claude Juncker and the re-elected Prime Minister John Key met in Brisbane in the margins of the G20 Summit. Foreign Minister Murray McCully held the first meeting with the HR/VP in Brussels on 2 December, confirming commitment to the expanding EU-New Zealand partnership and to a closer coordination on security matters during New Zealand's membership in the UN Security Council in 2015-16.

The first formalised EU-New Zealand Security Dialogue at Political Directors' level was held on 12 December in Wellington.

In the follow-up to the Framework Agreement on the participation of New Zealand in EU crisis management operations signed in Brussels on 18 April 2012, New Zealand was invited to participate in several CSDP missions and operations. New Zealand contributed to EUVNAFOR Atalanta with a Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft in October and November.

In April, Commissioner Andris Piebalgs held a joint visit with Foreign Minister McCully to the Pacific. The primary objective was to take stock of progress in the implementation of joint projects in the framework of the EU-New Zealand Energy Partnership in the Pacific, launched at the co-hosted Pacific Energy Summit held in Auckland in March 2013.

5.5.3. Fiji

Fiji's return to democracy was consolidated on 17 September with the first parliamentary elections since the 2006 military coup. The elections were technically well prepared and provided voters with a genuine choice. The EU provided technical assistance to the electoral process and, as part of the wider international monitoring effort, fielded an Election Expert Mission to assess the elections.

The EU also sent a verification mission to assess the situation related to the requirements of article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement. Following these missions, the EU agreed in November to discontinue the so-called "appropriate measures" (sanctions) under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement and Article 37 of the Development Cooperation Instrument, and to resume full development cooperation with Fiji. Close monitoring and support in the area of human rights will be ensured through i.a. renewed political dialogue and programming of the EU financial assistance.

5.5.4. Solomon Islands

Parliamentary elections were held on 19 November, following which, on 9 December, the members of the new Parliament elected a new Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare, with a comfortable majority. The 2014 electoral process was peaceful with relatively minor security incidents. These elections represent an important milestone confirming the return to stability and the progress achieved in the areas of democratization, good governance and human rights since the deployment of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in 2003. EU support was provided for the updating of the voter register. The EU also funded activities to increase public electoral awareness in general and women's participation in particular as well as technical assistance for the drafting of a regulation to implement the Political Parties Integrity Act.

5.5.5. Regional issues

The EU continued to strengthen its dialogue and partnership with the Pacific Island countries and its regional organisations. The HR/VP attended the 45th Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) meeting in Koror, Palau in July and Commissioner Andris Piebalgs represented the EU at the United Nations' Third Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in September, in Apia (Samoa). On the latter occasion, 21 SIDS countries (10 Pacific, 10 Caribbean and Cabo Verde) signed the National Indicative Programmes 2014-2020 (amounting to some EUR 340 million) under the Cotonou Agreement. Provisionally applied by Papua New Guinea since 20 December 2009, the EU-Pacific Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) has also been provisionally applied by Fiji since 28 July 2014.

6. Africa

6.1. African Union

Increasingly close cooperation with the African Union (AU), the UN and other regional organisations has begun to stabilise a number of conflicts, and the consistent emphasis on the importance of building robust institutions capable of consolidating democracy, human rights and the rule of law is beginning to bear fruit.

At the 4th EU-Africa Summit held in Brussels in April 2014, leaders reaffirmed the EU's sustained support for the African Peace and Security Architecture through the African Peace Facility (APF) and the potential for providing more equipment as well as training and mentoring. The EU was able to announce the launching of EUFOR CAR. A maritime security meeting hosted by the HR/VP, along with comments in the Plenary, highlighted the valuable lessons learnt from Operation Atalanta, and the great interest from West African countries in the EU's new Gulf of Guinea Strategy. The presence of UNSG Ban Ki-moon sent a strong message about the extent of EU-AU-UN cooperation. Bilateral meetings also played a crucial role in strengthening relations between the two continents.

Overall, the Summit succeeded in giving a positive momentum to EU-Africa relations and provided a sound basis for future dialogue and cooperation. It issued a Joint Declaration reaffirming the commitment to the objectives set out in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy adopted in 2007. Common key priorities and areas for joint action were further redefined in the road map for the period 2014–17. The EU continues to be perceived as Africa's most important partner in all important areas, including peace and security.

On 15 May 2014, the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the EU Political and Security Committee (EUPSC) met in Brussels for the seventh time.²⁵

²⁵ The meeting provided the opportunity for an open and well-structured discussion on i) crisis situations and threats to peace and stability from the Sahel to the Horn, covering conflict situations in South Sudan, Mali/Sahel and Central African Republic, as well as cross-cutting issues of proliferations of Small Arms and Weapons, terrorism, borders and migration; ii) enhancing African capacity-building in peace and security; iii) enhancement of PSC to PSC cooperation. In addition, both PSCs were briefed on peace and security in Europe (Ukraine).

In 2014, the Commission also adopted the 2014-2016 African Peace Facility action programme, with a financial envelope of EUR 750 million out of which EUR 325 million come from the EDF bridging facility to mainly support ongoing peace support operations in 2014. The overall orientations of the 2014-2016 Action Programme are broadly in line with previous APF action programmes. The direct beneficiaries remain the African Union (AU) and Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) with close to 90% of the funds to support African-led peace operations and the rest to support the operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and quick impact actions aimed at conflict prevention and crisis management.²⁶

Through the APF, the EU continued to support to AU-led missions in 2014:

- AMISOM in Somalia: since the beginning of the mission in 2007, the total APF commitment to the mission amounts to almost EUR 771.1 million, making the EU one of AMISOM's biggest donors.
- MISCA in Central African Republic: the EU provided an initial funding of EUR 50 million, and committed a further amount of EUR 75 million. The multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation in CAR, MINUSCA, took over responsibility from African Force MISCA on 15 September. It will however not be able to carry out its ambitious mandate until May 2015.

²⁶ The main changes introduced by the 2014-2016 action programme are the following: i) the need to establish exit strategies and increase financial burden sharing for long-running peace operations is underlined; ii) the APF support to APSA and capacity building will be re-aligned with more targeted support and a gradual decrease of general support to staff costs; the EU decision-making procedure is also simplified in order to increase speed and reactivity.

In 2014, the EU also supported several African mediation initiatives under the Early Response Mechanism of the APF, including the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM) of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) in its mission of restoring and promoting trust between DRC and its neighbours; the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) mediation process in South Soudan and the joint Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa/East African Community (COMESA/EAC) initiative in order to support peaceful elections in Burundi.

6.2. West Africa

After ten years of joint work, the negotiation of EU-West Africa Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was concluded on 30 June 2014. The agreement covers trade in goods, on the basis of the newly adopted ECOWAS Common External Tariff, and development-cooperation and includes rendezvous clauses for services and trade rules chapters. The ECOWAS Heads of State have instructed West African Chief Negotiators to take all necessary steps to quickly start the process of signing and implementing the EPA. The agreement will replace the interim EPAs of Cote d'Ivoire (signed in 2008) and Ghana (not signed) which were not ratified/applied.

The annual EU-ECOWAS ministerial political dialogue was held in Abuja, on 27 November 2014, covering a range of files of mutual interest including regional developments on peace and security, regional programming issues and the EPA negotiations.

6.2.1. Security and development in the Sahel

The implementation of the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel continued throughout 2014, with a review in 2013 demonstrating concrete progress and delivery in all the four main strands: political, development, security, and countering violent extremism. It was recognized that the link between security and development should remain at the heart of EU policies and operations in the Sahel, and that the implementation of the Strategy should be extended to Burkina Faso and Chad. In that context, a new regional action plan covering the next steps of the implementation of the Sahel Strategy is being developed.

Throughout the year, increased attention was given to international coordination and synergies with partner organisations, in particular the UN, African Union and ECOWAS. Attention was paid to the Bamako platform, launched after the joint UN, EU, World Bank high level visit to the region in 2013, providing a coordination mechanism among donors and the UN, the AU and the EU in particular. Emphasis has been also given to the Nouakchott process²⁷, which is promising regarding the involvement of the AU and Algeria in the security field, and the G5, which represents an important step towards self-appropriation of the challenges by the five countries concerned.²⁸

²⁷ African Union-led process launched in March 2013; stated aims include enhancing security cooperation and the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Sahara region. Within the Nouakchott framework the heads of intelligence and security services of 13 Sahelo-Saharan countries were to meet regularly every two months under the auspices of the African Union while their ministers of foreign affairs would meet regularly every three months.

²⁸ Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso.

6.2.2. Mauritania

The EU deployed an Electoral Expert Mission (EEM) to the Presidential Elections in June 2014. It concluded that the electoral process was held according to acceptable standards. They issued a number of recommendations to improve the process in future elections.

The second mandate of President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz started with encouraging signs for political stability and continuity in pursuing key policies. However, consolidation of stability and continuing growth are threatened by risks of violent Islamic radicalisation, deepening social and ethnic division and an unstable regional context. The EU will closely follow social, ethnic and religious tensions that were on the rise in the second half of the year, in the context of a regular political dialogue with Mauritania.

Mauritania assumed the African Union Presidency in January 2014, as well as the co-presidency of the 5+5 dialogue and the presidency of the Arab League Council of Ministers. As a result, the country has been proactive in regional affairs. ²⁹

EU-Mauritania relations were marked by two meetings of Art. 8 Political dialogue (May and December 2014), the visits of the EUSR for the Sahel in January and December and of Commissioner Andris Piebalgs in February; the signature of the Indicative National Programme 2014-2020 in June, and the launching of negotiations in May for the renewal of the Fisheries Protocol.

²⁹ President Aziz co-chaired, with the EU, the fourth EU-Africa Summit held in Brussels, in April 2014. As a proof of its African engagement, Mauritania announced its participation in MINUSCA with a contingent of around 900 troops to be deployed in 2015. As an engaged partner on Sahel issues, Mauritania launched in February 2014, together with Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Chad, the G5 initiative of the Sahel which aims at defining appropriate responses to specific sahelian challenges, linking closely security and development, along the same lines as the EU Sahel Strategy.

6.2.3. Mali

Since the beginning of the political and security crisis in Mali - a rebellion in the north in January 2012 and a coup d'état the following March - the EU has continuously supported Mali's territorial integrity, return to constitutional order and a political settlement of the crisis through dialogue. As part of its comprehensive response to the Malian crisis, the EU mobilised all instruments at its disposal.

Following the organisation of transparent presidential and legislative elections in 2013, that were observed by the EU and other international partners, the EU provided substantial support to the transition process leading to the restoration of constitutional normalcy, peace and order. On 15 May 2013, more than EUR 3.25 billion was pledged during the Brussels high-level donors' conference for Mali. The EU alone pledged EUR 1.28 billion, including budget support. The last Follow-up meeting concluded in September 2014, that so far, half of that sum was disbursed / committed. The Commission has also provided significant amounts in humanitarian aid.

On the security side, the EU - both individually and collectively - provided crucial support to the fight against terrorist groups, particularly since January 2013. It launched a military Training Mission (EUTM Mali) to help the Malian Army restructure and enhance its capabilities. EUTM Mali has trained six battalions of the Malian armed forces so far.

A new civilian CSDP mission, EUCAP Sahel Mali, was established in Mali in April 2014. The Head of Mission and a core team were deployed in July to prepare the launch of the Mission in early 2015.³⁰

The EU has also been actively engaged as a co-mediator (together with the UN, the AU, ECOWAS and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) in the Algiers peace talks on Northern Mali, launched in July 2014. The EU is committed to participate in the Follow-up Committee that will monitor the implementation of the peace agreement.

The EU is fully committed to support the reconstruction and recovery of Mali after its return to constitutional order.³¹

6.2.4. Niger

The relative internal stability of the recent past was challenged after the government reshuffle in August 2013, which has brought about changes in political alliances. Political tensions were on the rise throughout 2014, coupled with street demonstrations, occasional violent confrontations and impasse at the National Assembly. Political dialogue on a large range of domestic and regional issues is taking place on a regular basis.

³⁰ The Mission will provide training and advise to the internal security forces (Gendarmerie, National Police and the National Guard), with a specific focus on human resources management and capabilities. The core objective of the mission is to help rebuilt the institutional link between Malian security forces and political authorities, through establishing a transparent, professional and service-oriented management system within the forces. The initial mandate of the mission will be of two years. The mission will mobilise 80 international experts and is located in Bamako.

³¹

In 2014, Niger has been victim of various terrorist attacks causing several casualties.

The spill-over of Boko Haram violence from Nigeria to Niger raises serious security and humanitarian concerns for Niger authorities. As a result, Niger is actively involved in international efforts to enhance security in Nigeria.

EU-Niger relations were marked in 2014 by the signature of the Indicative National programme 2014-2020 in June and by the visits to Niamey of President Herman Van Rompuy (February 2014) and of the Special Representative for the Sahel, Michel Dominique Reveyrand-de Menthon (5-6 November 2014).

In July 2014, EUCAP SAHEL Niger completed its first mandate. The Council decided to adjust and extend the mandate until July 2016. During the second half of the year the mission and other EU instruments conducted numbers of joint activities and intensified its activities outside the capital Niamey with special focus on improving Nigerien ownership and sustainability of the mission's achievements.

6.2.5. Burkina Faso

After 27 years in power, President Blaise Compaoré was forced to resign and flee the country in October, further to widespread protests and social unrest caused by a move on his part to change the Constitution and run again as a candidate in the 2015 Presidential elections. Following the unrest and two weeks of military rule, all stakeholders (including political parties and civil society) agreed on a Transition Charter and nominated the civilian Michel Kafando as the Transition President. The EU stated its support for peaceful democratic transition and for the efforts of the international community, in particular the UA/CEDEAO/ONU mission, to facilitate the transition process.

On 17 March, the Foreign Affairs Council decided to extend the EU Sahel Strategy to Burkina Faso. A joint EEAS, DEVCO, EUSR-Sahel mission was subsequently detached in May to convey to the Burkinabe authorities the implications of their inclusion in the Sahel Strategy and to gather information on possible activities under the development-security pillar of the Sahel Strategy.

The EU is a member of the ECOWAS Contact Group for Burkina Faso and will assist the country during the transition period in the built up to inclusive and transparent democratic elections, in November 2015 at the latest.

6.2.6. Senegal

The excellent and dynamic relations between Senegal and the European Union are based on political dialogue, trade and development cooperation. Senegal is an important partner of the EU in several regional and international files.

The political dialogue continued on a regular basis, with two meetings in 2014, in June and in December. Topics discussed were in particular domestic policies, Senegal's foreign policy, the security situation in the region as well as the major economic challenges that Senegal is facing. Human rights were discussed in a devoted dialogue with the Minister of Justice Sidiki Kaba in November. Through the political dialogue and the EU cooperation with Senegal, the EU and its Member States focused on priorities such as women's and children's rights, the fight against impunity, reform of the judiciary, and non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

The EU supports the normalisation of the situation in Casamance, where a low intensity conflict has been ongoing for more than 30 years. Peace talks are ongoing between different factions of the separatist movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance – MFDC) and the Senegalese government. Funding through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace covers support to this process and to the victims of the conflict. Negotiations with the northern front resulted in the declaration of a unilateral ceasefire by the MFDC's leader, Salif Sadio, on 1 May 2014.

Illegal migration via the Senegalese coast seems to be under control thanks to an intensified scheme of surveillance of maritime borders, which is supported by Frontex and bilateral cooperation with Spain.

High-level meetings and visits took place throughout the year, with e.g. Commissioner Andris Piebalgs visiting Senegal in February, and President Macky Sall participating in the EU-Africa summit in April, where he met President José Manuel Barroso and Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva. Furthermore, the Minister of Economy and Finance Amadou Ba met Commissioner Piebalgs in October and Commissioner Neven Mimica met Prime Minister Mohammed Abdallah Boun Dionne in November. On 28/29 November, Senegal hosted the summit of the Organisation International de la Francophonie (OIF), where Commissioner Mimica held bilateral meetings with President Sall and with other African Heads of State.

6.2.7. The Gambia

In 2014, The Gambia was faced with economic pressure due to two external shocks: decline in tourism because of the West Africa Ebola outbreak, and regional drought. The state of democracy, respect for the rule of law and the human rights situation remained a major source of concern for the EU. In February, the spokesperson of the HR/VP issued a statement, after the President of The Gambia, Yahya Jammeh, held an inflammatory speech against LGBTI persons on the occasion of the National Day. As a response to the President's signing of a law criminalising "aggravated homosexuality", the EU published a local statement in November.

The human rights situation in The Gambia attracted international attention as The Gambia underwent its second Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in October. The EU contributed to the preparations and financed a public screening event of the UPR session together with other actors.³²

³² The draft report of the UPR working group pointed out a number of serious shortcomings in the area of civil and political rights, in particular regarding freedom of expression and assembly. UN Member States acknowledged improvements in the field of education and the development of the health care centres of the country, but concern remained regarding the death penalty, extra-judicial arrest and detention beyond the time prescribed by law, the legal age of marriage, the freedom of the press, the rights of LGBTI persons, etc. Furthermore, the EU and Member States represented in Banjul closely followed the visit of the two UN Special Rapporteurs on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions and on Torture and other Cruel, Inhumane and Degrading Treatment or Punishment in November. The visit had been cancelled at short notice in August and then rescheduled. The Special Rapporteurs were denied access to the security wing and death row of the main prison and decided not to continue their planned visits to other detention centres, due to this breach by The Gambia of the agreed terms of reference.

Political dialogue under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement was held in April and led to an agreement on commitments in the human rights area by the Gambian authorities. Follow-up contacts seemed to confirm the constructive spirit of that meeting. However, no further Article 8 dialogue meeting took place in 2014. In November, the government of The Gambia notified the EU that it intended to discontinue the political dialogue under Article 8. Furthermore, in a speech on 29 November, broadcasted on national television, the Minister of Foreign Affairs directly linked the local EU statement, criticizing the adoption of a law on “aggravated homosexuality”, to the government's suspension of the political dialogue.

6.2.8. Guinea Bissau

After a two years' transitional period that followed the coup d'état in April 2012, the legislative and presidential elections took place peacefully in April/May 2014 and were considered by the EU Electoral Observation Mission led by a member of the European Parliament, Krzysztof Lisek, as free and credible.

In order to support the new authorities to restore the rule of law and enable them to face the important political and socio-economic challenges, the EU decided to suspend the application of Article 96 measures of the Cotonou Agreement.³³

The EU restrictive measures against 21 military leaders involved in the coup d'état on April 2012 remain in place as set out in the Council Decision 2012/285/CFSP.

The EU is closely working with main international partners (UN, ECOWAS, AU, CPLP) to support, in a coordinated and complementary manner, the efforts of the newly elected authorities of Guinea Bissau to reinforce the political institutions, reform the security sector, strengthen the rule of law, fight corruption and illegal trafficking and promote sustainable development.

³³ In this context, the Council Decision 2014/467/EU of 14 July extends the validity of Art. 96 Decision but suspends the application of its measures allowing the EU to provide urgent support to the authorities and to initiate the 11th EDF programming exercise.

6.2.9. Guinea

The period of normalisation of relations between Guinea and the EU started at the end of 2013 and continued during 2014, with the lifting of the arms embargo decided by the Council of the EU in April 2014. The National Indicative Programme under the 11th EDF (2015-2020) was signed, on 6 December 2014, allocating EUR 244 million for cooperation in four sectors: consolidation of the rule of law, urban sanitation, health and transport (this last one in an exit strategy).

Nevertheless, the individual sanctions against five individuals presumed to be responsible for the September 2009 massacre have been extended in 2014 for one more year due to insufficient progress of the ongoing judicial procedures. The fight against impunity remains a priority of the EU.

Local elections were foreseen for the end of 2014 but, due to the impact of the current Ebola outbreak, they have not been called.

Since March 2014, Guinea has been severely impacted by an Ebola epidemic which has gradually translated itself from a health emergency into an economic and social crisis, with potentially wider political and regional implications. The insufficient coordination and the increasing resistance from the population to Ebola measures make the situation extremely complicated. A most serious incident took place in September, with the slaughter of a sensitization team in the village of Womey. A local statement was issued by the EU Delegation.

The EU is strongly engaged in the fight against Ebola in Guinea.

6.2.10. Sierra Leone

The year 2014 was dominated by the Ebola out-break and its serious political, security and economic implications to the country and the region.

In November, the EU Ebola Coordinator Commissioner Christos Stylianides and Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis visited Freetown to personally assess the situation and to analyse the needs and the gaps with a view to better adjust the EU response.

Including all Member States and all instruments the EU pledged about EUR 1.1 billion for the Ebola response in West Africa throughout 2014.

With a view to increase democratic and inclusive governance and align the constitution to the country's international commitments in the area of Human Rights, the work on the constitutional review, launched in 2013, continued, although outreach to provinces could not be carried out, due to the Ebola outbreak.

6.2.11. Liberia

In 2014, Liberia was struck by the Ebola disease that broke out in March. Ebola had a heavy impact on the whole society and serious political, security and economic implications to the country and the region. All government activities had to concentrate to the response efforts.

Together with WHO and other partners, the EU provided substantial support to the government to fight against the crisis. In November, EU Ebola Coordinator Christos Stylianides and Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis, visited Monrovia to personally assess the situation, the needs and the gaps with a view to better adjust the EU response.

Due to the Ebola crisis the partial senatorial elections, planned for October, had to be postponed. The government's proposal to hold the elections on 16 December had been put on a hold after a complaint of political groups and a court ruling. The situation might have an impact to the constitutional review envisaged for 2015 and can also affect the whole political scene.

UNMIL's mandate was extended until the year 2015, considered as useful for the country's stability considering the destabilising effects of the Ebola crisis.

The EU and Liberia maintain an intensive political exchange which is supported by a large cooperation framework. A political dialogue according to Art 8 of the Cotonou Agreement took place in February 2014. The EU implemented its human rights strategy for Liberia with a key focus on the abolishment of death penalty, women rights and civil society engagement in human rights. A conflict prevention workshop was organised by the EU in March with key members of the international community, civil society organisations, think tanks and members of government.

6.2.12. Côte d'Ivoire

In 2014 Côte d'Ivoire pursued its process of political appeasement and reconciliation, further to the violent electoral crisis of 2010. The process is fragile. The Presidential Elections foreseen for October 2015 could give rise to political tensions and violence. The Electoral Commission (CEI) has made slow progress in their preparation, in particular in the update of the electoral roll. The opposition (FPI) requested an upgrade of its representation in the CEI, which was answered positively by President Alassane Ouattara.

Security has improved and following a decision by the UN Security Council, the UN peacekeeping mission (UNOCI) will be progressively downsized. The UN and EU sanction regimes were reconfirmed (arms embargo, individual sanctions except lift of sanctions against the advisor of former President Laurent Gbagbo, Alcide Djédjé). Following the lift of the diamond embargo, concrete steps have been taken in the implementation of the Kimberley process.

The EU continues to support the reconciliation process and to denounce impunity. It is committed to promote a transparent, competitive and inclusive process leading to presidential elections in 2015. Furthermore, the EU supports reforms in the justice and security sectors. Disbursement of budgetary aid in 2014 included indicators for the renovation of police stations and the implementation of impartial justice.

6.2.13. Togo

Following an agreement reached between the government and the opposition prior to the legislative elections in 2013, a national dialogue on constitutional reforms, including the issue of limiting the number of Presidential mandates to two, took place in May 2014. However, in June the proposal for a revision of the constitution was rejected by the National Assembly although the law was introduced by the government that is backed by a strong majority of deputies. Although discussion on the revision of the constitution was reopened in the end of 2014, the rejection has increased the risk of political tension and instability in the run up to the 2015 presidential elections. The EU has actively encouraged dialogue and flexibility to complete the constitutional and institutional reforms agreed by the Togolese political parties in different agreements.

6.2.14. Nigeria

With elections scheduled for February 2015, 2014 saw political tensions rise and cases of election related violence start to occur. For the first time since the end of the military era in 1999 a real contest was expected given increased organisation and capacities of the opposition. To contribute to the organisation of credible and peaceful elections, and in view of the agreed EU Election Observation in 2015, several election related missions went to Nigeria in 2014 to offer electoral assistance in addition to the on-going election support programme.

The criminalising Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act was finally approved by the Nigerian President in January 2014. The death penalty continued to be of concern, with numerous soldiers sentenced to death by military courts on charges of mutiny and attempted murder.

In 2014 Boko Haram (BH) stepped up their terror campaign and carried out attacks of unprecedented brutality and frequency. It expanded its geographical presence with appalling terrorist violence perpetrated not only in the North East, but also in other parts of the country and increasingly also in neighbouring Cameroon. Violence and human rights abuses were reported also on the side of the Nigerian security services combatting the insurgency with a heavy-handed approach. The EU listed BH as terrorist group in May, along the lines of the UNSC Sanctions Committee decision, and expressed its concern about the ongoing terrorist attacks in its Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 12 May.

The EU continued to engage on all these issues in several political dialogue sessions and during the EU-Nigeria Ministerial Dialogue held in Abuja, on 27 November 2014. National elections, human rights and the BH insurgency were the three principle bilateral subjects discussed at that Dialogue at the end of which a Joint Communiqué was adopted.³⁴

6.3. East Africa

EU and EAC Senior Officials successfully concluded the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations and initialled the text in October 2014. The agreement covers market access on goods, and includes a fully-fledged development cooperation chapter, flexible rules of origin, a full institutional structure and cooperation on a wide range of issues including agriculture, SPS and trade facilitation.

The Sixth Ministerial Meeting between the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the European Union (EU) was held in Brussels on 1 April 2014. The two parties discussed the situation in the Horn of Africa, including South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea. Implementation of the IGAD Regional Strategy and the EU Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa was discussed, as well as the status of, and the prospects for, future co-operation between IGAD and the EU.

³⁴ Nigeria was tabled three times for the human rights urgency debate in the plenary of the European Parliament (January, March, July) and EP resolutions on the human rights situation in the country were adopted each time ((2014/2517(RSP), (2014/2634(RSP) and 2014/2729(RSP)).

6.3.1. Djibouti

Djibouti remained a major partner in the international fight against piracy in the Horn of Africa and in the process of stabilisation of Somalia. It decided to reinforce its contribution in troops to the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) with the deployment of a second battalion that took place at the end of the year. Djibouti hosts the headquarters of the EU Mission on Regional Maritime Capacity Building in the Horn of Africa (EUCAP Nestor) as well as aircrafts and ships of the Atalanta Operation. EUCAP Nestor mission is however tasked by the PSC to concentrate its activities in Somalia where piracy originates and to phase out bilateral activities in Djibouti accompanied by transitional strategies including a possible involvement of EU programmes. In 2014 foreign missions and forces present in Djibouti were targeted by a first terrorist attack perpetrated by the Shebaab.

After months of negotiations the Government of Djibouti and the Union pour le Salut National (coalition of opposition parties) signed on 30 December 2014 a framework agreement on political dialogue. The most important reform measures foreseen therein are the creation of an independent electoral commission, the adoption of a legal status for opposition parties, and the review of the communication law.

6.3.2. Eritrea

In 2014, the UN sanctions remained in place. The socio-economic and human rights situation inside the country remained difficult. On 18 September 2014, the Spokesperson of the HR/VP issued a statement on the situation of political prisoners in Eritrea. Migration out of Eritrean remains a major concern. Following the tragedy of Lampedusa in October 2013, when hundreds of refugees, mostly from Eritrea and Somalia, died trying to reach European shores, the EU launched in November 2014 the EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative, now called the Khartoum process.³⁵ In September 2014 Eritrea had also acceded to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Human Trafficking. In the meantime the Government of Eritrea has informed the EU of its intention to reapply its' proclamation Nr.82, limiting again the duration of the national service to 18 months for the next draft, an important decision since the indefinite duration of the national service is among the main "push factors" of migration. In 2014 EU and Eritrea started programming the 11th EDF National Indicative Programme.

³⁵ Eritrea is one of the four core countries in the Khartoum Process and is among the members of the Steering Committee agreed in November during the Ministerial Conference in Rome. Within this process focus is on human trafficking and people smuggling, the most pressing challenges for the region.

6.3.3. Ethiopia

Ethiopia remained a strong partner for the EU in terms of peace and security in the Horn of Africa. In the framework of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, Ethiopia has led mediation efforts between the South Sudanese government and the rebel leaders, although with limited success. On Somalia, the integration of Ethiopian troops in the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), under the same EU funding arrangements, has also brought positive results in the field. EU-Ethiopia political dialogue is frequent, including at the highest levels: Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn visited Brussels on the occasion of the EU-Africa Summit in April, and he met the HR/VP as well as President Herman Van Rompuy; and Minister for Foreign Affairs Tedros Adhanom met the HR/VP at the margins of the Copenhagen Conference on Somalia in November. However, concerns over restricted space for political opposition, media and civil society increased, with arrests of members of the opposition and journalists and charges brought upon them under the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation. The EU published two statements on 6 May and 31 July raising these concerns, particularly worrying in the run-up to the May 2015 elections.

6.3.4. Somalia

In 2014 the EU Delegation to the Federal Republic of Somalia was reopened and temporarily located in Nairobi, Kenya. The EU Special Envoy to Somalia has been re-appointed as Head of Delegation. The EU stepped up activities and presence in Somalia, with a more direct engagement with the Federal Government of Somalia and regional authorities.

Throughout 2014 the EU actively backed and supported the federalisation process.

The EU Delegation to Somalia, as well as the EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, were instrumental in the coordination process for international response and the mediation of the dispute between the President and the Prime Minister, who conceded peacefully to a no-confidence vote by the Parliament in December.

As a follow-up to the Brussels Conference of September 2013, a High Level Partnership Forum (HLPF) took place in November 2014 in Copenhagen. The meeting discussed progress and challenges one year after the initiation of the New Deal process for Somalia. In spite of the ongoing internal political crisis in the Federal Government the meeting served to signal continued commitment to the New Deal Compact. Both the HR/VP and the Commissioner for International Development Neven Mimica attended the event confirming the active role that the EU is playing in Somalia. The Council, in Conclusions adopted in October 2014 in the run-up to the HLPF, stressed the continued importance of the Somali Compact and its implementation for the reconstruction of Somalia.

In 2014 the EU continued to provide political and security support to Somalia and the African Union for the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). Through its Training Mission (EUTM) in Somalia it also continued to support the development of the Somali Defence institutions and the Somali National Armed Forces through strategic advice, mentoring and training. In January the EUTM completed its move from Uganda to Somalia, thus allowing it to conduct its activities in Mogadishu. The mission has trained and mentored around 5000 soldiers of the Somali National Army since 2010. In November, another CSDP mission, EUCAP Nestor, established its presence in Mogadishu. This will allow for more direct engagement with Federal authorities. The duration of these two missions, together with EUNAVFOR Operation ATALANTA contributing to the fight against piracy, has been extended until the end of 2016 synchronising of their mandate periods.

6.3.5. South Sudan

The events of 15 December 2013 and beyond which precipitated South Sudan into armed conflict only two and a half years after independence have drastically changed the prospects for the newest world state. The civil war has resulted in the deaths of at least ten thousand people, the displacement of two million people and appalling violations and abuses of international humanitarian law and human rights. At least 2.5 million persons face food shortages and the situation which is man-made has become one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. Beyond the suffering of the South Sudanese people, this crisis risks affecting a much wider region already prone to instability.

While for months the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been pushing for inclusive and comprehensive peace talks, the government and the opposition have failed to engage in the process in good faith or fully honour their commitments. Weak command and control and the proliferation of militias and self-defence forces, increase the likelihood of further fragmentation of fighting forces.

EU response to the crisis

The EU, together with the international community, is engaged in trying to prevent the crisis escalating. The EU's main objectives have been to avoid a regional spill over, bring an immediate end to the fighting and expedite the peace talks.

Throughout 2014, the EU has engaged and pursued a comprehensive strategy to support the restoration of peace in South Sudan which includes: politically and financially supporting the IGAD led process and the mechanism to monitor compliance with the cessation of hostilities; imposing targeted measures (visa ban and asset freeze) against (two) military leaders that are spoilers to the peace process and that have committed human rights violations and abuses; supporting accountability and reconciliation through the AU Commission of Inquiry and actions by the UN Human Rights Council; and reshuffling the EU's development portfolio, adopting a stabilisation package while increasing humanitarian assistance.

The EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, Alexander Rondos, continued to be at the core of EU policy towards South Sudan and work in close coordination and complementarity with international partners.

6.3.6. Kenya

The security situation in Kenya has become of increasing concern with more frequent terrorist attacks, continuous high levels of violent crime and inter-group tensions between regions, ethnicities and religion, coupled with the government's inability to undertake necessary reforms in the security sector. In June 2014, the terrorist attacks in Lamu County killed at least 100 people. After the unprecedented attacks targeting Christians in Muslim-populated areas in Mandera in November/December 2014, President Uhuru Kenyatta dismissed and replaced the Minister of Interior and the Inspector General of Police.

The Government's response to insecurity is often heavy handed, with a negative impact on human rights.

The EU is actively participating in donor-government groups on Countering Violent Extremism. Despite serious short-comings in the security sector and the EU's and other donors' push for security cooperation/dialogue with the Government of Kenya, the latter has until now not shown any leadership in this regard.

At the regional level – Kenya and the Horn of Africa - and in the area of counter-terrorism the EU is supporting under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) the following three programmes amounting to EUR 19 million: Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism (EUR 2 million); Countering the Financing of Terrorism and Combatting Money-Laundering (EUR 6 million), and a Regional CT Law Enforcement Project (EUR 11 million).

EU Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator (CTC), Gilles de Kerchove, visited Kenya in the context of the AU Summit on Terrorism in Nairobi on 2 September 2014.

6.3.7. Madagascar

After credible elections, which took place during the last quarter of 2013 and were observed by the EU, Madagascar has returned to constitutional order early 2014. New legitimate President, National Assembly and Government were all in place in April 2014 and, as a consequence, the EU decided, on 19 May 2014, to repeal the appropriate measures adopted under art. 96 of the Cotonou Agreement and to restart full cooperation with Madagascar.

In the field of maritime security and piracy, Madagascar has shown interest to increase its cooperation with EU in three aspects: it has shown willingness for a transfer agreement of suspected pirates captured by the EU, also interest for training on board EUNAVFOR vessels and, finally, has presented its candidature to host a Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (IFC) and is ready to make a proposal jointly with Seychelles.

6.3.8. Mauritius

Mauritius continued to play an active role in the fight against piracy in the Western Indian Ocean, in particular through the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) supported by the European Commission's regional Maritime Security Programme (MASE). The EU had concluded a transfer agreement of suspected pirates with Mauritius in 2011. Based on this agreement, 12 suspected Somali pirates were transferred by EUNAVFOR to Mauritius for the first time on 25 January 2013. Their trial has started on 7 October 2013, and the Intermediate Court of Mauritius acquitted the suspects in a verdict delivered on 6 November 2014. An appeal against the judgement was launched immediately.

A framework between the EU and Mauritius on the retransfer of convicted pirates to serve their sentence in Somalia is put in place. This framework will help building even more confidence in our established partnership and the strategic model where the flow of pirates is followed from the transfer until pirates go back to their homeland.

6.3.9. Seychelles

The Seychelles is a very active partner of the EU in the fight against piracy. Under the Transfer Agreement (TA) between the EU and the Seychelles, EUNAVFOR have transferred pirates to the Seychelles authorities for trial and prosecution.

The EU mission EUCAP Nestor continued to provide assistance to the Seychellois authorities to enhance the country's maritime security and governance capacities, in April 2014 through specific technical assistance and training to support Seychelles Air Force. The mission has developed synergies with the IOC *antipiracy unit* supported by the European Commission's regional Maritime Security Programme (MASE). EUCAP Nestor is phasing out activity in Seychelles to focus more on Somalia.

Seychelles is proposing to host a regional maritime security operational coordination centre to combat piracy and maritime criminality, in complementarity with Madagascar which is ready to host a regional maritime information fusion centre.

Seychelles has also hosted on 8-9 February 2015 the Second Ministerial meeting on Maritime Safety and Security in Africa convened by the African Union Commission. The meeting was a follow-up to the Ministerial Meeting on Maritime Security and Piracy in the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Guinea convened by the EU (HR/VP) in Brussels on 1 April 2014.

6.3.10. Tanzania

The EU and Tanzania held a political dialogue in March 2014, under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement, where the political and security situation in the African Great Lakes region and the deployment of Tanzanian troops to South Sudan as part of the UN peacekeeping mission, were also addressed. Tanzania's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Bernard Membe participated in the Maritime Security event hosted by the HR/VP in Brussels on 1 April 2014, in the margins of which the EU and Tanzania signed an agreement on the conditions of transfer of suspected pirates from EUNAVFOR to Tanzania. Following this event, the EU, together with UNODC, reviewed the necessary support measures to the judicial chain in Tanzania, in view of addressing these through the EU regional Maritime Security Programme (MASE). President Jakaya Kikwete participated in the EU-Africa Summit in Brussels in April 2014, and held bilateral discussions with President José Manuel Barroso of the European Commission, touching upon also regional political issues. In November, the EEAS received a delegation of high level civilian and military representatives of the East African Community. On this occasion the EU shared with the EAC its experiences in developing the Common Security and Defence Policy, a multilateral defence co-operation. The EAC delegation also visited the European Defence Agency.

The EUCAP Nestor Country Office in Dar es Salaam continued carrying out highly appreciated capacity-building activities with the maritime police, the navy, civil maritime authorities and the judicial sector, including those in Zanzibar, throughout 2014. EUCAP Nestor mission is phasing out from Tanzania to focus more on Somalia.

6.3.11. Uganda

Uganda continued to play an influential role in its region during 2014. It remained the principal troop contributor to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), providing a contingent of some 6,800 soldiers.

Uganda continued to be a target for Al-Shabaab due to its role in Somalia.

Uganda also continued to play the leading role in the African Union Regional Task Force (AURTF) tasked with the elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army. The AURTF was commanded by a Ugandan officer and some 1,500 Ugandan troops served with the AURTF during 2014. The EU provided financial support to both AMISOM and the AURTF.

Following the outbreak of hostilities in South Sudan in December 2013, Uganda deployed troops to South Sudan. In its Conclusions of 17 March 2014, the Foreign Affairs Council expressed concerns about any external intervention that could exacerbate the political and military tensions in South Sudan. The Council recalled the engagement of the South Sudanese parties to redeploy or progressively withdraw allied forces invited by either side, and encouraged regional leaders to continue their co-operation under the aegis of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

Following the adoption by the Ugandan Parliament in December 2013 of an Anti-Homosexuality Bill, which introduced new criminal offences concerning sexual orientation, the High Representative, on 18 February, issued a declaration expressing deep concern at the impending enactment of draconian legislation to criminalise homosexuality and deploring discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.³⁶ Following President Museveni's assent to the Bill on 24 February, the Anti-Homosexuality Act became law. On 4 March, the High Representative issued a declaration on behalf of the European Union condemning the adoption of the Anti-Homosexuality Act. The EU called upon Uganda to ensure equality before the law and non-discrimination in line with its obligations under international human rights law.³⁷ The EU subsequently held an enhanced political dialogue with the Ugandan authorities under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement to discuss the Act, which was annulled by the Constitutional Court in August.³⁸

³⁶ On 16 January the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning laws that criminalise homosexuality and called on President Yoweri Museveni not to sign the Bill (2014/2517(RSP)).

³⁷ On 11 March, the European Parliament adopted a resolution deploring the adoption of the Act and calling for the opening of consultations with Uganda under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement (2014/2634(RSP)).

³⁸ On 7 July, the Government of Uganda issued a statement clarifying its intentions under the Act. The statement noted that no activities of individuals or groups would be affected by the Act and underlined that the government of Uganda would continue to ensure equal treatment of all persons. On 1 August, the Constitutional Court of Uganda annulled the Act on procedural grounds.

6.4. Central Africa

In addition to the ongoing security threats in the Great Lakes region and the Central African Republic, Central Africa faces challenges in driving forward regional integration and in achieving a steady democratic and economic development. The EU is committed to a long-term partnership with the region: overall, governments and regional organisations in Central Africa, which comprises ten countries, will receive close to EUR 3 billion of EU support over the period 2014-2020. This will include support to regional organizations, including those such as the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) which have a mandate in the field of peace and security. The EU will also ensure coherence in its activities in Central Africa with initiatives such as the Strategy for the Sahel and the Strategy for the Gulf of Guinea, especially given the need to deal with trans-frontier menaces such as maritime piracy and the Boko Haram insurgency. The EU-Central Africa Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was ratified by Cameroon on 22 July 2014 and provisional application started on 4 August 2014. The negotiations for a regional full EPA have been delayed because of the situation in the Central African Republic and are expected to resume soon.

6.4.1. The Great Lakes region and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Following the signature of the Peace, Security and Co-operation Framework for the DRC and the Region (PSCF) in February 2013, the EU has remained an important stakeholder in the Great Lakes region supporting the implementation of the national, regional and international commitments of the Framework.

The EU Senior Coordinator for the Great Lakes region, Koen Vervaeke continued to play an active role in the team of Special Envoys for the Great Lakes region. In the national and regional programming of the 11th EDF, the EU has dedicated substantial resources to meeting both the national and regional commitments of the PSCF. In March 2014, the Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, announced EUR 620 million of new EU support to the DRC and EUR 460 million for Rwanda for the period 2014-2020, during a trip to DRC and Rwanda. In July, a figure of EUR 432 million was announced for assistance to Burundi over the same period. These amounts represented a significant increase of funding compared to recent years.

In July 2014, the Council adopted Conclusions on the Great Lakes region, confirming the EU's determination to contribute to peace, stability and development in the region.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

In 2014, the EU closely followed preparations for the 2015 local elections, taking into consideration that legislative and presidential elections should take place by the end of 2016 in compliance with constitutional requirements. The EU made several public statements and demarches with the Congolese authorities to raise concerns regarding the targeting of political opponents and political activists in the country. As a follow-up to the 2011 legislative and presidential elections, the EU sent a mission to DRC led by Mariya Gabriel MEP in June 2014 to assess the implementation of the recommendations of the 2011 Electoral Observation Mission.

In October 2014, the Sakharov prize was awarded by the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament to Dr. Denis Mukwege for his fight for the protection of women's rights in DRC. The 59-year-old gynaecologist founded the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu in 1998 where he continues to treat victims of sexual violence who have sustained serious injuries.

The EU remained a key actor of Security Sector Reform in the DRC using its range of instruments (CSDP missions, Instrument for Stability & European Development Funds). Two CSDP missions on Security Sector Reform (SSR) were deployed in DRC: the EUSEC RD Congo (dedicated to army reform) and the EUPOL RD Congo (dedicated to police reform). Until 30 September 2014, when EUPOL RD Congo was closed, the Mission continued to support SSR in the field of policing and its interface with the justice system. At strategic level, the Mission maintained support to the decision-making processes on Police reform, conducted by the Ministry of Interior and Security and of the Congolese National Police, mainly through the preparation of the legislative framework and the relevant implementing decrees, assisting also with the implementation of the Police Action Plan.

In coordination with local and international efforts, EUPOL DRC contributed to the enhancement of the performance of the Police through mentoring, monitoring and advice. EUPOL DRC also supported the fight against impunity in the fields of human rights and sexual violence, strengthening its activities also in the area of child protection. Support to police reform is continuing under the EDF, with continued attention to public accountability and quality of service.

A phasing-out period is foreseen for EUSEC. In September 2014, the Council extended the mandate of the EUSEC RD Congo Mission until 30 June 2015. A budget of EUR 4.6 million is available until 30 June 2015. A micro-mission is planned until 30 June 2016 to continue with some core aspects of army reform, aiming at transitioning to full local appropriation. At the same time and in the course of 2015, the EU will commence its support to several areas of army reform in DRC through the 11th EDF.

During 2014, the EU continued to support Burundi's peace building and development processes. The EU focused on supporting Burundi's efforts to ensure an inclusive electoral process and in establishing a conducive environment for the 2015 elections, including on the basis of a regular political dialogue and with citizens able to exercise fundamental freedoms.

In its Conclusions of July 2014, the Council underlined that the 2015 elections in Burundi would be a crucial opportunity to consolidate recent progress and to contribute to a stronger future.³⁹

The EU issued statements (two local in May and September and two from the Spokesperson of the HR/VP in March and June). These covered the increasing political tension and the limitations on political and civil rights; the need to respect the rights of detainees, with reference to the detention of Pierre Claver Mbonimpa and the need for independent justice; and the positive steps taken in preparation of the elections, such as the signature of the Code of Conduct and the political dialogue in the framework of the Roadmap towards the elections 2015.

The EU held political dialogue meetings (under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement) with Burundi on 14 March, 5 June, 17 October and 9 December. During these meetings the EU reiterated the need to organise free, fair and transparent elections in 2015; to promote an open and inclusive participation of all political parties and actors (as agreed in the Roadmap towards the elections undersigned by all parties); to respect and promote political and civil rights, particularly the liberty of expression and assembly, to ensure an independent justice system and to fight against impunity. Economic and social development was also integrated in the political dialogue.

³⁹ On 18 September 2014, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution on Burundi. This condemned the detention of human rights defender Pierre Claver Mbonimpa. It also called the government of Burundi to comply with its international obligations on human rights, and expressed its concerns for impunity, arbitrary detention and the socio-economic situation (2014/2833(RSP)).

The EU and Burundi also pursued mutual commitments which had been made at the 'Conférence des partenaires du développement du Burundi' in 2012 in areas related to poverty reduction, support to democracy and the rule of law.

Rwanda

On 7 April, the 20th anniversary of the start of the genocide, EUSR for Human Rights Lambrinidis represented the EU at the commemoration ceremonies in Kigali. The HR/VP issued a statement on behalf of the EU for the same occasion. In March, Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs visited Rwanda.

In its Conclusions of July 2014, the Council welcomed progress made by Rwanda on a number of structural reforms, especially within the economic sphere, and recognised the achievements in reconciliation during the 20 years since the genocide of 1994. However, the EU noted its ongoing concern at constraints faced by political parties, including the shrinking of the political space, and at reports of disappearances and actions against human rights defenders and civil society. The EU encouraged Rwanda to consistently follow its commitment for democratisation, to further open up the political space, to give more room for independent civil society and in particular Human Rights defenders and to allow greater freedom of expression for civil society and all citizens in order to facilitate fuller democratic participation.

In December the EU (Head of Delegation plus resident EU Heads of Mission) carried out an Article 8 political dialogue with Rwanda, focusing again on issues of alleged human rights violations and shrinking democratic space, as well as on issues of regional stability.

The EU and its Member States met representatives of both government coalition and opposition parties in Rwanda. Among other issues the EU monitored the difficulties encountered by political parties seeking registration in Rwanda. With a view to achieving increased freedom of expression and more independent media, the EU and its Member States have also supported the setting up of the media self-regulatory body, the Rwanda Media Commission.

The EU and its Member States continued monitoring legal reforms and also high-profile judicial processes such as those against Kizito Mihigo, retired General Frank Rusagara, Colonel Tom Byabagamba and Joel Mutabazi.

6.4.2. Central African Republic (CAR)

Throughout 2014, the EU remained actively involved alongside international partners to bring stability to the country and to support the political transition endorsed by the region and international partners, aiming at sustainable recovery from crisis. The EU organised a Mini-Summit on CAR in the margins of the EU-Africa Summit on 2 April which gathered high-level participation, including UNSG Ban Ki-moon.

As part of its comprehensive response to the CAR crisis, the EU mobilised all instruments at its disposal, including a military CSDP mission. On 1 April 2014, the Council launched the operation EUFOR RCA in order to assist, in Bangui, international efforts to provide a secure environment and to protect populations most at risk. The mandate of this transition operation was extended by the Council until 15 March 2015 in order to ensure a smooth hand-over to the UN Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission, MINUSCA, expected to reach full operational capacity by April.

The EU paid specific attention to the imperative of fighting impunity and re-establishing the rule of law. Given the persistence of communitarian tensions and the total breakdown of the social fabric, the EU is also supporting initiatives, often in collaboration with the transitional authorities, to promote dialogue, the de-escalation of tensions and confidence-building between communities. The EU furthermore fosters political dialogue initiatives which can contribute to a lasting resolution of the CAR crisis. On 15 July 2014, the EU also launched its first ever multi-donor development trust fund, in support of CAR, which aims to facilitate the transition from emergency response towards longer-term development assistance. By end 2014 the 'Fonds Bekou' as the trust fund is named, received EUR 50 million, from the European Development Fund, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

Commissioner Andris Piebalgs visited CAR in March 2014. Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva travelled twice to CAR, and to neighbouring countries (Cameroon, Chad) to address the regional impact of the crisis.

In November 2014, the Council also acknowledged the added value of a potential further EU role in the reform of the security sector, in support of UN efforts and alongside local buy-in, and adopted a crisis management concept for a light military CSDP advisory mission. The Council also adopted Conclusions on CAR on 15 December 2014 which sent clear messages of support to the current transitional government and its progress.

The EU and its Member States have substantially scaled up their humanitarian engagement in CAR in 2014 and worked closely with the UN and other agencies to maximise assistance on the ground. Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva and UN USG Valerie Amos organised a joint ministerial meeting on CAR's humanitarian situation in Brussels on 20 January during which EUR 366 million were pledged for life-saving interventions and short to medium-term assistance.

6.5. Southern Africa

The annual Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the EU-SADC Political Dialogue was held in Brussels on 16 June, 2014, to discuss cooperation and roadmap towards the 2015 Ministerial Political Dialogue meeting. Parties agreed to work together to address possible challenges to peace and security and development in the region, including electoral processes, maritime security, migration, climate change, energy and regional economic integration.

On 15 July 2014, the European Commission and the SADC EPA Group concluded Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations and the chief negotiators initialled the text. This was a welcome achievement, all the more so because it meant that trade disruption could be avoided for Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland which were about to lose duty-free, quota-free market access to the EU market. The agreement covers trade in goods, a substantial sustainable development chapter, rendezvous clauses on services and investment, and a comprehensive component on geographic indications.

6.5.1. Angola

The first EU-Angola Joint Way Forward (JWF) Ministerial political dialogue took place in Brussels on 17 October 2014. Angola's election as a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) non-permanent member on the eve of the Ministerial in Brussels makes the country a valuable partner with which to discuss global issues, especially peace and security in the region. Angola assumed the Presidency of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Vice Chair of the Kimberley Process from January 2014.

The EU also continued to be attentive and supportive to Angola's progress in the context of the Angola 2014's United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Freedom of expression, freedom of association, violence against women and children, and strengthening of judicial institutions were at the core of the recommendations. Angola was invited to align its national legislation with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in order to ratify it.

6.5.2. Namibia

The conclusion of the negotiations on the comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in July 2014 with several Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries was at the centre of the EU's relations with Namibia. The Agreement has contributed to a further improvement of the already good relations between the EU and Namibia. The incumbent leadership in power was strongly confirmed in the elections of 28th November 2014: Hage Geingob was elected President with 87% of votes and SWAPO party won with 80% of votes.

6.5.3. Botswana

Botswana is included in the EPA concluded in July 2014 with SADC countries. The EU's dialogue with Botswana is in many respects a model for the EU-Africa partnership. The leadership of President Ian Khama was confirmed in the elections held on 24th October but the ruling Botswana Democratic Party for the first time won with less than 50% of the votes (47.6%). Opposition party Umbrella for Democratic Change obtained 30% of the popular vote.

6.5.4. Zambia

The EU and Zambia held a political dialogue in March 2014, under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement, which was well attended by key Ministers of Justice and Foreign Affairs and several deputy Ministers. Sensitive issues, such as the difficulties surrounding the application of the NGO Act and public campaigns against LGBTI were touched upon. In early April, Zambia's President Michael Sata attended the EU-Africa Summit in Brussels, where he met bilaterally with President Barroso and where the EU recognised the political stability in Zambia and its interest in making investments.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Upon the death of President Sata in October, Zambia held by-elections on the 20th of January 2015. The new President (Edgar Lungu) will be in the office for the remaining Presidential period until 3 quarter of 2016.

6.5.5. Zimbabwe

In February, the Council reviewed and amended Decision 2011/101/CSFP suspending remaining restrictive measures against Zimbabwe taken under CSFP, with the exception of the Arms Embargo and two individuals and one entity. It also extended the validity of Decision 2012/96/EU until 1/11/2014, the date of the expiry of the appropriate measures taken under the Cotonou agreement. An HR/VP statement issued at that occasion indicated that this was a step forward in EU-Zimbabwe relations-though reiterated the need to see progress in a number of areas. Furthermore, those decisions enabled progress with the programming of the 11th EDF.

6.5.6. South Africa

Given the density of political and electoral activities throughout the year both in South Africa (general elections) and in the EU (EP elections and designation of a new EU leadership), both sides agreed to defer their seventh annual summit.

Nevertheless, intense diplomatic contacts continued and culminated with the meeting between the HR/VP and the South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Maite Nkoana-Mashabane in the margins of the EU-Africa Summit in April.

A week of consultations at senior official level also took place in Brussels in November. This week included the EU-South Africa 6th Political and Security Dialogue Forum (PSDF) which discussed various African and international issues of common concern. The PSDF was preceded by the first meeting of the EU-South Africa maritime sub-committee which discussed different avenues for cooperation and allowed for an exchange of views on the respective maritime security strategies.

The holding of the 14th Joint Cooperation Council in November gave a chance to the eighteen formal and informal sectorial dialogues and meetings to report on their annual activities and present their future priorities.

The 2nd formal Human Rights Dialogue also took place. This second session was an opportunity for the EU and South Africa to discuss issues of common interest and mutual concern, including cooperation in multilateral fora as well as and domestic issues. A civil society seminar regrouping around twenty organisations from the EU and South Africa was held in its margins.

The intensive consultations on domestic and international challenges and on progress achieved on a wide range of issues covering political, security, trade, development cooperation and human rights have reinvigorated the Strategic Partnership.

A robust dialogue on trade and investment issues has taken place over 2014, on EPA, trade irritants and the investment climate in South Africa.

6.5.7. Swaziland

Swaziland is included in the EPA on which negotiations were concluded in July 2014 with SADC countries. It secures the duty-free export of sugar to the EU.

The turnout for the EU-Swaziland Political Dialogue showed the interest on both sides to engage more consistently and intensely in Swaziland. A frank discussion took place on sensitive issues such as the Electoral Process & Political parties, Human Rights, Anti-Corruption, Death Penalty, Rule of Law, Freedom of the Media and Freedom of Expression and Gender Issues.

6.5.8. Lesotho

Lesotho, which in general is a relatively stable country, went through considerable political turmoil during 2014. An attempted "coup d'état" on 30 August 2014 provoked serious instability in the political and security situation, with the Prime Minister Thomas Thabane temporarily fleeing the country.

The EU has been following closely the deterioration in the security and political situation in Lesotho and is ensuring close contacts with key actors in the country and the SADC region.

The EU has been supporting the efforts of the SADC Facilitator to resolve the crisis and is engaging closely to determine how best to further extend its support to the SADC Facilitator and Observer Mission, especially in the context of the new elections that have been scheduled for 28 February 2015.

Development Commissioner Neven Mimica met with a high-level Lesotho delegation on 3 November 2014 and confirmed the EU's continued readiness to support the efforts of the Government to reduce poverty, enable economic development and promote respect for democracy, rule of law and human rights' principles.

6.5.9. Mozambique

General Elections (Parliamentarian, Presidential, Provincial) were held on 15 October as scheduled. The whole electoral process was closely followed by the EU, which encouraged transparency and inclusiveness, while urging a peaceful election.

An EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) was also deployed. The EU, on 17 October, praised the orderly process but mentioned a series of shortfalls and incidents, in line with the EU EOM preliminary assessment.

Elections were preceded by increasing political violence in some areas of the country. In this context, a series of negotiation rounds between the government and the main opposition party, Renamo, culminated in a consensual change of the electoral law and the signature of a "memorandum of understanding" aimed at facilitating the reintegration of Renamo militias in the security sector and further opening the political system in the country.

This dialogue, the end of political violence and the implementation of the agreements reached have been encouraged by the EU and the international community.

6.5.10. Malawi

The EU attached great importance to Malawi's tripartite (presidential, legislative and local) elections that took place in May. It geared up its support to the electoral process and deployed an Election Observation Mission. In September, European Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs met with President Peter Mutharika in the margins of the UNGA in New York and in October with the Minister of Finance Goodall Edward Gondwe at the annual meeting of the IMF/WB in Washington where the Public Finance Management situation has been discussed. The EU identified Malawi as a pilot country under the EU Agenda for Action on Democracy Support, aiming to increase coherence between EU instruments and EU Member States activities, as well as deepening the understanding of the local context, through reinforced partnership with all stakeholders, including government and civil society.

7. Americas

7.1. United States and Canada

7.1.1. United States

A close and effective EU-US relationship continued over 2014, highlighted by the EU-US Summit held in Brussels on 26 March. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations were a political priority and occupied a central place in the EU-US relationship, with broader strategic implications beyond trade and investment.

Issues related to data protection continued to receive attention in EU-US relations, namely efforts to reinforce the Safe Harbour framework for the flow of personal data from the EU to companies in the US, as well as the negotiation of an "umbrella" agreement to govern the exchanges of personal data in the context of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters. Recognising the need to extend the right to judicial redress to EU citizens in cases where there has been a mishandling of their data, the US administration committed to pursue legislation to that end.

The HR/VP maintained an effective and productive relationship with the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, allowing for close and intense cooperation on many foreign and security policy issues. The EU and the US maintained close coordination on sanctions and diplomatic pressure to bring about Russia's commitment to the Minsk ceasefire agreement and in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea. They also worked with international financial institutions on assistance to Ukraine. The EU and the US stepped up efforts to dislodge ISIL/Da'esh, with individual Member States choosing to take part in the US-led global coalition, and to address the issue of foreign fighters. The two partners also dedicated further energy to stabilising the Western Balkans and to talks with Iran.

Two EU-US Energy Council meetings took place on 2 April and 3 December and were aimed to a large extent at addressing the energy situation in Ukraine and the broader question of energy security in Europe, as well as coordinating action on climate change including preparations for the Paris UNFCCC Conference of Parties in December 2015.

The US cooperated with the EU on Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) activity, seconding its personnel with EUSEC RD Congo and EULEX Kosovo missions and assisting other operations. Although the US did not take up the invitation to contribute to EUAM Ukraine, it pledged to strengthen cooperation on reforming the Ukrainian security sector. The CSDP symposium of 6 May in Washington provided an opportunity for substantive bilateral discussions on issues of mutual interest, particularly supporting African peacekeeping. The US collaborated closely with the EU during the chairmanship this year of the multilateral Contact Group for Piracy off the coast of Somalia. The EU Military Staff also continued talks with US Europe Command on "Administrative Arrangements" to reinforce cooperation. The EU and the US cooperated closely in assisting Western African countries affected by Ebola.

The US positively engaged in the newly established framework of regular tripartite meetings to achieve full visa reciprocity with the Commission and the Member States concerned. However, no substantial progress was achieved so far.

The EU and the US collaborated effectively in the field of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. Joint outreach efforts continued to secure international support for the International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, as did preparations for the 2015 Review Conference on Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The United States was an important partner for the EU in the Arctic Council and holds the Chairmanship in the Arctic Council in 2015-17.

7.1.2. Canada

EU-Canada relations were boosted in 2014 with the conclusion of two negotiations, the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), at the EU-Canada summit in Ottawa on 26 September, the first since 2010. The 2014 Summit confirmed the commitment to ensure, as soon as possible, visa-free travel between our countries for all Canadian and EU citizens, also so that they will benefit fully from the new trade and economic opportunities that are being created between Canada and the EU. In 2014, the EU maintained a full programme of political dialogue with Canada. Energy and climate cooperation is a key sector in transatlantic relations. As an outcome of the EU-Canada summit in 2014, the parties agreed on reactivating their bilateral energy dialogue.

On 8 May, the EU and Canada organised the second annual Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) symposium in Ottawa.

Canada is a regular contributor to the EU's CSDP missions and currently participating in two missions: EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) and in the EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo. Canada was invited to contribute also to the EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector reform (EUAM) in Ukraine, in view of Ottawa's concern with the situation in Ukraine. Canada also contributed financially to the EU Training Mission (EUTM) in Mali. There was close cooperation on issues such as sanctions against Iran and Syria. Also in 2014, Canada participated in the EU Election Observation Mission in Egypt.

Canada was an important partner for the EU in the Arctic Council, as the Chair of the Council in 2013-15.

7.2. Latin America and the Caribbean

7.2.1. Bi-regional relations

During 2014, preparations started for the next Summit of Heads of State and Government between the EU and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which was held for the first time in Brussels on 10 and 11 June 2015. The general theme of this Summit was "Shaping our common future: working for prosperous, cohesive and sustainable societies for our citizens". This was the second Summit held with CELAC as such, an entity which encompasses all 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, but the eighth Summit of the EU with the region since the launching of the strategic bi-regional partnership in 1999. Several preparatory, high-level thematic events took place in the run-up to the Summit, tackling bi-regional cooperation in areas such as civil society, academia, business or Parliamentary affairs through the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly.

As regards the implementation of the EU-CELAC Action Plan, several bi-regional high-level meetings took place in fields such as science and technology (April, San José - Costa Rica), the world drug problem (June, Athens), Corporate Social Responsibility (September, Brussels and November, San José – Costa Rica) and migration (November, Brussels). Following the mandate of the previous Summit in Santiago, both the EU and CELAC worked on the review of the EU-CELAC Action Plan and its possible expansion.

The European Union – Latin America and Caribbean Foundation (EU-LAC Foundation), based in Hamburg, continued supporting the EU-CELAC bi-regional partnership with activities, in line with its objectives.

7.2.2. Sub-regional relations

Mercosur

Negotiations with Mercosur for an Association Agreement continued during 2014 towards an exchange of offers on goods, services and investment, and government procurement. At the Mercosur Summit in Caracas in July 2014, Mercosur heads of state announced that they had reached agreement on the Mercosur offer, and called on the EU to consult with Member States and finalize the EU's offer with a view to exchanging offers. The EU asked for more information on the Mercosur offer, while continuing work on finalizing the EU offer, with a view to further discussions in early 2015.

Central America

As regards Central America, during 2014 relations with the EU were substantially reinforced with three significant developments: the entry into force of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA) in May, the holding of the first EU-Central America Association Council meeting in June, and the adoption by the Council of the EU Citizen Security Strategy for Central America and the Caribbean in July. On 17 October, the EU and Central America held the first Joint Committee meeting under the PDCA in Tegucigalpa with the participation of all members of the Central America Integration System (SICA).

EU-Caribbean

EU-Caribbean relations continued to expand, building on the high-level political dialogue between the European Union and the Forum of the Caribbean Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (CARIFORUM) in 2013 and in the framework on the EU-Caribbean Strategic Partnership adopted in 2012. Joint political priorities at regional level on which work was focused during 2014 include regional integration, Haiti reconstruction, climate change and disaster preparedness, crime and security and joint action in multilateral fora. In addition, the EU held a Political Dialogue under article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement with a number of Caribbean countries, including countries which never had such sessions before. Some were faced with particularly challenging situations, for example Haiti. Dialogues under article 8 were also held with Jamaica, Bahamas, Belize, Guyana, Dominican Republic, paving the way for closer bilateral relations but also for increased cooperation on CFSP global issues. The implementation of the Cariforum-EU EPA is well underway by both sides. The Joint Trade and Development Committee, composed of senior officials, held its fourth meeting on 18-19 November 2014, took stock of developments and reviewed progress in EPA implementation. The Joint Consultative Committee, which comprises civil society representatives, has been set up and held its first meeting on 13-14 November 2014.

7.2.3. Bilateral relations

Brazil

EU-Brazil relations were dominated by political transitions, mainly the October general elections in Brazil. In February, the EU hosted the 7th EU-Brazil Summit which allowed for a good exchange of views on the overall state of play in the strategic partnership (trade and investment, Mercosur negotiations, SME cooperation, science and technology). In April, the fourth EU-Brazil High Level Dialogue on Human Rights took place in Brasilia, co-chaired by EU Special Representative for Human Rights Lambrinidis and the Brazilian Human Rights Minister Ideli Salvatti. In July, President José Manuel Barroso met with President Dilma Rousseff in Brasilia. A number of EU-Brazil dialogues (international peace and security, UN matters, drugs, non-proliferation and disarmament) were postponed to 2015 due to Brazilian presidential, legislative and gubernatorial elections.

Mexico

The EU has been working to strengthen relations with Mexico, in particular given its growing role as a global actor in the international system. On 27 January the first EU-Mexico High-Level Political Dialogue took place in Brussels. The EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis chaired the fourth EU-Mexico High Level Dialogue on Human Rights on 18 March, in Brussels.⁴¹

⁴¹ Following an urgency debate, the European Parliament adopted on 23 October a resolution expressing concern at the disappearance of 43 teaching students in Mexico and calling for increased EU support in the fields of strengthening state institutions and human rights.

Crucially, Mexico announced in September that it would restart contributing to UN peace-keeping operations. Possible cooperation with EU missions is under consideration.

During 2014 discussion continued on a possible EU response to Mexico's 2012 legislation requiring airlines to transmit passenger information (PNR data) or face substantial fines.

In parallel, an EU-Mexico Joint Working Group has been drafting a Joint Vision Report on a possible comprehensive modernisation of the EU-Mexico Global Agreement in its three pillars (political dialogue, cooperation, trade), as a follow up to decisions taken during the EU-CELAC Summit in Santiago (January 2013).

Cuba

On 10 February 2014, the Council adopted the negotiating directives for an EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement. Negotiations were launched on 29/30 April in Havana, and a second round of talks was held in Brussels on 27/28 August. Both sides reached agreement on modalities and a roadmap for the way ahead, and started initial exchanges on the main chapters of the agreement concerning Political Dialogue, Cooperation and Trade. Human rights remain central to the EU's relations with Cuba and were raised with the Cuban authorities both in Brussels and in Havana. The EU welcomed the change in US policy towards Cuba, as announced in December by President Barack Obama.

The EU is strongly involved in supporting the bi-national dialogue between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy visited both Haiti and the Dominican Republic in July 2014, where he chaired a Tripartite meeting bringing together President Danilo Medina of the Dominican Republic and President Michel Martelly of Haiti. The meeting provided the opportunity for the EU to further facilitate dialogue and binational cooperation, and promote positive measures aimed at solving irritants between the two countries, including on the issue of Dominican nationals of Haitian origin. Several EU-funded support programmes are currently in place for this purpose.

Argentina

Despite common values and economic interests and generally good cooperation in multilateral fora, bilateral relations with Argentina were not at their full potential. Vice-President Antonio Tajani visited Buenos Aires in June 2014 for a 'Mission for Growth'.

Paraguay

The visit of Vice-President Antonio Tajani to Paraguay in June 2014 provided an opportunity to discuss industrial cooperation and investment promotion, and led to the first EU-Paraguay Investment Forum in November. The bi-annual EU-Paraguay Joint Cooperation Committee took place in Brussels in November and reflected the expansion of cooperation to new areas including human rights, the fight against drugs and climate change. The EU approved the 2014-2020 bilateral development cooperation programme for Paraguay, which will include a specific allocation for democracy, participation and institutional strengthening, in particular the implementation of the 2013 EU Election Observation Mission recommendations.

Uruguay

The EU and Uruguay reaffirmed their shared interests in dialogue and cooperation on global issues, in areas such as human rights, climate change, the Millennium Development Goals and international peacekeeping, during the bi-annual EU-Uruguay Joint Committee meeting held in Montevideo in June 2014. Uruguay's participation in several UN peacekeeping missions demonstrates its solid commitment to the principles of the UN Charter, shared also by the EU. In this regard, the two sides continued to explore possibilities to further strengthen cooperation in the fields of international security and defence.

Venezuela

Following Venezuela's contested 2013 presidential elections, street protests started in early 2014, and violent confrontations between protesters and security forces took place over several months. In a series of statements the EU conveyed concern at the detention of political figures and students; underscored the importance of respect for human rights and freedom of expression in all circumstances; and called for renewed regional efforts to facilitate a dialogue between all parties in view of the ongoing polarization in the country. The EU continues to monitor developments in the country, and to follow closely the cases of imprisoned opposition leaders, and students, including by observing the trial hearings of Leopoldo Lopez, and Judge María Lourdes Afiuni.

Colombia

The EU continued to follow closely the peace negotiations in Havana between the Government of Colombia and the FARC. Five statements were issued by the HR/VP's spokesperson on the occasion of key developments in the peace process to reiterate the EU's support for peace. The successful visit of President Juan Manuel Santos to the EU institutions – following President Herman Van Rompuy's attendance in August at Mr. Santos's inauguration ceremony after his re-election – highlighted the importance Colombia attaches to the EU's constant support to the Havana negotiations. Political relations with Colombia have expanded to new areas including crisis management with the signature in August of a Framework Participation Agreement (FPA) that will facilitate Colombia's participation in EU-led operations; a first concrete example should see Colombia participate in operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta. The EU and Colombia held high-level political consultations in Bogota in October, including the annual dialogue on human rights where in particular issues related to land restitution were discussed.

Ecuador

2014 marked the end of negotiations for Ecuador to join the Multi-Party Trade Agreement already concluded with Colombia and Peru; the agreement was initialled in December. Beyond economic benefits, the agreement is expected to elevate bilateral relations to a new level. This was confirmed during Commissioner Andris Piebalg's visit to Ecuador in July. At the second meeting of the High Level Dialogue in Quito in October the EU and Ecuador agreed to complement the trade agreement with a Memorandum of Understanding on political dialogue and cooperation.

Peru

2014 marked the entering of a new phase in EU-Peru relations. While the EU is phasing out its bilateral aid to the country and trade and investment are strengthening under the umbrella of the trade agreement, new forms of cooperation are emerging on issues of common interest. Cooperation on key topics of the international agenda as well as on counter-narcotics was highlighted as a priority during the meeting between President Herman Van Rompuy and President Ollanta Humala in August. The annual political dialogue under the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding was reformed to reflect this new dynamics in the relationship. The November high level consultations covered a broad range of key political priorities for both sides and envisaged cooperation in new areas such as CSDP. Peru hosted the 20th Conference of the Parties (COP) on Climate Change in December, which Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete attended.

Bolivia

General elections in Bolivia took place on 12 October 2014. The EU deployed an Election Expert Mission. The HR/VP met with Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca in November in Brussels in the margins of the EU-Bolivia High-Level Dialogue; both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation on global issues, especially climate change, and explored options for a visit by President Evo Morales to Brussels in 2015. The EU approved the bilateral development cooperation programme for Bolivia which foresees the strengthening of cooperation in counter-narcotics to cover enforcement aspects as well as cooperation in the field of justice reform in 2014-2016.

Chile

In 2014, the EU and Chile agreed to launch new sectoral dialogues on education, energy, corporate social responsibility, SMEs and clusters within the framework provided by the existing Agreement and to hold exploratory discussions on a possible modernisation of the EU-Chile Association Agreement. The signature of a Framework Participation Agreement between the EU and Chile in January 2014 will facilitate Chile's participation in EU-led crisis management operations. In September 2014 a CSDP delegation visited Chile to exchange views with Chilean counterparts about the perspectives for strengthening Chilean participation in EU missions. Both sides agreed to establish a regular dialogue on security and defence.

B. Addressing Threats and Global Challenges

1. Non-proliferation and Disarmament

Non-proliferation and disarmament continued to be an integral part of the EU's foreign policy in 2014, contributing to the effective implementation of the European Security Strategy.⁴²

Further efforts have been undertaken to strengthen coordination between EU institutions as well as between EU institutions and Member States, and with third countries and international partners. Priority was given to bringing together all instruments and tools at the disposal of the EU to ensure complementarity and consistency, as well as a comprehensive approach. Specifically, the EU in 2014 continued to support universal accession to relevant international treaties and instruments as well as their full and effective implementation, particularly with regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the newly adopted Arms Trade Treaty. The EU also continued to promote the inclusion of clauses on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as on small arms and light weapons, into agreements between the EU and third states, in particular with Brunei, Japan, Kazakhstan and Malaysia.⁴³ The EU Non-Proliferation Consortium organised its third International EU Non-proliferation and Disarmament Conference in Brussels on 4 and 5 September 2014.

⁴² The EU's engagement across the spectrum of activities in this field was based on a set of strategic documents: The 2003 European Security Strategy; the 2003 EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the 2008 New Lines for Action in combating the proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems; the 2005 EU Strategy to combat the illicit accumulation and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the 2008 Common Position on conventional arms exports. For more details on conventional weapons, see below Section B.2.

⁴³ For more details on conventional weapons, see below Section B.2.

The EEAS Principal Advisor and Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament, Jacek Bylica represented the EU in a number of key international meetings in 2014, notably the G8/G7 Non-Proliferation Directors Group, the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee (April-May), the Open-ended Consultations on the draft International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities (May), the UNGA First Committee (October), and the G7 Non-Proliferation Directors Group (November). In addition, the Special Envoy intensified or initiated non-proliferation dialogues with major partners outside the EU and pursued the mainstreaming of non-proliferation issues in the EU's bilateral relations with all relevant countries, in particular through Political Dialogue meetings and more informal contacts.

1.1. Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

1.1.1. Non-Proliferation Treaty

In 2014, the EU continued to actively pursue the implementation of the Action Plan adopted by the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, including through its support to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (see below). The EU reported on its efforts to the third NPT Preparatory Committee (New York, 28 April to 9 May 2014, where it delivered, *inter alia*, a general statement and three specific cluster statements focused on the three pillars of the NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The EU also presented working papers on the EU's efforts to strengthen nuclear security and nuclear safety. In the margins of the Preparatory Committee meeting, it organised a well-attended side event presenting the EU's efforts to strengthen nuclear security. Work started on an EU positions for the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

The EU continued to support the Facilitator's efforts towards the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction to be convened by the UN Secretary-General, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. In this context, the EU organised, through the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium of think-tanks, a capacity-building workshop on 18-19 June 2014 in Brussels. The event targeted junior and mid-career diplomats from Middle East countries and the League of Arab States.

1.1.2. Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

The EU continued to actively promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to further support the activities of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO, based on the Council Decision adopted in November 2012 providing additional financial support through the CFSP budget of around EUR 5.2 million to the CTBTO.⁴⁴ It conducted outreach efforts towards countries that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT, including in the framework of events such as the CTBTO Regional Conference held on 19-21 May 2014 in Jakarta for the Asian countries, co-organised by the Indonesian authorities and to which the EU contributed financially, or the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament held in Tokyo on 8-9 July 2014. An EU statement was delivered by then HR/VP-designate Federica Mogherini at the Seventh Ministerial Meeting in support of the CTBT held in New York on 26 September 2014. The EU also supported financially and participated in the high-level visit to observe the on-site inspection Integrated Field Exercise 2014, which took place in Jordan on 14-17 November 2014.

⁴⁴ See Council Decision 2012/699/CFSP of 13 November 2012 on the Union support for the activities of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation in order to strengthen its monitoring and verification capabilities and in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 314, 14.11.2012, p. 27).

1.1.3. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The EU also continued to provide support through various instruments to the IAEA in Vienna.⁴⁵ The implementation of the 2013 Council Decision providing more than EUR 8 million of additional financial assistance to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund has started.⁴⁶ The primary aim of the support provided to the IAEA is to make sure that when peaceful nuclear activities are undertaken by third countries, the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards are met. A second Senior Officials Meeting, opened by IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano, took place on 20-21 February 2014 bringing together officials of the European Commission, the EEAS and the IAEA to continue discussing how mutual cooperation that encompasses financial assistance of approximately EUR 120 million since 2007 could be further enhanced. The meeting followed the successful visit of IAEA Director General Amano to Brussels on 3-4 February 2014.

1.1.4. Chemical Weapons Convention

The EU continued to pursue the universalisation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and to promote new activities in support of specific projects. The Council Decision in support of activities carried out by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), adopted on 23 March 2012⁴⁷, is under implementation. Another Council Decision for the years 2015-16 has been prepared and is in the final stage of approval by the Council.

⁴⁵ The EU remains a key donor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund for the benefit of more than 80 countries in Africa, Middle East, Latin America and Asia, with nearly EUR 40 million contributed since 2004 (including the contribution provided in 2013).

⁴⁶ See Council Decision 2013/517/CFSP of 21 October 2013 on the Union support for the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the areas of nuclear security and verification and in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 281, 23.10.2013, p. 6).

⁴⁷ See Council Decision 2012/166/CFSP of 23 March 2012 in support of activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 87, 24.03.2012, p. 49).

The EU noted the accession by Syria to the CWC under extraordinary circumstances and contributed with a total of almost EUR 17 million to the destruction operation of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. The EU continued to put pressure on Syria in order to complete the elimination of its entire chemical weapon program, including chemical agents, and the remaining production facilities on its territory. It also continued to support the OPCW's efforts to resolve gaps and discrepancies and thus verify Syria's Declaration to OPCW. The EU expressed its grave concern regarding the alleged use of chlorine against the civilian population, stressing that those responsible must be held accountable. The EU will not have confidence that Syria is meeting its international obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and Security Council resolutions 2218(2013) and 2209(2015) until all discrepancies in its declaration are resolved and all chemical weapons attacks cease.

1.1.5. Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

In 2014, the EU continued to be actively engaged in the 2012-2015 inter-sessional programme of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). It issued statements and presented an updated version of its working paper on Assistance and Cooperation (Article X of the BTWC) at the Meeting of Experts (4-8 August 2014). The implementation of the Council Decisions in support of the BTWC⁴⁸ and World Health Organisation⁴⁹ activities in the areas of bio-safety and bio-security, adopted respectively in 2012 and 2013, continued in 2014. With a view to the next BTWC review conference in 2016, the EEAS organised a workshop on BTWC and Compliance through the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium of think-tanks (24 April 2014) and participated in a Wilton Park Conference on the same subject (24-26 September 2014). The EU worked on the elaboration of concrete ideas to inject dynamism to intersessional process and to effectively strengthen the BTWC. Those ideas should be part of a new EU Council Decision to be negotiated and adopted in 2015.

⁴⁸ See Council Decision 2012/421/CFSP of 23 July 2012 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 196, 24.07.2012, p. 61).

⁴⁹ See Council Decision 2013/668/CFSP of 18 November 2013 in support of World Health Organisation activities in the area of biosafety and biosecurity in the framework of the European Union Strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 310, 20.11.2013, p. 13).

1.1.6. Export control

In 2014, the EU made considerable efforts continuing to support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1540, 1673 and 1810 on the basis of a 2008 Council Joint Action. The 2008 Joint Action, as well as the recent Council Decision in support of the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 adopted in July 2013, aim at strengthening the skills and capacities of third countries' state officials.⁵⁰ As regards export control processes, the EU in 2014 continued to support partner countries to enhance the effectiveness of export control systems. The cooperation aims at updating export control legislation and procedures by promoting today's standards of export control of dual use items.

Over the last eight years, the EU outreach programme for Export Controls on Dual Use items, financed under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) long-term component, has promoted export control activities within 28 countries with a contribution of EUR 21 million aiming at combating the spread of WMD.

The EU delivered statements on the occasion of the Australia Group plenary held in Paris on 2 - 6 June 2014, the Nuclear Suppliers Group plenary held in Buenos Aires on 26-27 June 2014, and the 28th Missile Technology Control Regime plenary held in Oslo on 28 September – 3 October 2014.

⁵⁰ See Council Decision 2013/391/CFSP of 22 July 2013 in support of the practical implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery (OJ L 198, 23.7.2013, p. 40).

1.1.7. Hague Code of Conduct against the Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles

The EU has continued its outreach to non-subscribing states.⁵¹ It did so in particular through several events, in Vienna in May 2014, on the occasion of the HCoC Annual Regular Forum, in New York in October 2014 in the margins of the UN General Assembly First Committee, in Abu Dhabi in April 2014 at the Middle-East regional outreach seminar, as well as in Lima in July 2014 at the Latin America regional outreach meeting.

EU Member States have renewed their support to HCoC with a new Council Decision adopted on 22 December 2014.

1.1.8. Outer space activities

Space assets, operated by an increasing number of governmental and non-governmental entities, offer the world enormous benefits that were unimaginable just a few decades ago. Today, these benefits are threatened by risks from dangerous space debris ('space waste'), destructive collisions, the crowding of satellites, the growing saturation of the radio-frequency spectrum, etc. These challenges call for committed involvement by all space-faring and other countries to ensure greater safety, security, and long-term sustainability of outer space activities. The EU has proposed an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, which is a transparency and confidence-building measure (TCBM) designed to address these issues.

⁵¹ See Council Decision 2012/423/CFSP of 23 July 2012 in support of ballistic missile non-proliferation in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and of the Council Common Position 2003/805/CFSP (OJ L 196, 24.7.2012).

From 27 to 28 May 2014, the EU held in Luxembourg the third and final round of open-ended consultations on the proposed Code of Conduct that was first presented to the international community in June 2012. Altogether 95 UN Member States participated in the three rounds of open-ended consultations, which served as a platform to exchange views on the draft Code in a transparent and inclusive manner, with a view to building international support for the text.

Following calls from participants at the Luxembourg consultations, the EU started discussions with UN Member States on moving the process to a negotiating phase during 2015 with a view to early finalisation and international adoption of the Code of Conduct.

1.2. Conventional weapons

1.2.1. Arms Trade Treaty

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)⁵², which aims at strengthening responsibility and transparency in arms trade, entered into force on 24 December 2014. The 50th ratification-threshold for entry into force was passed on 25 September 2014, with a significant contribution of EU Member States. After its entry into force, the Treaty's effective implementation and universalisation will be key to ensure actual progress on the ground. Against this background, the EU started implementing first assistance activities under its dedicated implementation support programme for the ATT, adopted in December 2013⁵³. Needs assessment visits took place in November and December 2014 respectively in Colombia and in the Philippines, the two first countries benefitting from the EU programme. The regional seminar for Latin American and Caribbean countries took place in Colombia in November 2014. It enabled neighbouring countries to exchange on common implementation challenges and to involve competent regional organisations and civil society with a view to coordinated long term implementation awareness.

⁵² The European Parliament adopted on 5 February 2014 a resolution on the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty (2014/2534(RSP))

⁵³ See Council Decision 2013/768/CFSP of 16 December 2013 on EU activities in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, in the framework of the European Security Strategy (*OJ L 341, 18.12.2013, p. 56*)

1.2.2. Small arms and light weapons

In 2014, the EU continued to support the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), of the International Tracing Instrument and of the Firearms Protocol. In December 2014 the Council adopted a Decision to help ensure sound physical security and stockpile management of government weapons arsenals in the Sahel region.⁵⁴ 2014 also saw the start of the implementation of the EU-funded "iTrace" project⁵⁵, which aims at establishing the first global reporting mechanism for systematically tracing illicit conventional weapons and providing policy-makers and export control officials with precise, verified information on diverted conventional weapons and ammunition acquired by investigation teams *in situ* in armed conflicts.

On 15 December 2014, the Council adopted Conclusions amending the standard article on Small Arms and Light Weapons ("SALW clause") included in agreements between the EU and third countries, introducing new language related to the regulation of conventional arms transfers and taking into account the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ See Council Decision 2014/912/CFSP of 15 December 2014 in support of physical security and stockpile management activities to reduce the risk of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Sahel region (OJ L 360, 17.12.2014, p. 30)

⁵⁵ See Council Decision 2013/698/CFSP of 25 November 2013 in support of a global reporting mechanism on illicit small arms and light weapons and other illicit conventional weapons and ammunition to reduce the risk of their illicit trade (OJ L 320, 30.11.2013, p. 34–42)

⁵⁶ See Council Conclusions on the amendment of the Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) article in agreements between the EU and third countries, 15 December 2014

1.2.3. Anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions

In June 2014, the EU actively participated in the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Convention) Third Review Conference in Maputo, Mozambique, based on strong Council Conclusions⁵⁷. The Conference resulted in the adoption by consensus of a political declaration, a five year Action Plan for 2014-2019, as well as procedural decisions aiming at further enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention mechanisms. Besides, the implementation of the EU Council Decision to support the implementation of the Convention's Action Plan 2010-2014⁵⁸ continued in 2014, with assistance activities notably in the area of victim assistance and mine clearance. Beyond this Council Decision, the EU and its Member States provided together over EUR 89 million for mine action in 2013, of which EUR 30 million came from the Union budget, making the EU as a whole the largest donor worldwide.

The Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions took place on 2-5 September 2014 in San José, Costa Rica. An EU statement was delivered on this occasion, which reiterated the EU's consistent support to international efforts addressing the humanitarian, socio-economic and security impact of conventional weapons and their indiscriminate use on civilian populations.

⁵⁷ See Council conclusions on Third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, 16-17 June 2014

⁵⁸ See Council Decision 2012/700/CFSP of 13 November 2012 in the framework of the European Security Strategy in support of the implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014, adopted by the States Parties to the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (*OJ L 314, 14.11.2012, p. 40–46*)

1.2.4. Export controls

Regarding export control of conventional arms, the EU action remains guided by the principles of responsibility and transparency enshrined in the EU Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008. The EU continued in 2014 to promote such principles to a number of third countries in its close neighbourhood through the export control assistance activities under Council Decision 2012/711/CFSP, such as study visits, legal reviews and workshops.

1.2.5. Wassenaar Arrangement

The EU participated in the Wassenaar Arrangement plenary meeting held in Vienna on 2-3 December 2014. The EU supported the accession of Cyprus to it.

2. Trans-Regional Threats and Global Challenges

2.1. Organised crime

Serious and organised crime represents an underestimated threat, both in the EU and in third countries. It remained on the agenda of EU political dialogues with many countries and regional and international organisations, in particular in relation to drug trafficking. This is all the more important as some regions are becoming consumption areas in addition to their “traditional” role as transit zones. West Africa is the most striking example of this new trend, just as it is also becoming a production zone for New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) for the East Asian, in particular the Japanese, demand.

EU-funded assistance programmes and CSDP missions contributed to translating political orientations into practice. These actions also seek to complement the outgoing EU (internal) Policy Cycle for Organised and Serious International Crime 2011-13 as well as the new Policy Cycle 2014-2017.

The 'Cocaine' and 'Heroin Route' programmes, funded by the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), continued to build law enforcement capacities and international linkages along their respective trafficking routes. A special focus will now be given to criminal justice along the cocaine route. The production of and trafficking in falsified medicines is another threat to public health, where developing countries are particularly exposed and vulnerable. An IcSP project raising state and public awareness in Ghana, Senegal, Jordan, Morocco and Cameroon was successful. It would now need to be opened to other benefiting countries.

2.2. Maritime security

In 2014, maritime security became the object of greater attention. On 6 March, the Commission and the HR adopted the Joint Communication "For an Open and Secure Global Maritime Domain: Elements for a European Union Maritime Security Strategy". This paved the way for the adoption of the EU Maritime Security Strategy by the Council on 24 June. Member States considered that the Strategy reflecting the EU's cross-sectoral approach to maritime security should be implemented, and an Action Plan identifying five areas (external relations, information sharing, capability development, risk management and research and training), in which cooperation between various maritime players can be enhanced, was adopted by the Council on 16 December. In 2014, the EU has also increased engagement in maritime security with key strategic partners, including international organizations and multilateral fora, such as NATO or ASEAN-ARF, and strategic partner countries, such as South Africa and Angola.

The EU has chaired the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) since January 2014. The EU Chairmanship set three main priorities: the rationalisation and regionalisation of the CGPCS, the documentation of the lessons learned from fighting piracy in the Horn of Africa and zero ships and zero seafarers in the hands of Somali pirates (abbreviated to 'zero/zero').

The EU has delivered on these priorities: the CGPCS has been reformed and regional states now take co-ownership of the fight against piracy, a Lessons learned consortium has been established to document and analyse the fight against piracy, and the number of ships and seafarers in Somali hands has been brought down zero ships and 26 seafarers in March 2015, from a peak of 736 hostages held in 2011 and 47 vessels pirated in 2010.

3. Since 2009, the IcSP Critical Maritime Routes (CMR) programme has focused on the security and safety of essential maritime routes in areas affected by piracy to help to secure shipping and trading lines of communication. The long-term objective addressed by the programme is to improve maritime governance. The emphasis is on capacity building at regional and trans-regional level for exchange of information, cooperation and subsequent implementation at national level.

Progressively linking up the actions under CMR, the programme aims to create trans-regional synergies. Three geographical areas are concerned: Gulf of Guinea, South-East Asia and the Western Indian Ocean. The programme therefore contributes to the EU overall strategies in these regions: the EU Council Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa, the EU joint paper on Security and Development in the Gulf of Guinea and the Nuremberg Declaration on EU-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership for South-East Asia. Most recently, in 2015, the EU Strategy for the Gulf of Guinea and its accompanying Action Plan have been adopted. For the period 2007-2014, EUR 24 million of the IcSP long term budget have been committed to maritime security.

2.3. Cyber policy and cyber security

Global and trans-regional threats can no longer be tackled effectively without also addressing the cyber aspects. The February 2013 EU Cyber Security Strategy calls for improved EU-wide efforts on the policy relating to cyber resilience, cybercrime, EU international cyberspace issues and cyber defence. Priorities for the EU international cyberspace policy include preserving freedom and openness in cyberspace; developing norms of behaviour and applying existing international law in cyberspace; raising cyber security capacity in third countries and fostering international cooperation on cyberspace issues.

To further these priorities, the EEAS has continued to implement the international policy objectives set by the EU Cybersecurity Strategy. Cyber dialogues are in place with the US, India, Japan, South Korea and China, and consultations are ongoing with other partners such as Brazil.

The EEAS continued to closely follow global cyberspace developments relating to human rights, development and internet governance, and actively participated in the Netmundial Global Multi-stakeholder meeting, the Internet Governance Forum and WSIS related processes.

The EU also actively supported the process of further developing cyber security confidence-building measures within an OSCE framework and has promoted cyber confidence building measures within the ASEAN Regional Forum. The EU is supporting the London process on norms of behaviour in cyberspace, and is contributing to the preparations for the Global Conference on Cyberspace in The Hague in 2015.

New cyber capacity building projects have been initiated under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) to address cybercrime and cyber threats which will continue into 2015. The planning of initiatives for 2016 is already underway.

Finally, in November 2014, the Council adopted the EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework.

2.4. Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Risk Mitigation

The EU has stepped up its efforts to engage in cooperation in human, environment and security risks associated with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear matters (CBRN). Outside of the CFSP framework, support is provided under the IcSP's long term component, and the EU continued to support the EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CBRN CoE). Strategic programming out to 2020 was finalised in 2014.

The Centre covering the Gulf Cooperation Council, with its Secretariat in Abu Dhabi was inaugurated - adding to the first four Regional Centres which were established the previous year for African Atlantic Façade (Rabat), Middle East (Amman), South-east Europe/Southern Caucasus/Republic of Moldova/Ukraine (Tbilisi) and South-east Asia (Manila). Their remit is to strengthen regional and international cooperation on all chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks. The number of participating countries is now 48 (December 2014) and continues to rise. In addition to 40 projects adding up to EUR 49 million previously contracted, 5 new projects amounting to around EUR 26 million were contracted in 2014 with different consortia, including mainly Member States. A strong effort has been focused on health preparedness, prevention and response particularly in relation to Ebola where, in addition to reinforcing regional Ebola preparedness, existing mobile labs were deployed to help fight the outbreak, while programming for new autonomous mobile labs and training of local experts was developed to maintain capability.

2.5. Energy

Energy Security developed into one of the top strategic priorities of the European Union in 2014. The way in which energy issues became instrumentalised in the Ukraine conflict served as an important reminder for the need to urgently address the challenges related to energy security and diversifying external supplies and routes and related infrastructure, with a holistic view for the long and short term internally as well as externally.

The Commission adopted in May the European Energy Security Strategy (EESS), which was prepared with the close involvement of the EEAS. The Strategy sets immediate and mid-term goals regarding the internal market, infrastructure development, energy production and saving, and – importantly – the need to strengthen common external action, where the diversification efforts and a strengthened dialogue within the neighbourhood stand out as key goals.

The EESS also put particular emphasis on the energy supply security questions concerning natural gas, paving the way for a targeted Stress Test to discover vulnerabilities. Also within this framework, the EU took a lead role in organising the high-profile trilateral gas supply discussion with Russia and Ukraine. The potential gas transit disruption through Ukraine was one of the most significant immediate challenges of winter 2014, while the agreement on potential Russian supplies to Ukraine was also very important to stabilise the energy situation within Ukraine and provide a positive element for the ongoing crisis-talks. The EEAS actively took part in and supported these negotiations led by former Commission Vice-President Günther Oettinger.

Energy security was also an important element of the discussion surrounding the 2030 Climate and Energy framework agreed by the European Council in October 2014. The framework sets ambitious climate and energy policy targets, which require, on the one hand, active outreach to partners across the globe, particularly on climate change, and are, on the other hand, important contributors to the long term energy security of the EU.

These policy documents and conclusions play an essential part in the concept of the Energy Union, currently under development under the leadership of a new and dedicated Commission Vice-President. The HR/VP and the EEAS are committed to making this Energy Union into a success, and have launched this year a closer coordination mechanism with Member States Foreign Ministries in order to find way in which foreign policy tools and instruments (e.g.: embassies/delegations, diplomatic tools) may be better and more coherently employed to support policy goals. In addition, the EEAS continued to actively follow ongoing work along the Southern Gas Corridor and provided support for a new energy initiative in the Mediterranean, which culminated in a conference in Rome in November.

Further afield, the EU engaged actively in the various modernisation and outreach efforts of multilateral energy institutions such as the International Energy Agency, Energy Community, the Energy Charter and others.

The EU-US Energy Council has met on two occasions this year, and a number of other Political and Strategic Dialogues with key global partners featured energy high on their agenda.

2.6. Climate Change

The EU strongly stepped up its climate change diplomacy particularly during the 2nd half of 2014, with special focus on outreach to strategic partners to ensure the progress of international negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). 2014 was an important year in laying the groundwork for the UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Paris 2015, where the EU seeks to secure a fair, ambitious and legally-binding international climate change agreement for the post-2020 period and to ramp up pre-2020 climate change ambition.

The 2030 Climate and Energy Framework was the basis of the EU's own intended nationally determined contribution (INDC) to the global climate agreement. The core of EU's ambitious INDC is the commitment to reduce its domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030, relative to 1990 levels.

December 2014 saw the 20th COP in Lima (1-14/12/2014), which was an important stage in the negotiation process and in the definition of the scope, design and structure of the 2015 Paris agreement.

Progress was also made on the draft text for the Paris agreement itself. However, translating the growing global momentum into improved willingness to find compromises in the formal negotiations in Lima proved challenging. Moving beyond the bifurcated notion of differentiation of responsibilities between the "developed" and "developing" countries based on income levels of 1992 remains difficult and will continue to be one of the main stumbling blocks in the negotiations throughout 2015. Providing adequate reassurances on climate finance and on support for adaptation to climate change impacts will also feature high when determining success in Paris.

The EEAS and Commission services worked closely with the EU delegations and Member States foreign ministries to enhance the use of foreign policy tools, such as the 'climate diplomacy toolbox', to support cooperative alliance building with, and consistent and coherent messaging to partner countries.

2.7. Migration

The external dimension of migration has gained in importance and will remain a priority for the EU. The need to further improve the links between the EU's internal and external policies and to make migration policy a much stronger integral part of the Union's external policies was confirmed by the June 2014 EU Council Strategic Guidelines on the future of Home Affairs.⁵⁹

According to them, migration policies must become a much stronger integral part of the Union's external and development policies, applying the 'more for more' principle and building on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM). Likewise, foreign policy concerns and priorities should be adequately reflected when defining objectives and actions under the GAMM.

⁵⁹ See also the April 2014 Council Conclusions on the implementation of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility.

Migration is seen as a global, complex and multifaceted phenomenon that requires a comprehensive, coherent and long term response. This approach entails addressing the root causes through intensifying cooperation with countries of origin and transit, especially in the most concerned regions,, and better integrating migration in the EU external policies.

An informal Council meeting was held in Rome on 27 November where Ministers exchanged views on how to better enhance coordination between the external dimension of Home Affairs and the EU External Action.

On 12 December, the Council adopted Conclusions on Migration in EU Development Cooperation, which called for EU action to fully integrate the migration dimension into EU development policy and cooperation, wherever relevant, and by ensuring appropriate funding responses.

The European Union is actively involved in the Nansen Initiative that aims at building an international consensus on a protection agenda addressing the needs of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change.

In October 2014 the Council adopted Conclusions on "Taking Action to Better Manage Migratory Flows – Strategic Approach and Operational Priorities". Action in cooperation with third countries is one of the three pillars of intervention listed in the abovementioned conclusions.

The EU continues to systematically place migration on the agenda of its political, economic and social dialogues with its neighbouring countries and its strategic partners as well as in the framework of several regional initiatives. Of particular importance in 2014 in this regard were the adoption of a stand-alone declaration on Migration and Mobility by the EU-Africa Summit held in Brussels in April; the IX High Level Meeting of the Structured and Comprehensive EU-CELAC Dialogue on Migration held in Brussels on 13 November; the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the Rabat Process held in Rome on 27 November; the launch of the Khartoum process by an EU-East Africa Ministerial held in Rome on 28 November; and the conclusion of Mobility Partnerships with Tunisia and Jordan.

2.8. Drugs

The EU continued its consistent effort to address drug-related problems worldwide, inter alia through dedicated dialogues and institution & capacity building in key countries and regions (Latin America, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Central Asia and West Africa). A comprehensive and balanced approach was applied to target the overall degrading effect on the stability and security of the source and transit countries, with a focus on production, supply and demand of drugs, but also wider, i.e. anti-corruption, money-laundering and drug-related criminality. This was done while taking into consideration the respect of human rights, which represents a major added value of the EU policy in this field.

On the basis of the EU Drugs Strategy (2013-2020) and EU Action Plan on Drugs (2013-2016) a number of successful programmes continued to deliver. In Latin America, EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs has taken firm ground and represents a meaningful acquis for further EU-LAC dialogue, e.g. on public health implications of drug abuse. The COPOLAD Cooperation programme continued to consolidate, among others, national drug observatories and to stimulate rural development. In Central Asia, the EU funded the renovation of border crossing points, the creation of drug profiling units, enabled inter-institutional cooperation on critical cross-border issues.

The so-called "drug routes" concept is still developing, but already making it much easier for the EU contributors (institutions and Member States) to act coherently in their fight against drugs (see also the section on organised crime).

These practical efforts were enhanced by diplomatic work and joint assistance with some international organisations: UNDP implements a border management programme of the EU in Central Asia (BOMCA). Furthermore, dialogues on drugs took place with key regions and partners like the USA, CELAC, Western Balkans, Russia (technical level).

Last but not least, in 2014 the EU started, together with its international partners, the preparations for the UNGA Special Session on Drugs (2016). Taking place for the first time in 18 years, the Session is expected to open new prospects to managing the worldwide drug problem within the framework of the existing UN Drug Conventions.

As in many other global areas, improving the link between the internal and external dimension of EU policy was subject to brainstorming and institutional action and will continue to be so in 2015.

2.9. Responsible Mineral Sourcing

On 5 March 2014, the HR and the Commission proposed an integrated EU approach to stop profits from trading minerals being used to fund armed conflicts. The focus of the approach is to make it easier for companies to source tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold responsibly and to encourage legitimate exploitation in and trading with conflict-affected and high risk areas.

The integrated approach consists of a joint HR/Commission Communication presenting the overall comprehensive foreign policy approach on how to tackle the link between conflict and minerals exploitation and trade, setting out the further engagement in support of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High Risk Areas and the EU's foreign policy outreach and support including development tools. The joint Communication is accompanied by a Commission Proposal for a Regulation setting up an EU system of supply chain due diligence self-certification of responsible importers based on the OECD system.

On 23 June 2014, the Council adopted conclusions on the Union's approach on responsible sourcing of minerals. The Council stressed the need for the Commission and the High Representative to continue to promote a strong, comprehensive and coherent raw materials diplomacy, addressing the security-development nexus in a joined-up and strategic manner.

2.10. Counter – Terrorism

The EU remained fully committed to preventing and fighting terrorism, promoting the rule of law and criminal justice while respecting human rights. The EU's key objectives at global level remain to deepen the international consensus and enhance international efforts to combat terrorism.

A key part of the EU's strategic approach is political outreach through Political Dialogues on Counter-Terrorism with many key partners and international organisations. These Dialogues are an important platform to raise critical issues at stake (e.g. in 2014 on the issue of Foreign Fighters in Syria/Iraq). In 2014, dedicated CT Political Dialogues were held with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Canada, UN, the US (CT cooperation and countering financing of terrorism), and Australia. Terrorism-related issues are also discussed in a range of other EU dialogue meetings including foreign policy security dialogues.

In 2014 the EU worked on effectively addressing the threat of the foreign fighters through concrete measures, together with the UN and all MS. The brutal terror of ISIL/Da'esh made it necessary to concentrate even more on the situation in Syria and Iraq. This has led to the elaboration of the EU Syria/Iraq CT/Foreign Fighters strategy which was adopted by the Council on 20 October. This is a key part of the EU's comprehensive efforts to implement UNSCR 2178 on Foreign Fighters and countering violent extremism. In 2014, Member States also agreed to increase by 400% the EU's CT-specific (IcSP) assistance to third countries in the next financial framework 2014-2020. The EU CT assistance continued its focus mainly on the following priority areas: South Asia region, in particular Pakistan, Afghanistan; Sahel, Nigeria and Maghreb; Horn of Africa/Yemen and the implementation of the UN standards on counter-terrorism.

The EU continued to support the key role of the UN in multilateral cooperation in combating and preventing terrorism. Overall, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is integral to the EU's approach to counter-terrorism. The EU remains in close dialogue with a range of UN agencies on counter-terrorism issues and promotes the key role of the UN in multilateral cooperation in combating and preventing terrorism. The EU strongly supported UNSG efforts on implementation of the UN Global CT Strategy (which was highlighted at the 4th Review exercise of the implementation of the UN Global CT Strategy in June 2014).

The EU remained a strong supporter of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), as it was flagged during the 5th GCTF Ministerial meeting in New York in September 2014.⁶⁰

The EU continued to provide support to the three GCTF-inspired institutions; Hedayah, international centre of excellence on countering violent extremism, Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law.

On terrorist financing, the EU approved a specific programme to foster Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) capacities in the Horn of Africa and Yemen. By December 2014 the EU had published 15 Implementing Regulations concerning the Al-Qaida sanctions regime, which transposes decisions taken by the UN Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee into EU law.

⁶⁰ This year's GCTF Ministerial prepared the special UN Security Council session on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) chaired by President Barack Obama on 24 September. The EU also backed the launching of a new working group on 15/16 December 2014 in Marrakech on FTF issues [co-chaired by The Netherlands and Morocco], as well as the progress of GCTF initiatives in the areas of CVE and rule of law: the International steering board of the Centre of Excellence on CVE (Hedayah Centre in Abu Dhabi); The International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, (IIJ); and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF). The EU supports these initiatives financially and will become part of relevant Steering and Governing Boards of these initiatives. The US and Turkey will continue their co-chairmanship of the GCTF Horn of Africa working group.

C. Contribution to a More Effective Multilateral Order (UN, CoE, OSCE, G7 /G8 /G20)

1. UN

Effective multilateralism is at the core of EU foreign policy. Via its delegations accredited to UN bodies in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris, Nairobi, and Rome, the EU has a well-established cooperation with the UN across the entire range of the UN's action. Effective multilateralism is at the core of EU foreign policy. Via its delegations accredited to UN bodies in Geneva, Paris, Nairobi, New York, Rome, and Vienna, the EU has a well-established cooperation with the UN across the entire range of the UN's action.

The EU and its Member States collectively continue to be the largest financial contributor to the UN system. The sum of the contributions of 28 EU Member States amounts to 35% of the UN regular budget and 36.8% of the UN peacekeeping budgets. In addition, the EU and its Member States also provide about one-half of all the voluntary contributions to UN funds and programmes.

In June 2014, the Council adopted the EU Priorities for the 69th UNGA session⁶¹, in line with the EU's medium-term priorities at the United Nations (2012-2015) allowing for targeted and coordinated EU action, along five broad headings: peace and security, sustainable development, human rights, strengthening the UN and humanitarian issues. The EU Member States will continue to seek an efficient and effective management of the UN and its financial resources, and further reform.⁶²

⁶¹ EU priorities for the 69th session of the UN General Assembly (doc 10856/14)

⁶² On 2 April 2014, the European Parliament adopted its recommendation to the Council on the 69th session of UNGA. The recommendation is structured on human rights, democracy and the rule of law, peace and security, Responsibility to Protect, Women and children, Post-2015 development agenda, and other issues, including privacy in the digital age, Arms Trade Treaty, the EU at the UN and climate change (European Parliament recommendation to the Council of 2 April 2014 on the 69th session of UNGA (doc. 2014/2017(INI), P7_TA (2014)0259).

As a result of a Resolution adopted on 3 May 2011 (which did not alter the EU's observer status), the EU representatives as defined by the Lisbon Treaty are allowed to speak in the UN General Assembly. Work is also ongoing to review the EU's participation rights in a number of international organisations.

The President of the European Council has represented the EU in the General Debate, the yearly opening of the General Assembly in September and also spoke at UNSC summit on foreign fighters on 24 September 2014. In February 2014, after a briefing by the HR, the Security Council formally welcomed the close cooperation between the UN and the EU in a presidential statement. EU and UN are cooperating successfully on many crisis situations, which is fostered by biannual high level dialogue in the EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management.

2. Peace and Security

The EU and the United Nations are key partners in the field of peace and security. The UN Security Council underlined this on 14 February 2014 when, in a presidential statement adopted by consensus, it welcomed the close cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union and encouraged both organisations to further strengthen their institutional relations and strategic partnership.

Close strategic cooperation in maintaining international peace and security has grown to cover the entire conflict cycle from prevention to post-conflict peacebuilding. EU Member States currently contribute 37% of the peacekeeping budget as well as 8% of personnel in UN peacekeeping operations. The development of the EU Common Security and Defence policy (CSDP) has allowed significant and increasing EU-UN civilian and military crisis management cooperation, such as off the coast of Somalia (ATALANTA), Kosovo (EULEX), Mali (EUTM Mali), Central African Republic (EUFOR RCA) and continues to be an important part of our overall partnership. Strengthening EU support to UN peacekeeping operations is one of the EU's priorities based on the Action Plan of July 2012. Through its strong in-country development role in the consolidation of peace, as well as with longer-term peacebuilding activities in post-conflict situations, the EU plays an active role in the UN Peacebuilding Commission and all its country configurations.

The EU continued to support the development and application of the concept of Responsibility to Protect and supports the inclusion of this item on the formal agenda of the UNGA in 2015, as proposed by the UNSG in his report on the Responsibility to Protect of July 2014.

3. Human, economic and social development and Post-2015 development agenda

In 2014, development issues have been even more crucial than in previous years. The EU has intensified efforts for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, as a starting point for a future post-2015 agenda. It has worked towards a single overarching post-2015 framework that recognises the mutually reinforcing nature of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

In order to improve its impact on extreme poverty eradication and support partner countries in fully achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the European Union applied a new transparent allocation methodology, which increased the share of support to countries most in need, including fragile states, while 16 large and more advanced countries graduated out of bilateral aid. Strategic bilateral programmes, which were adopted in 2014, are more focused and concentrate on a maximum of 3 sectors. The areas of cooperation were chosen out of the priority areas of the "Agenda for Change", notably human rights, democracy and other key elements of good governance and inclusive and sustainable growth. Joint programming with EU Member States and other donors is also being taken forward in over 40 countries.

EU and the UN are today close partners working together in over 100 countries in areas such as rural and economic development, water and sanitation services, access to public health, labour and decent work issues, access to education and post-conflict reconstruction.

Development cooperation funds have supported UN efforts in the areas of democratic governance, electoral assistance, conflict prevention and conflict recovery, human rights, gender and climate change. Other very important focal sectors of cooperation with the UN are food security and nutrition and rural development, support to education and health as well as to refugees.

In May 2014 the Commission adopted the Communication "A Stronger Role of the Private Sector in Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in Developing Countries" which, acknowledging its role as job provider on the fight against poverty and therefore also its impact on the country security situation, advocates for its enhanced engagement in EU development cooperation.

In July 2014, the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted its proposal for Sustainable Development Goals.

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Sustainable Development Financing (ICESDF) adopted its report in the beginning of August 2014. Drawing on these and other inputs, the UNSG issued his synthesis report "The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet"⁶³ in January 2015. This year's UN General Assembly General Debate in September was held under the theme: "Delivering on and implementing a transformative post-2015 development agenda".

The next phase of intergovernmental negotiations will start early 2015, in view of agreeing at a summit in September 2015 an overarching post-2015 framework, including new SDGs, which would address poverty eradication and sustainable development in its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental/climate change).

In December 2014 the Council adopted conclusions, which provide the basis for the EU position in the upcoming international negotiations in the UN that shall be concluded at the summit in September.⁶⁴

4. Cooperation with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries

The 11th EDF, the financial instrument covering EU development cooperation with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries up to 2020, has been put in place.

National and regional indicative programmes (NIPs and RIPs), as well as the intra-ACP programme, are currently being negotiated, approved and signed by both the EU and ACP partner countries. More than 50 % of NIPs were signed by the end of 2014. The remaining ones will be finalised in 2015.

⁶³ A/69/700

⁶⁴ The European Parliament has adopted a resolution on 25 November 2014 on the EU and the global development framework after 2015 (2014/2143(INI)).

5. G7 / G20

The Commission and the President of the European Council participated in a number of summits and meetings of the G7 and G20 throughout 2014.

Talks within the G7 have been largely dominated in 2014 by the response to the Ukraine crisis and relations with Russia. A positive agenda aimed at de-escalation with Russia and stabilising Ukraine has also been discussed within this context. Other considerations within this group have focused on global growth and how to tackle high unemployment, trade issues and the nexus between climate change and energy security. Leaders have also underlined their commitment to international efforts to tackle climate change under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and development issues, through the post-2015 agenda.

The EU fully supports the work of the G7 Roma/Lyon Group⁶⁵ as part of EU efforts to implement UNSCR 2178 and the EU strategy on Syria/Iraq CT/Foreign Fighters adopted by the Council on 20 October 2014.

The EU welcomed the results of the G20 summit in Brisbane aimed at putting the global economy on a sustainable growth path. The G20 summit adopted the Brisbane Action Plan on Growth and Jobs and put strong emphasis on investment. The G20 also reaffirmed its commitment to fairer taxation and provided a renewed impetus to financial regulation, global climate action and open trade embodied in the multilateral trading system. Finally, the G20 has made progress on anti-corruption, energy and sustainability, development and reform of international economic institutions.

⁶⁵ The G7 Roma/Lyon Group deals with counter-terrorism and organised crime.

6. Council of Europe (CoE)

The EU continued its active engagement with the Council of Europe in line with the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two organisations in 2007, notably in the European neighbourhood and the Western Balkans. CoE work in 2014 has been importantly concentrating on Ukraine. The CoE has made available to Ukraine its expertise on key issues relating to legal, constitutional and electoral reforms as well as human rights. It has also continued to cooperate with the EU in the Southern Mediterranean and Central Asia, within the framework of the Council of Europe strategy for cooperation with its neighbours.

EU-Council of Europe joint programmes remain a fundamental component of our cooperation. In 2014, the EU and the CoE have worked together to set out new modalities for cooperation through projects, foreseeing a longer term cooperation perspective, clearer objectives and results. On 1 April 2014, Secretary General Jagland and former Commissioner Stefan Füle signed a statement of intent to confirm this orientation.

7. Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The OSCE agenda in 2014 was overshadowed by the crisis in and around Ukraine. The conflict has highlighted the organisation's continued value, but also its political and operational limitations. Russia has violated core OSCE principles and restrained the OSCE from assuming its full role in the implementation of the Minsk agreements – particularly as regards border monitoring. At the same time, the OSCE proved its worth as the only international and impartial actor on the ground in the conflict zone in Ukraine, and as a key forum for dialogue between the different parties throughout the crisis. The EU welcomed the considerable efforts made by the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office during 2014 in addressing the crisis.

The EU, whose Member States make up almost half of the OSCE participating States and contribute 70% of the organisation's budget, continued to support the OSCE's work in and across all its three dimensions – politico-military, economic-environmental and human. The Union continued to defend and promote the OSCE's commitments and principles in the face of multiple challenges, be it Russia's actions in Ukraine or the deteriorating human rights situation in parts of the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

With regard to the crisis in and around Ukraine, the EU lent significant political, financial and in-kind support to the different OSCE activities, notably the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM), the Observer Mission to two Russian border checkpoints, and the Election Observation Missions by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to the early presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine. The SMM is the biggest OSCE field operation in recent years and has had to operate under increasingly challenging circumstances. The EU supported its expansion to 500 monitors by January 2015 and EU Member States have contributed more than 70% of the mission's staff. In addition to contributions by its Member States, the Union provided EUR7m in extra-budgetary funding to the SMM through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) as well as 40 unarmoured and 4 armoured vehicles. The EU also lent strong political support to the Trilateral Contact Group consisting of representatives of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office, Ukraine and Russia.

In response to the Ukraine crisis the EU supported an extensive use of the OSCE politico-military instruments, in particular the Vienna Document. Significant numbers of verification measures to both Ukraine and Russia were undertaken with the active participation of EU Member States in an attempt to alleviate concerns about unusual Russian military activities along the border with Ukraine. However, little de-escalatory impact could be achieved due to diverging security interests and Russia's lack of political will to comply with its commitments in the field of confidence and security building measures not only in letter but also in spirit. The EU will therefore continue to push for the full implementation and modernisation of the Vienna Document with a view to enhancing the OSCE's role in confidence and security building, risk reduction and conflict prevention.

The crisis in and around Ukraine also impacted on the protracted conflicts in the OSCE area. Despite the challenges, the EU continued its active engagement in the resolution of these conflicts, notably the Transnistria settlement talks and the Geneva International Discussions on the consequences of the 2008 conflict in Georgia, where it is a participant. The EU also continued to support the efforts to achieve progress in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The EU provides significant funding for building confidence between the parties of each of these conflicts.

The EU continued to attach great importance to the full implementation of human dimension commitments, especially in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this context, the Union notably emphasised the important role of the autonomous OSCE institutions (ODIHR, Representative on Freedom of the Media and High Commissioner on National Minorities).

Cooperation with the OSCE was further developed in the field of transnational threats, including on issues related to counter-terrorism, border management and cyber security. The EU also continued to support the work of the OSCE field operations notably in the Western Balkans, South Caucasus and Central Asia. The EU continued to provide significant financial support to the Community Security Initiative in Kyrgyzstan through the IcSP.

The annual Ministerial Council on 4 and 5 December 2014 in Basel was dominated by the crisis in and around Ukraine. While no consensus could be reached on a declaration on the crisis, the discussions confirmed the OSCE's role as key forum for issues of European security. The Ministerial also demonstrated that there was agreement among the vast majority of participating states in opposing Russia's actions in and around Ukraine and in upholding the basic principles of the Helsinki Final Act, including the inviolability of frontiers. The Ministerial also addressed the future of the European security order. While the Helsinki+40 process (an attempt to reinvigorate the OSCE in the lead-up to the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975) hardly made any progress in 2014, the Ministerial agreed to continue to pursue the process in view of the upcoming anniversary. The Swiss Chairmanship – in cooperation with its successors Serbia (2015) and Germany (2016) – also set-up a Panel of Eminent Persons on the future of European security.

D. Support to Democracy, human rights, international humanitarian law and the rule of law

1. Promotion of human rights, international humanitarian law, democracy and the rule of law

In 2014 the EU remained committed to promoting respect for human rights across the world and advocating compliance with international humanitarian law. The EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, adopted in June 2012, have continued to be the reference documents of EU External Policy in this area, setting out the guiding principles and main priorities of the EU action. These documents aim to improve the effectiveness and consistency of the EU's human rights policy and to place human rights and democracy at the core of the Union's external action.

With the Action Plan expiring at the end of the year, during the reporting period the External Action Service (EEAS) set off a broad process of consultation with other EU institutions (Commission, Council and Member States, European Parliament) and relevant stakeholders (including in particular civil society organisations and academic institutions) with a view of preparing a fully renewed Action Plan, to be adopted in early 2015.

2. Human rights throughout EU policy

In 2014 the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, completed the second year of his mandate. His core task, as defined in his mandate, continued to be increasing the coherence, effectiveness, and visibility of human rights in EU foreign policy. To this end, he focused on strengthening the EU's human rights engagement with strategic partners, including through visits to the United States, Brazil and Mexico; building relations with countries in transition and regional partners, including Myanmar, Pakistan and Egypt; upgrading the EU's visibility and engagement with multilateral and regional human rights mechanisms; cooperating with and empowering civil society. He also focused on promoting key EU priorities, in particular those reflected in EU human rights guidelines and other issues, such as for example freedom of expression offline and online, women's human rights, human rights based approach to development, abolition of the death penalty and business and human rights.

The EEAS has also worked on streamlining its internal mechanisms and procedures, with a view of making its action on human rights more effective. The Council Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM), in charge of all human rights aspects of the external relations of the European Union, adopted the EU's strategic priorities in UN Human Rights Fora for the year, which contributed to the successful outcomes of the EU work in the UN Framework. Thanks to the concerted efforts of EU Delegations, Heads of Missions, EU Institutions and Services, and Member States, 132 human rights country strategies have been endorsed by the Political and Security Committee (PSC). The implementation of the human rights country strategies has led to more intense collaboration between the EU Delegations and Member States Embassies on human rights and contributed to better frame and increase coherence of human rights dialogues.

In 2014 the EU held formal human rights dialogues and consultations with 37 partner countries and regional groupings, including - for the first time - a human rights dialogue with Myanmar/Burma. In addition, many of the 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries that are party to the Cotonou Agreement engaged in a dialogue with the EU. The human rights dialogue with Russia was suspended, the one with Azerbaijan postponed. The EU continued its efforts to improve the impact and effectiveness of the dialogues, including by establishing links between the dialogues and other policy instruments, developing follow-up mechanisms and covering individual cases in the discussions. Most human rights dialogues were preceded by consultation meetings with civil society organisations (CSOs) in Brussels and the countries concerned, and followed by debriefings. The EU issued declarations on human rights delivered by the HR/VP or her Spokesperson. Confidential demarches were also used during the year.

The EEAS provided regular training sessions on human rights and democracy, on topics such as non-discrimination (freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief, the rights of persons with disabilities and LGBTI rights), economic, social and cultural rights, business and human rights, gender equality, children's rights, democracy support and election observation, human rights in the UN context, and human rights in the Council of Europe. A mapping exercise of human rights training programmes run by Member States was also launched, with a view to collecting best practices and exploring synergies. To this end, it was agreed in September to set up an informal network of focal points for human rights and democracy training in EU Member States. By the end of 2014 all EU Delegations in Third Countries and CSDP missions and operations had appointed human rights and/or gender focal points.

Efforts were reinforced in 2014 to address issues of coherence and consistency between the EU's internal and external human rights policies. This was also the subject of specific conclusions adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council in June in which the Council recognised that consistency is key for the EU's credibility and can only be achieved if the EU leads by example in the area of human rights. In 2014, the European Commission remained committed to inserting human rights into its impact assessments carried out for proposals in the field of EU external action, and started developing specific guidelines on the analysis of human rights impact assessment in trade agreements.

3. Implementing EU human rights priorities

Throughout 2014 the EU focused on specific thematic human rights challenges, as regards both civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights.

The EU was active in promoting the **right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly**, through public statements and in the framework of the EU's bilateral relations with third countries; through the human rights dialogues and consultations with like-minded partners in terms of exchanging on activities and good practices. In September 2014 the EU organised an event in the margins of the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, in order to examine with civil society recent trends of the enjoyment of freedom of peaceful assembly in the OSCE area.

At the UN Human Rights Council session throughout the year and during the UN General Assembly Third Committee meeting in October, the EU underlined the importance of the work of **civil society organisations and human rights defenders (HRDs)** and expressed concern about the shrinking space for civil society in many countries, the increasing restrictions placed upon non-governmental organizations and the harassment and severe human rights violations inflicted upon activists. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights is a key financial tool to support civil society organisations active on human rights, and HRDs, including journalists and bloggers.

EU Foreign Ministers reiterated the EU's commitment for HRDs in Council conclusions which were adopted in June, to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders. The Council emphasised the particularly important role of women HRDs and HRDs from vulnerable and marginalised groups. In May, EU Delegations were provided with detailed guidance on the implementation of the guidelines on human rights defenders, setting out best practices for handling cases. Throughout the year, EU Delegations were active in working to protect HRDs, who have continued to face increasing pressure from the authorities and from non-state actors in many countries. EU diplomats monitored trials, visited detained activists and issued statements on individual cases.

The EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy underlines the EU's determination to continue to promote **freedom of opinion and expression on-line and off-line**, as democracy cannot exist without these rights. On 12 May 2014 the EU adopted the Human Rights Guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline. Building upon existing instruments and documents, these guidelines recall key principles and contain clearly defined priorities and tools for the use of EU Delegations and Member States Embassies, as well as EU Headquarters, in order to better promote and defend this right. The EU repeatedly condemned attacks against journalist and bloggers through public statements and in the framework of bilateral relations. The EU followed closely the work of the Freedom Online Coalition, and actively supported the UN HRC resolution on "safety of journalists", the UNGA resolution on "the right to privacy in the digital age" and the resolution on "Human Rights and the Internet" adopted for the second time this summer in the HRC. The 2014 annual EU NGO Human Rights Forum held on 4/5 December 2014, dedicated to the protection and promotion of freedom of expression, saw the participation of more than 200 NGO representatives from all over the world.

The EU reaffirmed its **opposition to the death penalty** and used all diplomatic tools at its disposal to advance the cause of worldwide abolition, in line with the relevant EU Guidelines. Through extensive lobbying, the EU actively participated in the cross-regional alliance promoting the UN General Assembly Resolution ultimately adopted in December, reaffirming the call for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. Thanks to the EU's efforts the resolution obtained an unprecedented number of 117 votes in favour, 37 against and 34 abstentions, compared to similar resolutions in previous years.

The EU celebrated the 30th anniversary of the **Convention Against Torture**, while continuing to implement the Guidelines on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. It encouraged all countries to ratify and implement the Convention and its Optional Protocol and raised individual cases of torture and ill-treatment in its human rights dialogues with third countries, as well as during visits to the countries. An event was organised in Brussels in December, to raise awareness on the 30th anniversary and to reflect on the way forward to ensure the widest implementation possible of the Convention.

This year the EU celebrated the 25th anniversary of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**. To mark this anniversary and the EU's commitment to children in its internal and external policies, the Justice and Home Affairs Council adopted Conclusions on the Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights in December. The EU actively supported the campaign "Children, Not Soldiers" jointly initiated by the UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF, which aims to prevent the recruitment and ultimately end the use of children by government armed forces in conflict by 2016. In line with ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour, the EU advocated for the establishment of hazardous work lists in 33 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Europe/Central Asia. During human rights dialogues with certain countries there was a particular focus on child labour.

The protection of the **rights of women**, and the fight against gender-based violence remained high on the EU agenda. These issues were consistently mainstreamed in EU programmes and were included in public messages and dialogues with governments, regional organisations and civil society. Support to women human rights defenders and women's organisations was also a priority. The UN continued to be the main platform in which the EU advances its strategic priorities in the area of gender. For example, the EU had an important role in the negotiations of the Agreed Conclusions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The EU and UN Women continued to implement their 2012 Joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Key achievements were made in the fields of communication, policy dialogue and joint advocacy, training, and planning of joint EU–UN Women programmes. In this context, the conference 'Spring Forward for Women', bringing together women parliamentarians from the Arab States region and members of the European Parliament, took place in Brussels in November 2014. As regards sexual violence in conflict, the EU actively participated in the Global Summit in June 2014 in London, and committed to follow up with practical actions in the areas of human rights, conflict prevention, crisis management, mediation, and humanitarian assistance. During the Girl Summit in July the EU pledged more than EUR 100 million for the next 7 years to gender equality and children wellbeing that will include also concrete projects on ending Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child, early and forced marriage.

As regards the enjoyment of **human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI)** persons, the EU engaged in dialogue with several countries and undertook whenever necessary diplomatic demarches, notably in Africa and Central Asia, in order to invite countries to reconsider or repeal legislation discriminating against LGBTI persons and infringing internationally agreed non-discrimination provisions. In addition, the EU advocated LGBTI rights in the relevant Human Rights Dialogues and provided support to LGBTI human rights defenders and to NGOs implementing projects to fight discrimination against LGBTI persons through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The EU was actively engaged in multilateral efforts, notably within the UN, to tackle discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. At the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva the EU actively and successfully contributed to the adoption of the Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity ('SOGI') Resolution in September.

One year after the adoption of the EU guidelines on **Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)**, the EU continued to focus on this fundamental freedom which is increasingly challenged worldwide.

The EU was particularly shocked by atrocities and abuses of basic human rights, including for instance in Iraq and Syria, in particular when committed against persons belonging to specific religious minorities and vulnerable groups.

It underlined the need for safeguarding the multi-ethnic and multi-religious character of those countries. In multilateral fora, the EU focused on consolidating FoRB resolutions both in the UN HRC and in the General Assembly. In the March 2014 HRC session, the EU-led resolution on FoRB was adopted once again by consensus.

The EU contributed to the promotion and protection of the **rights of persons belonging to minorities** by joining forces with the United Nations and other international and multilateral organisations such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe. In September 2014, the first ever UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples was held in New York as a high level plenary of the General Assembly. The EU contributed actively to the preparations of the Conference by supporting the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and by providing coordinated contributions towards the adoption by consensus of an outcome document. The EU also organized a side event on monitoring indigenous peoples' right. Building up on the results of the Conference, the EU started work on a strengthened EU policy on indigenous peoples, as foreseen by the Human Rights Action Plan.

In its internal as well as external action the EU is committed to promoting the rights of **persons with disabilities** in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), of which the EU is a party. In 2014 the European Commission prepared the first EU report as required under the CRPD and submitted it to the UN for consideration. The report describes how the EU has been implementing the CRPD through legislation, policy actions and funding instruments.

As an advocate of the universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated nature of all human rights, the EU considers that **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)** are part and parcel of its external human rights policy. During the year, the EU paid increased attention to this area during human rights dialogues with key countries. At multilateral level, the EU actively supported and cooperated with several UN Special Rapporteurs working on ESCR.

In 2014 the EU continued to implement internally and to promote the implementation in other countries of the 2011 UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Business and Human Rights. In the EU, the Council adoption in September of the Directive on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by large companies and groups was a step forward. Companies concerned will disclose information on policies, risks and outcomes as regards respect for human rights among other things. As part of its external action, the EU discussed the issue with a growing number of partner countries. At the June session of the HRC, the EU supported the resolution renewing the mandate of the Working Group on Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and other Enterprises. In September at a joint seminar in Addis Ababa the African Union and the EU took the commitment to jointly promote and implement the UNGPs in the two regions and to work on areas of potential cooperation.

4. Human rights in all external policies

The EU followed up on its commitment to promote human rights and democracy through all its external actions.

The EU took further steps towards applying a more effective human rights-based approach to **development co-operation**. The April 2014 Commission Staff Working Document designed a toolbox providing political impetus and concrete guidance on how to include a rights-based approach in any development co-operation programme or project. Subsequently, EU Council Conclusions welcomed this significant step. The EU adopted the new external financial instruments (2014-2020), in which human rights and democracy feature as key principles and/or are covered by dedicated programmes. It continued to shape its position and strategy for the follow-up to Rio+20 and the post-2015 development agenda. In a number of policy statements, endorsed by the Council, the EU has been an advocate for integrating human rights, rule of law and governance issues into the global development agenda. In its Conclusions of 16 December, the Council emphasised the importance of a post-2015 agenda encompassing all human rights.

The EU also used its **trade policy** to promote respect for human rights in third countries. In this context, under the new Regulation on the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), entered into force in January 2014, 13 countries⁶⁶ have been granted GSP+ preferences. The new regulation reinforces monitoring mechanisms for compliance of these countries with international conventions, including core human rights conventions. The EU started putting in place additional innovative ways of providing support to the GSP+ countries for the implementation, enforcement and monitoring of the relevant Human Rights treaties and International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions. In 2014 the EU and its MS promoted action at the multilateral level to ensure controls on exports of surveillance technology which could be used for human rights violations, by negotiating proposals in the context of key multilateral export control regimes such as the Wassenaar Arrangement. As a result, the EU introduced new controls on specific intrusion software and internet monitoring equipment through Commission Delegated Regulation of 22 October 2014. In the context of the general review of Regulation 1236/2005 on trade in goods that can be used for capital punishment and torture, the Commission submitted a proposal for amending the Regulation to the Council and the European Parliament in early 2014.

⁶⁶ Armenia, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Georgia, Guatemala, Mongolia, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru.

The EU took additional steps to mainstream its human rights and gender policies in **CSDP missions and operations**. In line with the 2013 Crisis Management Procedures, human rights and gender considerations were addressed during the planning process for new missions and operations, and an analysis of the human rights and gender situation was integrated into planning documents, including for the EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine and EUFOR Central African Republic. Furthermore, the conflict early warning system (EWS), which includes many human rights-related indicators, was gradually rolled-out at global level. In 2014, there were advisers or focal points for human rights and gender in all CSDP missions and operations. Their tasks include both mainstreaming human rights and gender into the work of the mission or operation, and implementing specific activities. The EU continued to advance its commitment to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security both internally -via the EU Member States Informal Taskforce- and by promoting the development of National Action Plans with third countries. The Second Report on the EU-indicators for the Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 & 1820 on Women, Peace and Security was published in January 2014.

In its efforts to entrench human rights issues in its **counter-terrorism activities**, the EEAS, in co-operation with other EU institutions, elaborated a Counterterrorism Guidance to be applied in the planning and implementation of counter-terrorism assistance projects with Third Countries. The Guidance, which was endorsed by MS in November, takes into account International Humanitarian Law and International Refugee Law.

5. Democracy and the rule of law

The EU pursued efforts to support democratic reforms and values. In 2014, the EU supported electoral processes across the world by deploying Election Observation Missions and Electoral Expert Missions, as well as providing technical and financial assistance to election management bodies and to domestic observers. Overall, the EU deployed 8 Election Observation Missions to observe 9 elections in total. EOMs were deployed to the Maldives (legislative elections), Guinea Bissau (presidential and legislative), Malawi (presidential, legislative and local), Egypt (presidential) and Kosovo (legislative), Mozambique (legislative), Tunisia (legislative and presidential). The EU deployed an Election Assessment Team (EAT) to Afghanistan for the presidential elections, which also observed the audit of the votes, conducted following the agreement brokered by the US Secretary of State Kerry. Eight Electoral Expert Missions were deployed in the course of 2014 to the following countries: Egypt, Libya, Thailand, Iraq, Algeria, Mauritania, Bolivia, and Fiji. While the EU does not observe elections in the OSCE area, it supported closely OSCE/ODIHR in the context of the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine.

More in general, the EU stepped up its work on democracy support, with the objective to increase coherence between EU instruments and EU Member States activities, as well as to forge a common understanding of the local context, through reinforced partnerships with all stakeholders, including government and civil society. In this context, the EU identified twelve EU delegations for a second generation of democracy support pilot work in March 2014, and work started in June. As from 2014, some funding from the EIDHR is supporting the pilot exercise.

2014 was the first full year of activities for the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), a Foundation under Belgian private law, but including all EU Member States, EEAS, Commission and European Parliament in its Board of Governors. By late 2014, the EED had received about 1200 applications for support out of which about 120 were accepted, evenly distributed between the Eastern and the Southern neighbourhoods. The European Commission and 14 participating states are contributing to the EED budget about EUR 27 million (2013-15). In December 2014, the Board of Governors decided that EED "may implement and finance a limited number of activities outside the EU Neighbourhood".

6. Promoting universality, working at multilateral and regional levels

The EU continued efforts and outreach to encourage additional countries to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The EU maintained its systematic demarche campaigns in support of the ICC, and its policy of including ICC clauses in agreements with third countries. Likewise, cooperation with UN mechanisms and bodies (Universal Periodic Review, Special Rapporteurs and Treaty Bodies) and implementation of their recommendations have now become standard elements of the EU's bilateral engagement on human rights with third countries. In its bilateral contacts, the EU also routinely encourages third countries to extend a standing invitation to UN special rapporteurs.

The EU pursued its close cooperation with the Council of Europe and its support of the OSCE in the fields of human rights and democratisation.

E. Comprehensive Approach, Conflict Prevention, Mediation and Crisis Response

1. Comprehensive Approach

The Joint Communication on the EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises of December 2013⁶⁷ was followed by Council Conclusions in May 2014⁶⁸, which placed emphasis on early, joined-up analysis of conflict or crisis situations, the need for enhanced engagement at all stages of the conflict cycle, starting from prevention, the ambition to better link up the EU's instruments across different policy domains (as well as internal and external policies) and the need to ensure that CSDP efforts build on existing EU engagements and that their results and impact are sustained, for example through a smooth transition to EU development instruments. The Council tasked the HR and the Commission to present an Action Plan to outline how key actions should be taken forward including in specific country cases. In December, key priorities were discussed with Member States as well as possible country cases.

⁶⁷ See European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crisis, JOINT(2013) 30 final, 11.12.2013.

⁶⁸ See Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach, 3312th Foreign Affairs Council meeting, 12.05.2014.

2. Conflict prevention and mediation

The Council Conclusions on Conflict Prevention of June 2011 highlighted the importance of strengthening and combining EU prevention tools and referred to three specific areas: further strengthening the EU's early warning capacities and preventive action, reinforcing its mediation capacity and conflict analysis tools and building/intensifying partnerships with non-governmental and international organisations and relevant institutions.⁶⁹

Within this policy framework, the following activities relating to conflict prevention, peace building and mediation were undertaken in 2014.

In terms of **early warning**, the focus has been on building systems and tools and a common culture to identify (1) countries at medium- to long-term risk of violent conflict and (2) options for early action to address risks. In 2014 a second pilot test was undertaken and the EU Early Warning to Early Action System (EWS) was rolled out at global level, generating a series of early action and other follow-up activities. This work included input from Member States and relevant Commission services including Directorates-General DEVCO, ELARG, FPI and ECHO, the JRC and the Secretariat-General. Two Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace-funded projects relating to the enhancement of NGO early warning capacities continued in 2014, namely: "Strengthening Early Warning and Mobilising Early Action" (ICG in partnership with EPLO) and "Capacities for Peace" (Saferworld in partnership with Conciliation Resources).

In terms of **mediation capacity**, the HR/VP was actively engaged during 2014 in efforts to help implement the agreements reached in the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The HR also led E3 +3 talks with Iran, which will continue in 2015.

⁶⁹ See Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on conflict prevention, 3101st Foreign Affairs Council meeting, 20.6.2011.

EUSRs and Special Envoys continued to engage in mediation and dialogue efforts, directly and indirectly, in line with the EU mediation concept. The EU actively supported the ongoing Algerian-led peace talks in relation to the situation in Mali. Relevant EEAS staff and EU Delegations continued to work on strengthening mediation support and conflict prevention capacity more generally through assistance to conflict analysis and the provision of expert advice.

Work was taken forward on the development of a transitional justice strategy for the EU and a seminar on transitional justice was organised with the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO).

The EU continued to strengthen its partnerships. The EU and UN held a joint workshop on conflict prevention and analysis, to share lessons learned and identify opportunities for future cooperation. The EU continued to co-operate with, and fund, the UN Mediation Support Unit and Standby Team. Contact and cooperation took place with other international organisations including ASEAN, OAS, OIC, OSCE and the World Bank.

Partnerships with civil society took the form of close cooperation with two consortia of Civil Society Organisations (CSO) in the delivery of expertise for EEAS staff and third parties. The CSDN, managed by the European Peace-building Liaison Office, was active in organising 16 events in 2014 on a wide range of relevant issues. The EU took forward its dialogue with the US on security and development and on atrocities prevention covering, inter alia, early warning, conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

3. Crisis response and operational coordination

In 2014, the EEAS worked actively to develop coordinated analyses and rapid responses to address the many crises and challenges affecting European security. The Joint Communication on the Comprehensive Approach adopted in December 2013 acquired great relevance.

13 Crisis Platforms⁷⁰ were convened in response to crises mainly in South Sudan, Sahel region, Central African Republic, Ukraine, Iraq, Syria, and Ebola. Inter-service working groups or task forces ensured appropriate assessments and relevant implementation of decisions.

The EEAS also organised numerous inter-service **missions in crisis-affected or crisis-prone areas** which aimed inter alia at: assessing needs and contributing to joint planning together with Commission services, reinforcing EU Delegations or ensuring an EU presence as close as possible to the crisis theatre, as needed; liaising with international partners and facilitating the coordination with EU member States. In 2014, missions were carried-out in the following crisis areas: Central African Republic, Sahel, Turkish-Syrian border, Iraq, Gaza, Myanmar/Burma, Philippines, Georgia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

⁷⁰ The EU Crisis Platform can be convened by the HR/VP, the Executive Secretary General or the Managing Director for Crisis Response and Operational Coordination. It brings together key EEAS and Commission representatives to analyse and assess a crisis situation and agree on the main elements of EU response.

In the field of consular cooperation in crisis situations, the EEAS – in particular through EU Delegations – encouraged further work to enhance consular cooperation in crisis situations including contingency planning (e.g. Nepal, Gaza, Libya, Lesotho, India). It also supported work in the Council Working Group on Consular Affairs on these issues, as well as on travel advisories. Moreover, it participated with MS in the preparation of the Consular Cooperation Initiatives (CCIs) which will be carried out in 2015 in Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, Nepal, Nigeria and Tunisia. The aim of the CCIs is to test the capacity of the EEAS to support MS in their tasks of consular protection. The EEAS also continued to manage the Consular-on-Line (CoOL) web-page, which links consular divisions and crisis centres of Member States and of some partner countries (such Norway, Switzerland, Canada and US) as well as some of the military staff of the Member States, for the purposes of information sharing and contingency planning. In 2014 the EEAS organised or participated with MS and other partners in consular cooperation exercises like the Argonaut (Cyprus) and the ML14 consular component (Nairobi).

F. Common Security and Defence Policy

1. More capable

The implementation of the Conclusions of the 2013 European Council on security and defence took centre stage in 2014.

A total of 16 EU CSDP missions and operations were operating on the ground. One new military operation and two new civilian missions were established: EUFOR CAR, EUCAP Sahel Mali and EUAM Ukraine. A total of around 7000 staff is deployed under CSDP.⁷¹

⁷¹ Following the events of July 2014, EUBAM Libya was evacuated from Tripoli with a limited staff operating out of Tunisia.

Strengthening local capacities is at the core of most missions and operations. In Mali, for example, the EU is combining a military (EUTM Mali) and a civilian mission (EUCAP Sahel Mali) to assist Malian authorities with increasing their capacities in providing security and re-establishing their control over their territory. EUTM Mali has trained around 3500 soldiers. EUCAP Sahel Mali focuses on strengthening internal security forces' (ISF) operational efficiency and on restoring the chain of command for the three ISF (i.e. Police, Gendarmerie and Garde Nationale).

In the Horn of Africa, the co-ordination between three CSDP missions and operations facilitated by an activated EU OPCEN continued, providing an important link between combatting piracy and military and civilian capacity building.

As concrete operationalization of the EU's Comprehensive Approach, a policy approach is currently being developed jointly with EEAS and Commission services on EU support to capacity building of partner countries and regional organisations in order to enable them to increasingly prevent and manage crises by themselves (Train & Equip). This policy approach draws in particular on the identified pilot cases on Mali and Somalia, as well as a case study on support to the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) launched in Dec 2014 in support to security and development of partners and enabling them to prevent and manage crises themselves.

The contribution of partners to CSDP is commendable. The EU continued close co-operation with international organisations including UN, NATO, AU, OSCE. It was key in addressing crises in Africa, Middle East, Ukraine, Afghanistan and the Balkans in a comprehensive and complementary manner. During 2014 fifteen partner countries have participated in CSDP missions and operations, some of them joining for the first time: Georgia in EUFOR RCA, Australia in EUCAP Nestor, and Republic of Moldova in EUTM Mali. The EU signed three new Framework Agreements on participation in EU crisis management operations, which are in the process of respective ratifications: with Chile, Colombia and the Republic of Korea.

The financing of civilian missions was under strain in 2014 due to payment shortages in the CFSP/EU budget. As for the financing of military operations, a review of the Athena mechanism took place in 2014.

1.1. Capabilities

Throughout 2014, the EU and its Member States conducted intensive work to respond to the call by the December 2013 European Council to enhance capabilities –civilian and military – essential to the development of a credible and effective CSDP. In its 18 November Conclusions on CSDP, the Council welcomed the steps taken and progress made in implementing that task, as noted in the HR/VP report of July.

Efforts to develop military capabilities intensified, through the implementation of the collaborative projects endorsed by the EU Heads of State and Government in December 2013, as well as fostering more systematic and long term defence cooperation in Europe.

Furthermore, frequent recourse to civilian CSDP missions (11 out of the 16 ongoing missions), which represent an important tool of the EU'S external action, calls for enhanced development of civilian capabilities. Work has continued in that direction, notably by furthering the different strands of the Civilian Capability Development Plan.

1.1.1. Civilian capabilities

2014 has been another eventful and challenging year, which included the launch of two new missions: EUCAP Sahel Mali and EUAM Ukraine.

Despite the progress made, generating civilian capabilities – especially for EU rapid deployment – still remains a challenge, in particular concerning the shortages of well trained personnel with specialised profiles. The recruitment system for civilian experts was reviewed, but the overall process still remains long.

The recurring High-level Seminars on "Facilitating the deployment of civilian personnel for CSDP" remain unique opportunities for Member States and the EU institutions to discuss civilian capabilities. This year, a sixth edition was organised and marked by an even stronger presence from capitals. It highlighted, inter alia, the generation of civilian capabilities through tools such as Goalkeeper (see below), and the issue of the security/protection of staff in civilian CSDP missions. Member States expressed support for its continuation next year, with a seventh edition.

A snapshot of niche capabilities for 2013-2014 was presented (September), based on Member States' replies to the questionnaire on, inter alia, Integrated Police Units, Formed Police Units, national and multinational police expert teams.

Work continued on strengthening the cooperation with the European Gendarmerie Force. The general administrative arrangement between EUROGENDFOR and EEAS was signed by both parties in October 2014.

The work on establishing a list of generic (non-mission specific) tasks that may occur in civilian CSDP missions continued and should be finalised by mid-2015. The full implementation of the Civilian Capability Development Plan is a precondition, and will facilitate synergies between civilian and military CSDP.

The results of the Feasibility Study on a Centralised and Integrated Resource Management System for CSDP Missions and Headquarters were presented to Member States in December. The mid-term review on CSDP Warehouse has been postponed to March 2015, allowing its better integration into the ongoing discussions on a Shared Service Centre. Upon a request from Member States, a study on the possible use of national assets – including military units – for mission protection was developed and will be put to their attention in early 2015.

Progress was made - with continued support from Member States – towards the finalisation of the Goalkeeper software project, which is envisaged by mid-2015. The Registrar module is designed to better enable Member States and the EEAS to handle and manage rosters of deployable personnel to be recruited for CSDP missions. The remaining three modules are to be updated in 2015 to operationalize the whole Goalkeeper platform.

1.1.2. Military capabilities

In response to the December 2013 European Council tasking to the HR and EDA, on 18 November 2014 the Council and EDA Steering Board adopted a Policy Framework to foster more systematic and long-term defence cooperation, which has become essential to preserve and develop military capabilities.

It was put forward in full coherence with NATO planning processes. Through this framework, Member States are committed to deepen defence cooperation in Europe as a way to develop, deploy and sustain future-oriented military capabilities, which they make available on a voluntary basis for various engagements (national, multinational, CSDP, UN or NATO). While Member States have a primary role, the support by EU structures is instrumental to foster defence cooperation, including by stimulating incentives and synergies with EU wider policies.

Progress was achieved, by Member States with the support of EDA, on the implementation of the collaborative projects and programmes endorsed by the European Council in December 2013, in key capability areas (Air-to-Air refuelling, Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems, Governmental Satellite Communications and Cyber Defence).

In its 18 November conclusions, the Council encouraged the EDA to identify cooperation opportunities and to support cooperative projects through enablers and incentives, noting in that regard the continuing work on pooled procurement.

The Capability Development Plan (CDP) revision was completed in October. Providing Member States with a broader picture of the European capabilities landscape over time (shortfalls – the most critical in the areas of Intelligence Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) /Information, Cyber Defence, Strategic transport and Air operations, key enablers for operations, research and technology dimension, industrial capabilities and procurement plans), the CDP is an essential element for the setting of cooperative capability development priorities.

In line with the CDP revision, the EU Military Committee (EUMC) conducted a major update of the Headline Goal Process, which resulted in a new Force Catalogue of potentially available capabilities and a Progress Catalogue, highlighting the critical shortfalls in meeting the EU Level of Ambition. A comprehensive Lessons Learned exercise completed this work.

Cooperation on military capability development between the EU and NATO continued through intensive staff-to-staff contacts at all levels, and within the EU-NATO Capability Group, allowing transparency and ensuring complementarity as well as mutual reinforcement between the two organisations.

1.1.3. EU Satellite Centre

The new Council Decision, adopted in June 2014, marks the structural evolution of the Centre and provides new possibilities to face future challenges. It allows the Centre to establish cooperation with the Commission and with EU agencies, bodies or Member States in the area of space and security. The aim is to maximise synergies and complementarity with other EU activities that have a bearing on SatCen and where SatCen's activities are relevant, for example the monitoring of EU borders. It extends also the scope of implementation of the cost recovery principle in order to provide SatCen with additional sources of funding.

2014 continued the trend towards an increase of the Centre's production. For the first time more than 1000 products have been delivered. MS downloaded more than 25000 products, which represents a rise of more than 1000% in the last 5 years. Internally SatCen was a key asset enabling an autonomous assessment of the crisis in Ukraine.

Externally 2014 confirmed that SatCen's capability was well-recognised by international organisations (UN, AU, OSCE, etc.).

The SatCen supported the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in Syria (150 products delivered to OPCW). The OPCW asked to extend in time, until September 2015, the mandate of the Centre demonstrating the added-value and the quality of the support of SatCen. Furthermore the International Atomic Energy Agency requested the support of SatCen experts. Both actions have been funded by the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

1.2. Lessons learned and training

1.2.1. Lessons learned

In February 2014, the CSDP Lessons Management Group including all relevant stakeholders within the EEAS⁷² and the Commission⁷³ met for the first time and agreed an annual lessons report that identified five key lessons.⁷⁴

These lessons are not new but they have not yet been "learned", i.e. they have not yet been fully implemented. The report included 19 key recommendations that referred to the five key lessons and described concrete steps to be taken to implement each of them.

⁷² The EEAS stakeholders include the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate, EU Military Staff, Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, EU Intelligence Analysis Centre, Security Policy and Conflict Prevention Directorate, Crisis Response and Operational Coordination Department, Chair of the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management, Chair of the Politico-Military Group, and relevant geographic departments. In addition, the Chair of the EU Military Committee also participates in this group.

⁷³ The Commission stakeholders include Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid, Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), and Service for Foreign Policy Instruments.

⁷⁴ The PSC discussed these lessons in March and endorsed them in June in line with the advice of the relevant working groups. The key lessons are:

1. A Comprehensive Approach improves the efficiency of missions and the sustainability of mission results.
2. A common foundation of pre-deployment training for all CSPD mission staff can greatly enhance mission effectiveness and coherence.
3. Ownership and support by the host country is necessary if the mission is to be truly successful and sustainable.
4. The use of "preparatory measures" proved to be a useful tool.
5. Lessons should be taken into account systematically when preparing new missions.

The Lessons Management Group assisted by a Lessons Working Group at expert level monitored the implementation of the key lessons in 2014.

In November 2014 the Lessons Working Group held the first peer review exchange on lessons with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. These exchanges will be continued.

1.2.2. Training and exercises

Member States and their national training actors continue to be actively engaged, in line with the existing training concept and new training requirements. There was continuity in almost all established training activities and progress has been made in the development of new training courses and training modules including Internet Distance Learning (IDL).

Strong efforts were made since February 2014 in drafting a "New Training Policy of the EU under CSDP". The new EU Training Policy in CSDP will replace the current EU Training Policy in ESDP (2003) and the EU Training Concept in ESDP (2004). The EU Training Policy in CSDP addresses and integrates all dimensions of civilian and military CSDP training in the context of comprehensive approach to crisis management in the EU.

7 CSDP orientation courses, which this year focused on different regional and/or thematic aspects (Freedom, Security and Justice (FSJ), Eastern Partners, ASEAN and South Mediterranean) were organised in the framework of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) as a way to respond to the specific thematic developments in the field of CSDP, including the development of EU partnerships in CSDP.

June 2014 marked the end of the two years term for the implementation of the “Plan of Action to Enhance EU CSDP Support to UN Peacekeeping”, adopted by the Council in June 2012. On training (Action F.4), the cooperation spanned from the integration and use of UN training standards in the development of EU courses, curricula and guidelines (e.g. on Security Sector Reform (SSR, Mentoring, Monitoring and Advising (MMA)) to sharing EU developed standards based on UN experiences and practices (e.g. training modules on Gender, Human Rights and Child Protection).

From 2011 to 2014, the European Union Police Services Training Project (EUPST) has helped build the capacities of more than 2400 police officers from 68 countries. To build on this success, the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) Strategy Paper foresees support to a follow-up project, EUPST II. The CMPD gave and will provide strong support for the continuation of this project.

In October 2014, the EEAS-CMPD organised for the third time a meeting featuring an exchange of experience, lessons and best practices in this area. Target participants for the meeting were Mission/Operation members responsible for training of Mission/Operation) as the Heads of Training units or other relevant Mission/Operation members with such responsibility as well as representatives from the training provider community inter alia ESDC, CEPOL, ENTRi, EUPST and representatives from the EEAS , EU agencies and Member States.

The meeting featured on current and future challenges with regard to training. One of the key aspects of the programme were dedicated sessions on feedback from CSDP Missions/Operations' Personnel on missions/operations including sharing of experiences and discussions with training providers on training needs identified. The event was organised back to back with the seminar on Military Training and Education, organised by the EU Military Staff.

On 30 October 2014, the EU Military Staff (EUMS) and Multinational Joint Headquarters (MN JHQ), Ulm, Germany, co-organised the second EU Annual Seminar on Military Training and Education, which this year focused on "Developing individual and collective competencies for planning CSDP missions and operations". The seminar was attended by 70 participants from the Member States, EU institutions, Centres of Excellence and other civilian and military, national and multinational training consortia and institutes. Its purpose was to better define the training requirements for planning CSDP missions and operations.

As generally recognised, all international personnel – both seconded and contracted - should receive pre-deployment training (PDT) prior to their deployment to the mission area. The importance of proper PDT was mentioned as one of the five most important findings of the EU's Annual CSDP Lessons Report 2013. In addition to regular PDT-Training organised in the framework of ENTRi, Accordingly, the ESDC carried out a pilot activity "Preparatory Training for CSDP Missions" was also offered through the ESDC-network. PDT-course are however primarily covering seconded staff. The EEAS will work on the draft New Training Policy with a view to, inter alia, establishing a sustainable solution for pre-deployment training of both seconded and international contracted staff.

Other important training activities addressed, inter alia, issues such as the preparation of potential future senior mission leaders for CSDP missions and operations, the strategic planning for CSDP operations and CSDP missions, EU-China relations, security sector reform, rule of law, conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity and international standards for the protection of individuals and groups.

The EUMC continued to implement a series of actions⁷⁵ aimed at enhancing military training and education as part of a broader CSDP training system, EUMS increased the structured dialogue with NATO training authorities at the strategic level in the format of informal staff-to-staff discussions, in order to identify common areas of interest for both organisations and optimise the use of scarce training resources, in the interest of all EU Member States. and the principle of inclusiveness. Within this context, EUMS has developed a framework process of defining CSDP military training requirements⁷⁶, taking into consideration NATO's already existing work, focusing efforts on selected disciplines (e.g. Cyber Defence, CSDP Operations Planning or Civil-Military Cooperation).

The planned joint exercise between the EU and NATO, CME-CMX 15, was postponed in 2014 despite the EU's efforts towards this.

1.3. Concepts for CSDP activities

The development of concepts, standardisation and best practices is an important enabler for enhancing operational effectiveness. In this context, the term 'concept' is specifically understood to refer to a tool serving to guide CSDP action within a given field. Keeping a set of concepts, standard operating procedures, guidelines and best practice under constant review, and developing new models, is therefore important in laying the groundwork for the more effective planning, conduct and support of missions and operations. This process is based on lessons derived from the EU's own crisis management missions and operations, as well as the experience of other international actors.

⁷⁵ Military Training and Education in the EU - Final Draft Action Plan for the short term proposals, doc. EEAS 02648/2/14, dated 4 February 14.

⁷⁶ Framework Process for Managing CSDP Military Training Requirements, doc. EEAS 000945/8/14 REV8.

In the military field, this task is achieved through the Concept Development Implementation Programme (CDIP), which is driven by: the EDA Capability Development Plan, initiatives developed on behalf of the EU Council Presidency or Member States; developments arising from CSDP operations/missions lessons learnt processes; and/or by conceptual work developed by partner international organisations.

In 2014, there were 33 concept development projects ongoing, and 12 concepts were successfully completed.

In the civilian field, CPCC finalised Guidelines for the preparation of civilian CSDP mission-specific rules for the use of force, which were agreed by Member States on 18 September. Member States also agreed on Operational Guidelines for MMA in Civilian CSDP Missions, an issue that is increasingly important in many of the ongoing missions.

Both in the military and the civilian field, reflections on how to ensure rapid deployment continued in line with the conclusions of the European Council in December 2013.

Some of the issues addressed involved civilian/military cooperation. The EU concept for Logistic Support for EU led Military Operations and Missions may eventually facilitate closer cooperation with EU-led civilian missions as it attempts to address the different options for the execution of logistics functions. The Health and Medical Concept for EU-led Crisis Management Missions and Operations was drafted in cooperation between the military and the civilian structures, and aims at giving concise and consistent guidance for the optimal provision of medical support both for civilian missions and military operations.

As regards cooperation with the UN, the EU and the UN agreed on modalities for coordination during the planning of missions/operations, already successfully applied in the case of Mali. The EUMS finalised the EU Concept for EU military deployments in support of UN peacekeeping operations, which provides planning guidance for EU deployments involving bridging missions with the UN, taking over missions from the UN or joint deployments with the UN. The EU and the UN also agreed on detailed modalities for the further work on concepts and guidelines, and had several exchanges on the conceptual foundations for work on SSR.

2. More effective

2.1. Partnerships

Working with partners is for the European Union an integral part of the comprehensive approach. Partnerships allow the EU to build upon the knowledge, expertise and specific capabilities of its partners, while also drawing them closer to the EU. CSDP co-operation with partners has been further developed within the existing agreed frameworks and in full respect of the fundamental principle of EU decision-making autonomy. Priority was given to those who share with the EU common values and principles and are able and willing to support EU crisis management efforts.

Recently launched CSDP missions and operations enjoyed the wide political and practical support of several partners. Georgia joined EUFOR RCA with a light infantry company as second largest contributor; Serbia offered contributions to this mission as well; Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Switzerland and Serbia participate in EUTM Mali; Australia for the first time joined EUCAP Nestor; Ukraine supported European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) Somalia – Operation Atalanta with a frigate (the biggest Ukrainian contribution ever) and New Zealand with a reconnaissance aircraft.

In 2014, fifteen partner countries (Australia, Albania, Canada, Chile, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the US) participated in ten CSDP missions and operations accounting for about 8% of the total deployed personnel. Other practical co-operation initiatives include contribution by Ukraine and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the EU Battlegroups, China's naval escorts of WFP vessels and two naval exercises with EUNAVFOR; Japan's joint naval exercise with EUNAVFOR and projects in support of several CSDP missions, including in Niger; Canada's continued support to a project of EUTM Mali. Co-operation with the US continued including in Kosovo, DRC and Horn of Africa/Somalia, and at the military-to-military level with EUCOM and AFRICOM.

The network of CSDP partnerships further expanded to Asia and Latin America with the signature of Framework Agreements on participation in EU-led crisis management operations with Chile and Colombia (first partners in Latin America) and the Republic of Korea (first in Asia, second in Asia/Pacific after New Zealand). The entry into force of those agreements will open new avenues for dialogue and concrete operational co-operation.

The multilateral track of Eastern Partnership CSDP co-operation complemented very good bilateral relations with Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The Eastern Partnership Panel on cooperation in the area of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), established in June 2013, allowed for some fifteen dialogue and training activities in 2014, including courses and seminars in Brussels and Kiev, a legal workshop, a round-table on civilian capabilities, observation of a battle group exercise in Sweden, a field visit to the CSDP mission in Georgia and a conference with civil society in Vilnius.

The EU-UN partnership and co-operation on crisis management has become a "way of life", building on experience of working together in different theatres of operations (Mali; CAR; DRC, Somalia), accompanied by a regular high level dialogue in the EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management and by staff to staff meetings. The EU Action Plan in support of UN Peacekeeping has come to an end, having led among other achievements to establishing modalities for coordination on planning procedures, concepts, training and exercises and lessons learned between the two organisations. A follow-up initiative to define future strategic priorities is under discussion to keep the excellent momentum.

Both the EU and NATO share the assessment that the crises in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods significantly changed the security reality for Europe and broader transatlantic community.

The implications of those crises further strengthened the significance of the December 2013 European Council conclusions on taking forward the European security and defence agenda, including cooperation with NATO.

The EU attended the NATO Summit in Wales on 4-5 September 2014 and welcomed the relevant outcomes. As in the previous years, the EU and NATO pursued the gradual implementation of the concrete proposals for practical co-operation between the two organisations, as forwarded by the HR to NATO in 2011 and in line with the mandate given by the European Council of September 2010.

This included regular meetings between the HR and NATO Secretary General, reciprocal briefings to respective working groups on matters of common interest (i.a. the crisis in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods, Kosovo, maritime security, etc.), holding of two informal NAC – PSC meetings on Ukraine, interactions with non-EU NATO allies in the format of PSC +7 and PSC+9. The informal contacts between the two staffs continued to contribute to further enhancing of mutual awareness and understanding of respective activities, thus contributing to avoiding unnecessary duplication of efforts and ensuring complementarity and synergies in the areas where both organisations are actively engaged.

The successful EU Presidency of the Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia (CGPCS) in 2014 offered a unique chance of developing further ties with the countries present in the region. The CGPCS activities have been regionalised, with IOC, Mauritius, UAE and Seychelles assuming co-chairmanship of different groups.

From autumn 2013 to spring 2014, the EU co-chaired the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy and the related Defence Officials Dialogue, which underlined the EU's willingness to step-up co-operation with its Asian partners.

Partnership also includes working with non-governmental organisations and civil society. The EEAS was actively liaising with the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), a network of peacebuilding NGOs, and with the Civil Society Dialogue Network Facility (CSDN) with a focus on Ukraine, Georgia, Afghanistan and Somalia. The EEAS in Brussels, and CSDP missions and operations in the field are also cooperating with civil society more broadly, including with human rights and women's rights defenders.

2.2. Battlegroups and rapid response

Work was taken forward to respond to the call by the European Council in December 2013 to improve EU rapid response capabilities - inter alia by increasing the usability and deployability of the EU Battlegroups. A step forward was made with the revision, initiated by the EEAS, of the overarching EU Military Rapid Response concept and the subordinated Air and Maritime concepts together with the creation of a new Land Rapid Response concept. This includes strengthening EU Battlegroups' modularity in order to make them more adaptable to the entire range of possible missions and tasks. Furthermore, discussions continued at Ministers' level on the core issue of political will, considered essential for improving their operational usability.

During 2014 the EU Battlegroup Roster of Offers and Commitments has improved, also facilitated by the significant downscaling of Member States' military international operational commitments in other areas of the world (e.g. Afghanistan).

3. More coherent

3.1. Link between internal and external security

The Council Conclusions on CSDP in November 2013 stipulate that “The Council emphasizes that internal and external security dimensions are increasingly inter-linked. It underlines the importance to continue to strengthen the ties between CSDP and Freedom/Security/Justice (FSJ) actors, so as to foster a greater understanding of respective objectives and ensure mutual benefits. This will, inter alia, help to cope with important horizontal issues such as illegal immigration, organized crime and terrorism. In this context, the greater contribution of EU agencies (EUROPOL, FRONTEX, and CEPOL) as well as of INTERPOL to CSDP should be further accelerated, as appropriate”.

The Conclusions of the European Council of 26 and 27 June 2014 mention that "the answer to many of the challenges in the area of freedom, security and justice lies in relations with third countries, which calls for improving the link between EU's internal and external policies".

In the framework of the 'Strengthening Ties Between CSDP and Freedom, Security and Justice' road map,⁷⁷ a third annual progress report⁷⁸ was presented to the PSC and the Standing Committee on Internal Security in November 2014.

The finalisation of the actions identified in this political framework is under way. It represents the completion of the critical part of the current CSDP/FSJ roadmap. Its implementation has followed the rhythm of the progressive consolidation of EEAS services. A top-down, focused approach has been implemented, in particular concerning EU Agencies. In its wake, working arrangements have been set up with Europol and Frontex.

Enhancement of cooperation with Interpol on CSDP should contribute towards this coherence.

The COSI Support Group and CIVCOM, in cooperation with relevant EEAS and Commission services and relevant JHA Agencies representatives, were invited by PSC and COSI to take into consideration the debate held at the PSC/COSI meeting on 11 November 2014 and to elaborate possible concrete proposals on how to strengthen the cooperation between the CSDP missions and operations and the FSJ actors.

The recent Commission Communication on "The European Agenda on Security" which presents a renewed Internal Security strategy (ISS) for the period of 2015-2020", calls for making the link between internal/external security even more operational and for further reinforcing the links between Justice and Home Affairs and CSDP.

⁷⁷ See Council of the European Union, Strengthening Ties between CSDP and FSJ – Draft Road Map, 18173/11, 5.12.2011.

⁷⁸ Doc 14854/14

3.2. Civilian-military synergies

Work on promoting synergies in developing civilian and military capabilities was guided and inspired by the Conclusions of the December 2013 European Council. The need for greater synergy in capability development featured prominently.

Of particular importance is the acknowledgement of the increasingly dual-use nature of capabilities and technology, and therefore the considerable potential for synergies between civil and defence research, underpinning the capability development. In this regard, EDA and EEAS have been associated with the Commission's work on the Preparatory Action for CSDP-related research.

PART II: LOOKING AHEAD AT 2015

Many of the acute crises of 2014 and previous years will almost certainly continue throughout 2015. Important work on underpinning the EU's external action approaches and tools aimed at dealing with an increasingly challenging European Neighbourhood and evolving world will be conducted, in line with the December 2013 European Council conclusions.

1. Neighbourhood

Throughout the year the process of reviewing the European Neighbourhood Policy will take place, with the aim of making it more effective and responsive to diverse objectives and challenges in the neighbourhood.

The EU acknowledges that the broader geographical context of our partners and their relations with their neighbours are important considerations, impacting upon the ENP. It is the sole right of the EU and its partners to decide in a sovereign way on how they want to proceed in their relations.

The EU will pay considerable amount of attention to strengthening its strategic communications in support of EU policies, while taking pro-active measures to increase public resilience against information manipulation by third parties.

In terms of the **Eastern Neighbourhood**, challenges related to **Ukraine** and **Russia** relations will be at the forefront. In Ukraine, the EU will continue to support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and efforts in view of reaching a sustainable peaceful solution to the conflict in the Eastern parts of the country on the basis of the Minsk agreements. The EU will continue to assist the Government of Ukraine on necessary political and economic reforms, conditioned on concrete reform steps. The EU also supports Ukraine through the civilian mission EUAM Ukraine. Two major high-level meetings took place in the first half of the year: the EU-Ukraine Summit in Kyiv and an international conference in support of Ukraine in Kyiv.

The **Eastern Partnership Riga Summit** (21-22nd May) was an important opportunity to take stock of the current situation and set the agenda for further development of the EaP. The EU is fully committed to the Eastern Partnership and reaffirms the objective to develop strengthened, differentiated relations between the EU and its six sovereign, independent partners. The scope and depth of cooperation are determined by the EU's and partners' ambitions and needs as well as the pace of reforms. Particular efforts should be devoted to advance cooperation in state building, mobility and people-to-people contacts, market opportunities and interconnections. The EU looks forward to the earliest possible ratification by all Member States of the Association Agreements/Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (AAs/DCFTAs) with Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The EU stresses that their implementation, contributing to their political association and economic integration with the Union, will be a top priority of the EU and the partners concerned for the coming years.

In the **Republic of Moldova**, attention will be on assisting the new government with key reforms (justice, financial sector, investment conditions, fighting corruption), as well as security sector reform.

In **Georgia**, work will be needed in support of the smooth implementation of the Association Agreement/DCFTA, including increased independence of the judiciary and the Prosecutor's Office which are key for modernising the country. The 2014 strategic review of EUMM Georgia resulted in a two-year extension of the mandate, against the backdrop of the Ukraine crisis. 2015 will see no change in authorised strength, but with the last OPLAN revision, the Mission structure is optimised to better deliver in the current operational environment (i.a. focus on more analytical reporting, flexibility of the teams in the Field offices, allocation of a project cell to enhance Mission activities in the field of confidence-building).

For the other three Eastern partners, 2015 will see the results of scoping concrete initiatives aimed at identifying options for a new bilateral agreement with Armenia (following up on the Vilnius declaration of 2013); and with Azerbaijan, which will come forward with a draft for a new bilateral strategic agreement, to replace the Association Agreement and the Strategic Modernisation Partnership. Such a draft will need due consideration. With Belarus, outreach will continue with a view to potential deliverables (including Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements and the launch of negotiations for a Mobility Partnership). The EU is ready to continue engaging with Minsk in line with the 29 steps agreed by the Council, based on progress on human rights, democratisation, and political prisoners.

The work in the Eastern Partnership Panel on cooperation in the area of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) will be continued in accordance with its terms of reference, with a view to further development of the cooperation.

Events in the **Southern Neighbourhood** will remain at the top of the EU and international agenda. The numerous ongoing conflicts in the region will necessitate a reviewed Neighbourhood policy and increased synergies between Member States and EU policies and instruments.

The “Informal Ministerial Meeting with the Southern Partners on the future of the ENP” took place in Barcelona on 13 of April, gathering 36 Foreign Ministers together with the HR/VP and Commissioner Hahn and other representatives of regional organisations. It offered both EU Member States and Southern Neighbourhood partners the opportunity to have a fruitful exchange on the ENP review process, thus ensuring the principle of ownership.

The situation in Syria and Iraq will require sustained effort and attention, including to support the efforts to defeat ISIL/Da'esh. As part of that a priority will be the implementation of the EU's "regional strategy on Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat". In Iraq the efforts will focus on supporting the new Iraqi government in its endeavours to stabilise and pacify Iraq and build an inclusive political environment. In the case of Syria, the EU will support UNSE Staffan de Mistura's efforts aimed at incremental reduction of violence and creating an environment conducive to a process leading to a political transition. This will include the mobilisation of the instruments at our disposal. The Commission announced EUR 1 billion for the implementation of the above-mentioned strategy in 2015-2016. In the context of the budget review, a priority will be to explore possibilities for better prioritisation in favour of further humanitarian, stabilisation and development aid in the short to medium term to help address the ongoing crises.

The EU will also continue to work with international and regional partners to mitigate the destabilising effects of the conflicts in Syria and Iraq on neighbouring countries, including that of large scale refugee arrivals. Lebanon remains particularly at risk, and the EU will remain engaged with the authorities and support host communities and the Lebanese Armed Forces. In Jordan, the EU will continue to encourage political reform, promote the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan and support to host communities. Turkey's contribution to hosting refugees will need to continue to be acknowledged and appropriately supported.

Progress is urgently needed on the **Middle East Peace Process**.

The many tragic events of 2014 have highlighted the need to recreate a new political framework to enable the resumption of talks. The EU will remain actively involved and will continue to work towards peace, including within the Quartet, with both parties as well as with Arab states and other members of the international community. The objective remains a two-state-solution based on an agreement on all final status issues, and fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians. In the event of a final status agreement, the EU is offering an unprecedented package of political, economic and security support, including a 'Special Privileged Partnership' to both sides.

It is in the EU's fundamental interest to see an end to the conflict and simultaneously develop its close relations with both parties. The Strategic Review of EUBAM Rafah in early 2015 highlights the desire of the EU, and the broader international community, to ease the access and movement restrictions into and out of the Gaza strip. CSDP could play an important enabling role in this regard and thus a redeployment of EUBAM Rafah, with a potentially broader geographic role, should be considered as soon as the political and security conditions allow. EUPOL COPPS continue to deliver key assistance in establishing a self-sustaining Palestinian Civil Police and Palestinian justice sector. The Strategic Review, again in early 2015, will seek a continuation of their mandate.

Engagement with Gulf countries will need to be stepped up, at both regional and bilateral level, in particular to address common challenges in our shared neighbourhood, notably the scourge of violent extremism and terrorism. The EU-GCC Ministerial meeting took place in Doha on 24 May 2015.

In Yemen, the EU will continue to press all parties to achieve a sustainable political settlement in line with the existing inclusive framework for the transition. This is the only way to address the country's current challenges, both in security and economic fronts and to safeguard Yemen's unity and territorial integrity. A broad consensus amongst political actors should lead to the finalisation and adoption of a new Constitution. But this process is likely to remain complex and fragile throughout the year, with major political, economic and security risks contributing to political uncertainty. In particular, the threat stemming from terrorist activities will need to be urgently addressed by the authorities.

Increased attention to and engagement with **Morocco** and **Tunisia** will be key. Both Morocco and Tunisia have made substantial advances on transitioning towards greater democracy, and it will be critical to provide encouragement and support to nurture the important process of adopting and implementing democratic reforms, as well as to signal clear recognition of their privileged status and the strategic importance of this partnership for the EU. The main next step for both countries is to implement the Mobility Partnership and move forward on the negotiation of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. Concerning the intensive relationship with Tunisia, the EU will launch in the course of 2015 the Dialogue on Security and Terrorism with the Tunisian Authorities. Furthermore, Tunisia will soon start negotiations with the objective to be associated to Horizon 2020 from 2016.

Another priority will be revisiting the EU's engagement in Egypt. The gradual resumption of the Association Agreement is underway, as well as preparatory work for the negotiation of an Action Plan (ENP). The objective is to engage Egypt with a view to supporting the country and its people in their transition whilst discussing contentious issues notably in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In Libya, the EU is supporting the UN efforts to broker a deal between the parties which aims at forming a government of national unity as the prime means of breaking the political and security deadlock that has engulfed Libya of late. The process of political transition, establishing an enduring ceasefire, improving security (including the dissolution of militias) and building public institutions will remain dependent on progress in this regard. A number of potential CSDP options could be employed, in conjunction with support from EU instruments, to help a Libyan unity government in this regard. Prudent planning on CSDP is underway and will be further informed by the result of the UN dialogue (including possible specific requests for EU support) and reflections by MS at Council level. A decision will also need to be taken on the future of EUBAM Libya which is currently downsizing to 3 staff based in Tunis and whether it can be regenerated, as appropriate, to recommence delivery of Integrated Border Management (IBM) capacity to Libya. Once the government of national unity is formed, the EU will give it the appropriate support.

The EU will continue working on the positive dynamic of developing relations with Algeria. Completion of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan will be a priority. The EU-Algeria dialogue on energy matters was launched in 2015. The EU will further engage with Algeria on security and counter-terrorism issues.

The EU will continue to promote regional cooperation in the Mediterranean region, in particular by encouraging the launch of concrete and meaningful projects in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean, strengthening dialogue with the League of Arab States and promoting greater regional dialogue and cooperation in the Maghreb.

In relation to the Southern Neighbourhood, tackling migration and the smuggling of migrants, and relevant security challenges, will be a top priority in the Mediterranean. The response has to build effective linkages between the internal and external dimension of migration policy, drawing on the instruments that have already been put in place, including the Task Force Mediterranean and action foreseen under the Council Conclusions on Migration of October 2014.

2. Europe and Central Asia

With Russia the EU will need to navigate a difficult path and find new ways of managing the relationship. Following Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its continued destabilisation of eastern Ukraine, it cannot be business as usual. The EU's policy of non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea will be upheld and the Union will continue its two-track policy of diplomatic engagement in support of a political solution on the basis of the Minsk agreements combined with targeted restrictive measures as needed. Progress towards a solution of the Ukraine crisis will remain a prerequisite for re-engagement in a number of areas of shared interest.

At the same time Russia remains a major geopolitical player, albeit one which pursues aggressive policies in its neighbourhood and suffers from major domestic problems, with whom the EU has a number of shared interests. The EU will continue to follow the human rights situation.

The approach will need to reflect this challenging reality. The EU and Russia will need to maintain cooperation in the G20, on issues such as climate change and terrorism, and on international security issues such as Syria, Libya, the Iranian nuclear programme and the Middle East Peace Process.

At the same time, the EU will also continue to call on Russia to respect its international commitments such as on respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries, WTO, rule of law and good governance issues. In the long term, a wider area of economic prosperity based on WTO rules and sovereign choices throughout Europe and beyond could be beneficial to all.

During 2015, the EU will remain fully engaged in the Western Balkans in line with the objectives of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Council conclusions in this area, most recently on 15 and 16 December 2014. Early in 2015 we foresee the first round of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, after formation of the new Government in Pristina. Normalisation of relations is the overall objective and implementation of the April 2013 agreement will be a priority throughout the year. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in line with the conclusions of 15 December 2014, the EU expects confirmation across the full political spectrum of the Written Commitment on reforms, which are needed to unlock the SAA, entry into force and concrete progress on this country's path towards the EU.

The EU engagement with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will remain as close as in recent years; particular attention will be given to the domestic political dialogue where the risk of further deterioration requires dedicated mitigation efforts from all sides. Following the decision in June 2014 to grant Albania candidate status, 2015 will be an important year for deepening the reform efforts. Also, the municipal elections before the summer will require thorough preparation and good handling. In Montenegro, implementation of reforms will be needed to be given top priority during 2015.

On **protracted conflicts** the EU will continue to work closely with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

With **Turkey**, the immediate priority is to engage in further cooperation regarding the rule of law and fundamental rights, and to encourage further reforms. The EU will continue to support the Kurdish peace process. In the context of the fight against ISIL/Da'esh, Turkey will remain an important partner in tackling extremism in Syria and Iraq, and the shared threat of foreign fighters.

The EU will also use opportunities to recall that Turkey is expected to actively support negotiations aimed at a settlement of the Cyprus problem.

Work will take place on the **review of the EU Strategy for Central Asia** in the early part of the year, which will culminate in new Council conclusions in June. The appointment of a new EUSR for Central Asia reaffirms the EU's commitment towards the region, and will provide some momentum in that regard. A High-Level Security dialogue will take place in Dushanbe in March.

The Enhanced PCA with Kazakhstan was initialled on 20 January 2015. Kazakhstan will host an EU-Central Asia ministerial meeting, possibly in July.

Finally, during this first semester we will aim to conclude the negotiations on the renewal of the **EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms**. We will also launch Association Agreement negotiations with Andorra, Monaco and San Marino. The Swiss Federal Council is expected to approach the Commission following their adoption of the draft implementing law for the constitutional articles of 9 February 2014 and of the negotiating mandate for a renegotiation of the free movement of persons agreement.

The **Arctic** is a region of growing strategic importance. The EU is seeking to formalise its observer status at the Arctic Council, now that the Canadian objection has been removed, by the time of the next AC Ministerial in April 2015. A discussion within the Commission Group on External Action (CGEA) could be envisaged in the spring, followed by consultations with external actors. Preparations could then be taken forward for a Communication early in 2016.

3. Africa

The EU will continue to have two top priorities in relation to **Africa**: to encourage a peaceful continent through the prevention of conflict and terrorism; and to generate prosperity through an acceleration of sustainable growth and development. Finally, the EU and Africa share a common interest on global issues like climate change, migration and the post-2015 agenda.

The EU will work on maintaining a stepped-up political dialogue with Africa, in particular the AU, at all levels and on implementing the priority areas that were identified in the 2014-2017 road map: peace and security; democracy; good governance and human rights; human development; sustainable and inclusive development and growth, and continental integration; global and emerging issues. The EU welcomes the AU's theme for the year 2015 (Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063) as well as for the year 2016 (human rights with gender focus). The Comprehensive Approach and CSDP missions will remain at the heart of the EU's activity, with nine CSDP missions deployed on the African continent.

The **Horn of Africa** will remain a major priority, and EU Special Representative Alexander Rondos and EU Delegations will continue to work hard on stabilisation. In Somalia, building on the progress achieved in the areas of political stability and security and helping to further consolidate the political process at federal and regional level will be essential. In South Sudan the EU will continue to support the regionally-led mediation process and to work with all sides to achieve a sustainable resolution of the protracted conflict.

The Sahel region will continue to focus the attention of the EU as security and development in that area is of crucial interest. In that respect, the EU is committed to implementing its Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel, through the Regional Action Plan. In particular, focus will be on preventing and countering radicalisation and violent extremism, youth, migration and mobility, and border management and the fight against illicit trafficking and transnational organised crime, using all relevant instruments, including the CSDP missions in Niger and Mali.

In **Mali**, as a co-mediator, the EU, notably through its EUSR for the Sahel, is ready to assist parties in their efforts to implement the peace agreement signed on 15 May 2015 in Bamako. In the context of its comprehensive approach, the EU is committed to continue using its relevant instruments, including its CSDP Missions EUTM Mali and EUCAP Sahel Mali.

In the Gulf of Guinea, priority will be given to the implementation of the EU Gulf of Guinea Strategy, in tandem with the soon to be adopted Gulf of Guinea Action Plan. Ongoing coordination with African and international partners will be key in light of the AU Togo Summit on maritime security and development planned for November 2015.

In the Great Lakes region, the EU, in close coordination with African and international partners, will concentrate its action on two areas key for stability: the holding of credible, peaceful and inclusive elections in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the neutralisation of all armed groups in eastern DRC, in particular the FDLR.

In the DRC, the mission EUSEC RDC will transfer parts of its tasks to the European Development Fund programme PROGRESS, whilst continuing with its streamlined mandate with a significantly reduced staff. The mission will be closed on 30 June 2016.

In Central African Republic (CAR), the EU will continue to provide hard security and support for the rebuilding of the country, including in contributing to the elections under the UN support programme. The bridging operation EUFOR RCA has proved to be extremely successful in supporting MINUSCA in the stabilisation of the security situation in Bangui. Currently, EUFOR RCA is handing over its responsibilities for two districts of the city to MINUSCA. The operation will end on 15 March 2015. It will be followed by EUMAM RCA, which is an autonomous military advisory mission to support the Central African Republic authorities in the preparation of the upcoming Security Sector Reform, in close coordination with MINUSCA. It will assist the Central African Republic Armed Forces (FACA) to manage their existing situation and to build the capacity and quality needed to meet the goal for the future – modernised, effective and accountable Armed Forces. A mission mandate of one year is foreseen.

4. Americas

The Americas constitute a number of opportunities for the EU, in connection with the new College priorities, in helping boost EU jobs and growth but also in relation to the EU's multilateral agenda and external aspects of internal policies (e.g. climate change, energy, digital economy). 2015 is an opportunity to enhance partnerships with key allies and also send a strong signal of increased political engagement with Latin America with the EU-CELAC Summit in June. EU engagement with regional groupings will enhance strong bilateral relations.

The EU and American States share a number of key foreign policy concerns with Europe (climate change, migration, drugs, security, international financial cooperation). Cooperation, and in particular with the US, is essential. However, this will require continued extensive political engagement in all cases, including vis-a-vis multilateral fora. Maintaining and further developing strategic partnerships is crucial.

Further deepening of collaboration on **CSDP** is expected, following on from past successes including through contributions to EU CSDP missions (USA, Canada but also Colombia and Chile).

The EU's priority in its cooperation with **Canada** will be the signing and the provisional application of both the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement and the Strategic Partnership Agreement, and to advance on the Arctic Council and cooperation on foreign and security policy. The forthcoming Strategic Partnership Agreement will enshrine the EU and Canada's joint values and aims at taking relations to another level. It promotes a deepening of ties in all fields of cooperation, including further deepening of security policy cooperation (among others in support of crisis management and capacity building in third countries).

The EU will continue to cooperate closely with the **United States** in foreign policy areas, e.g. on the implementation of the Minsk agreements sanctions against Russia, as well as assistance to Ukraine, including security sector reform.

The fight against ISIL/Da'esh, coordinated i.a. via an anti-ISIL/Da'esh coalition, as well as further Counter-Terrorism work, also on measures agreed at the 19 February 2015 meeting in Washington on Countering Violent Extremism, will also take up much of our focus.

The EU will seek to bring to conclusion the Umbrella Agreement (including judicial redress to be enacted by the US) and the Safe Harbour Scheme. The EU and the US will also continue their close cooperation on energy, notably on energy security, and will cooperate on climate change in view of the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris.

It will be important to continue strengthening CSDP cooperation through encouraging the US contributions to EU missions and operations, furthering military-to-military cooperation, including in logistics.

The **Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)** is one of the top priorities in EU-US relations. In addition to the pure economic gains achieved through increased bilateral trade and investment and regulatory cooperation, the TTIP has the potential to bolster significantly the EU's position in global standard-setting and to contribute setting the economic agenda globally.

Greater economic strength of the EU, transatlantic economic integration and geo-economic partnership would all strengthen the EU's capabilities to respond to the challenges it faces in Europe. TTIP strengthens the EU-US strategic partnership alongside existing deep security and political ties.

The EU's **post-conflict assistance and mediation** capacities in the Americas could also provide further success stories in 2015, such as in Colombia. The EU will also be engaged in strengthening citizen security in Central America and the Caribbean, and supporting domestic reforms in Cuba. Here, the EU will pursue the ongoing negotiations for a Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement.

5. Asia-Pacific

2015 will entail a dynamic further consolidation of the European Union's longstanding relationship with **Asia and the Pacific**. EU action and policy initiatives will reflect the EU's strategic interests and its wish to see the region follow a path of peace, democratisation and respect for human rights, regional cooperation and economic development.

The EU is set to enhance its presence in the region through policy initiatives and increased personal commitment from EU leaders.

EU Guidelines such as the East Asia Policy Guidelines of 2012, the EU-China 2020 Strategic Cooperation Agenda, the EU-ASEAN and EU-India Plans of Action, the 2014 EU Strategy for Afghanistan and the Framework for the European Union's policy and support to Myanmar/Burma will continue to provide useful guidance. Some of these policy guidelines may be updated in the course of the year.

Persistent flashpoints in Asia and the Pacific have a direct bearing on EU interests, while non-traditional security challenges, such as climate, water management (notably in the Mekong region), energy, traffic of human beings, pandemics and disaster-related risks are increasingly on the regional security agenda. Rising energy demand and competition for resources have the potential to increase tensions.

These security challenges often contrast with a booming economy, with high stakes for all, including the EU, to preserve security of investments and supply routes. The Council will remain seized on all aspects of Asian security throughout 2015.

In practical terms, the EU's concerns will further be addressed through pro-active engagement - cooperation with Asian countries in the field of crisis resolution, mediation and post-conflict reconciliation as well as security and defence (Aceh, Myanmar/Burma, Mindanao, Nepal, Timor Leste) but also on cross-border issues such as cyber-security, fight against transnational crime and maritime security.

On the bilateral front, **CFSP/CSDP** cooperation will continue to develop at a good pace with Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea. Regional security issues will feature prominently in the EU's summits with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea as well as at the ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Afghanistan remains the only place in Asia where the EU currently deploys, since 2007, a CSDP mission (EUPOL Afghanistan). Against the background of its own experiences, the EU is a natural supporter of efforts aiming at building a robust multilateral and rule-based, cooperative security order in Asia. The EU accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 2012 has intensified engagement with the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** and EU leaders have attended key high-level multilateral meetings on security in the region, from the Shangri-La Dialogue on Security in Asia to annual ARF Ministerials. This will continue in 2015.

The EU will remain the leading donor in the region. Despite economic constraints, the financial envelope allocated to Asia under the new financial framework for 2014-2020 has significantly increased.

The region will, in this context, get a significant share of funds available under the new "Partnership Instrument", which aims at promoting EU strategic interests (improved market access, supporting the Union's partnership strategies, economic presence, implementing the international dimension of "Europe 2020" and public diplomacy).

ASEM will play a significant role in the EU's proactive approach towards Asia – following the successful 10th ASEM Summit in Milan and in preparation of the 12th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting to be held in Luxembourg and chaired by the HR/VP on 5-6 November 2015.

With the imminent appointment of the EU's first dedicated Ambassador to **ASEAN** posted in Jakarta, the EU will give a face to its intense relationship with the regional organisation and its ten member states.

ASEAN, which will be chaired by Malaysia in 2015, is on track to meet its objective of establishing an ASEAN Economic Community in 2015. The EU is ASEAN's second largest trading partner after China. The EU has concluded a Free Trade and Investment Agreement with Singapore and is negotiating FTAs with other ASEAN Members including Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand.

2015 will see the 40th anniversary of EU-**China** diplomatic relations. The central priority for the EU and China will be to sustain cooperation on the basis of the EU-China 2020 Agenda for Strategic Co-operation, which was agreed at the November 2013 EU-China Summit in Beijing. The 5th round of EU-China Strategic Dialogue and the 17th EU-China Summit will be important steps towards advancing our cooperation in 2015.

The EU will continue its engagement with the new **Indian** government, including through a possible EU-India Summit. In parallel, the EU will keep engaged with India on key global issues, such as energy/climate change in the run up to the Paris Conference and the post-2015 development agenda.

The EU will continue raising with Indian interlocutors the unresolved longstanding case of the two detained Italian marines.

The EU will work to advance the negotiations on a Strategic Partnership Agreement and a Free Trade Agreement with Japan, not least in view of the stated Japanese aim of concluding negotiations by the end of 2015. Given Japan's interest to contribute more to global peace and stability efforts, we will explore how to deepen security cooperation with Japan. The EU-Japan Summit in Brussels in the second quarter of 2015 will be an important opportunity to address common concerns and shared political objectives such as economic recovery, international security and climate change.

In 2015, in the EU's partnership with the **Republic of Korea** particular emphasis will be placed in implementing fully the provisions of the three major agreements in place (Framework Agreement, Free Trade Agreement and Framework Participation Agreement in EU crisis management operations) and in strengthening the existing political and sectoral dialogues. The EU-Korea Summit should be held in Seoul.

A Government of National Unity in **Afghanistan** offers new dynamics which may bring change domestically and help stabilise the region. If the Afghan National Security Forces are able to maintain security, it will provide space for ambitious economic and political reforms set out at the London conference, and for a meaningful peace process. The EU strategy for Afghanistan, underpinned by a EUR 1.4 billion allocation under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), an extended EUPOL mission and an envisaged Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development to be finalised in 2015, provides a framework for EU and Member States supporting this long-term process. A revised mutual accountability framework should be agreed at a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) by mid-2015.

For **Pakistan**, a priority will be to ensure continued progress on implementing the EU-Pakistan 5-year Engagement Plan, which is overseen by the Strategic Dialogue. A third EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue is being planned for 2015 in Islamabad. Progress on effective implementation by Pakistan of the 27 core conventions under GSP+ will be closely monitored in 2015, in order to present a report to the European Parliament and the Council. The EU will also continue its dialogue with Pakistan on specific issues, including human rights, energy, counter-terrorism and migration.

In **Bangladesh**, the EU will continue to monitor the governance and human rights situation and remain engaged with the government, the US and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to ensure implementation of commitments agreed in the Sustainability Compact to improve labour rights, working conditions and factory safety in the ready-made garment industry in Bangladesh.

The EU will continue to engage with Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia, in particular on issues where the EU has significant leverage and where unstable political situations or fragile post-conflict reconciliation may call for particular attention.

2015 offers a particularly favourable year for moving our relations forward with **Australia** and **New Zealand**. With Australia, the priority in 2015 will be the signature of the Crisis Management Agreement in early 2015 and the signature of the Framework Agreement later in the year. The EU will continue its engagement in cooperation on security issues including the annual Security Dialogue and Counter Terrorism Dialogue. As for New Zealand, the priority will be the signature of the Partnership Agreement for Relations and Cooperation (PARC) and pursuing the engagement in cooperation on security issues including the annual Security Dialogue.

The EU will resume full development cooperation and reinvigorate political dialogue with the new democratic government in **Fiji**. The EU will remain engaged with the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

6. International Security

Counter-proliferation work will remain priority activities for the EU. The 2015 Review Conference on Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will take place in New York on 27 April – 22 May, which will be an opportunity to promote increased cohesion between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states. The EU will also continue its role as a key sponsor of the WMD- free zone in the Middle East.

The need for a strong international framework to deal with these challenges remains, and the EU will continue to advocate the universal and effective implementation of international instruments (Chemical Weapons Convention, Arms Trade Treaty, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, etc.). EU support will focus on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation, and the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty.

The diplomatic process aimed at reaching a comprehensive solution to the **Iranian nuclear issue** will remain a top EU and international priority in the first half of the year.

Several rounds of talks at political and expert level, led by the EU, are envisaged. In parallel, the EU will continue to press Iran to play a constructive role in the region (as well as live up to its international obligations domestically on, among other things, human rights).

In the event of a nuclear agreement, the chances for the development of an enhanced and productive EU relationship with Iran will be greatly increased.

The European Union will need to maintain its attention on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a source of instability in the region and in the light of its ongoing illegal WMD and ballistic missile programmes. The EU will continue to do all it can to support and call for Inter-Korean dialogue and for a restart of the 6-party talks on a credible basis, closely coordinating with all its key partners. The EU will also continue to act for an improvement of the DPRK's human rights situation.

Concerns remain, and may build over time, of **WMD proliferation** concerns in connection with the conflict in Syria, given suggestions that undisclosed stocks of WMD material could fall into the hands of Islamic extremist groups such as ISIL. More broadly, the conflict continues to provide a focus for the rise of extremist terrorist groups, including the phenomenon of foreign fighters (from Europe and elsewhere) and heightened sectarianism. The potential growth of linkages between the diverse extremist groupings from the Middle East to North, East and West Africa will need greater scrutiny.

In terms of **European security**, the new and complex threats that have emerged highlight the need for further synergies and closer cooperation at all levels. Terrorism, organised crime and cybercrime are the three core priorities which are highlighted for immediate action in the European Agenda on Security adopted by the Commission in April 2015. They are clearly interlinked and cross border threats, and their multi-faceted and international dimension shows the need for an effective and coordinated response at EU level. The Agenda sets out the concrete tools and measures which will be used in this joint work to ensure security and tackle these three most pressing threats more effectively. The EU will continue to work through integrated regional strategies and in dialogues with key partners, as well as at the multilateral level.

Progress made in increasing the effectiveness, impact and visibility of the **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)** will need to be sustained.

The European Council will assess concrete progress on all issues in June 2015 and provide further guidance, on the basis of a report from the Council drawing on inputs from the Commission, the High Representative and the European Defence Agency.

The issues of defence spending and European defence capabilities will need to be addressed, as well as preparatory work on a number of areas such as supporting partners' capacity in crisis management and security (including "train and equip"), and the EU-NATO relationship.

Missions and operations will continue to be at the heart of CSDP. Outreach to partners and the promotion of participation in CSDP missions and operations, regular security and defence dialogues, reinforcing multilateral/regional partnerships and organising joint seminars with strategic partners will continue.

There will be opportunities to promote the external aspects of the **Maritime Security Action Plan**, adopted on 16 December, at African Union Summit (Addis Ababa, 30 January 2015) and during EU-China Strategic Partnership (February or March 2015).

The EU will also work towards improving its **rapid response capabilities** to deploy the right civilian and military assets.

In particular, developing responses to so-called "hybrid threats" techniques is critical - i.e., how to cope with threats that disrupt and destabilise from behind a mask of deniability, bolstered by aggressive communications operations.

The Global Conference on Cyberspace in The Hague on 16-17 April 2015 has formulated strategic policies on cyberspace, as well as an opportunity to promote a vision of a free, open and secure cyberspace, in which all stakeholders are engaged in decision making. In general, it has been important for the EU to continue to address both the threats posed to cyber security and the positive benefits that can be harnessed from cyberspace – including freedom and privacy, economic growth, innovation and access. The EU will take forward priorities in the coming year including the development of Confidence Building Measures in cyber security to enhance predictability of state behaviour in cyberspace, supporting cyber capacity building in third countries and application of human rights as part of internet governance.

Finally, in 2015, the EU will continue to be faced with conflicts that require a **comprehensive EU response**, starting with conflict prevention, the early identification of emerging conflict situations and mediation. We will continue to enhance practical cooperation with partners on conflict prevention such as the UN, including on mediation, shared conflict analysis and through the EU-funded Civil Society Dialogue Network

Work will be necessary to embed the **new EU Conflict Early Warning System** in strategic decision-making. To enhance prevention, but also conflict resolution and peace-building, structured conflict analysis will be needed to help guide joined-up EU action in conjunction with EU Member States, international partners, and drawing on the expertise of civil society. In so doing, improved training and guidance will be rolled out across relevant services to increase effectiveness and conflict sensitivity in external action.

Investment in supporting mediation by others and further consolidate EU capacities is a priority. The EEAS **Mediation Support** Team will further promote mediation as a tool of first response to emerging and ongoing crisis situations. On transitional justice, a new EU policy paper will be finalised and implemented, and the way the EU engages in security sector reform will be strengthened, with the provision of operational guidance to improve effectiveness across the EU system.

63. The European Union will continue to support the efforts to further the operationalisation of the Responsibility to Protect under its three Pillars, of equal importance.

64. 2015 will see major reviews in the peace and security field, namely in UN peace operations, the peacebuilding architecture and of UNSC resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This presents a timely opportunity to have a critical assessment of the present of UN peace and security architecture and pave the way ahead. Inter-linkages of those reviews are important.

65. A review of UN peace operations will be conducted in 2015.

A high-level independent panel is expected to report to the UN Secretary General in spring after which he will take forward the process. The EU and some EU Member States have already submitted contributions to the panel and will be looking at developments closely.

In 2015, a **10-year review of the UN peacebuilding architecture** will be conducted by the UNGA and the UNSC. This will be based on the work of an advisory group of experts that will undertake country studies in Burundi, Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Timor-Leste. It will conduct a policy and institutional review of the peacebuilding architecture, and will develop findings and recommendations based on this work. The EU will provide input to this process.

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary in 2015 of **UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security**, a **high-level review** will take place in October 2015, to assess progress at the global, regional and national levels in implementing UNSCR 1325, renew commitments, and address obstacles that have emerged. The EU will provide input to this process.

7. Human Rights and Democracy

The EU will continue to promote and defend **Human Rights** at bilateral and multilateral level and to mainstream Human Rights in all EU policies.

Following the expiration of the 2012 Action Plan on HR and Democracy at the end of 2014, a new one will be adopted in the second semester 2015.

The new Action Plan will cover fully the 2015-2019 mandate of the HR and of the European Commission, and will include a mid-term review clause (2017) to coincide with the mid-term review of the external financial instruments.

The EU will continue to pursue its action at multilateral level, in particular at the UN, as set out in the February 2015 Council conclusions on the EU priorities at the UN Human Rights Fora, adopted like every year ahead of the start of the main session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in March 2015.

The 2014 Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World will be prepared in the first semester of 2015. Like in previous years, the report will include a thematic and a country section.

Election Observation Missions (EOM) will remain key tools serving a fundamental objective of EU external action: promotion of democracy across the world.

On **Women's Empowerment** 2015 will be an important year for the promotion of gender equality, as we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the Commission of the Status of Women (CSW), as well as the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 on the contribution of women to peace and security.

8. Global Issues

On **Counter Terrorism (CT)** the Council Conclusions on CT adopted on 9 February will serve as the base for further mainstreaming CT in overall EU External Action and increase CT policy and actions concentrating on the following themes: strengthening partnerships with key countries; supporting capacity building; countering radicalisation and violent extremism; promoting international cooperation; and addressing underlying factors and ongoing crises

The final process of intergovernmental negotiations on the **post-2015 development agenda** will start in January 2015, building on previous processes resulting from Rio+20, especially the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which produced a proposal for 17 goals and 169 targets in July 2014, as well as the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Finance.

Within the ongoing process of strategic reflection on the **EU-ACP relations after 2020**, the EU will underline the need to remain open and realistic towards the future shape of post-Cotonou architecture that should create a truly modern relationship between the EU and ACP countries.

A **Comprehensive Approach Action Plan** will be elaborated before the end of the first quarter of 2015.

An EU-wide strategic framework for Security Sector Reform (SSR) should be developed by the HR and the Commission, by mid-2015, in consultation with the Member States.

A **Preventive Foreign Policy on Global Issues strategy** – an initiative by DE/IT/NL – may have to be elaborated in the course of this year.

Climate Change will continue to be a geopolitical strategic priority for the EU in 2015. The immediate aim is to agree an ambitious legally binding agreement under the UNFCCC, applicable to all Parties, at the December COP21 in Paris. The EU targets were agreed by the European Council of October 2014.

As changes in **Arctic** climate are of critical importance for Europe, the EU has a crucial role to play in supporting successful Arctic cooperation. An EU Arctic Strategy is foreseen to be adopted at the end of 2015.

Energy will remain a key element of EU external policy. The adoption of a European Energy Security Strategy and of the Energy Union will require foreign policy contributions to support their implementation , particularly in the areas of: 1) Diversification of EU energy supply and routes 2) Promoting open, rules-based and transparent global governance on energy, and 3) Common and consistent messaging to energy partners.

Migration will remain a high priority for 2015 and beyond. The EEAS will have to prioritize its contributions to implementation of the European Agenda on Migration (EAM) – a key strategy adopted in May 2015.

The EEAS will cooperate with key countries of origin and transit on policies and processes included in the EAM, such as the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), Rabat Process, Khartoum Process and others, especially in the most concerned regions.

The **Ebola** epidemic underlined the need for strengthening the health systems of many developing countries but also for improving the capacity of the international community to put in place effective emergency procedures for crisis situations.

International efforts to address **drug problems** worldwide will continue aiming to address both the supply side (related to trafficking and organised crime) and the demand side (health, social integration of victims of drug abuse). 2015 will be crucial for the preparation of the UNGA Special Session on Drugs which will take place in April 2016.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Overview of legal acts in the CFSP area (restrictive measures) 2014⁷⁹

Afghanistan/Taliban

Council Implementing Decision 2014/142/CFSP of 14 March 2014 implementing Decision 2011/486/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain individuals, groups, undertakings and entities in view of the situation in Afghanistan (*OJ L 76, 15.3.2014, p. 46*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/140/CFSP of 14 March 2014 implementing Council Decision 2011/486/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain individuals, groups, undertakings and entities in view of the situation in Afghanistan (*OJ L 76, 15.3.2014, p. 42*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/701/CFSP of 8 October 2014 implementing Decision 2011/486/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain individuals, groups, undertakings and entities in view of the situation in Afghanistan (*OJ L 293, 9.10.2014, p. 37*)

Belarus

Council Implementing Decision 2014/24/CFSP of 20 January 2014 implementing Decision 2012/642/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Belarus (*OJ L 16, 21.1.2014, p. 32*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/439/CFSP of 8 July 2014 implementing Decision 2012/642/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Belarus (*OJ L 200, 9.7.2014, p. 13*)

Council Decision 2014/750/CFSP of 30 October 2014 amending Council Decision 2012/642/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Belarus (*OJ L 311, 31.10.2014, p. 39*)

⁷⁹ This list concerns CFSP Decisions imposing restrictive measures only. The implementation of the measures falling within the scope of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union also requires the preparation of a Council Regulation or Council Implementing Regulation as appropriate.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Council Decision 2014/157/CFSP of 20 March 2014 amending Decision 2011/173/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*OJ L 87, 22.3.2014, p. 95*)

Central African Republic

Council Decision 2014/125/CFSP of 10 March 2014 amending Decision 2013/798/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Central African Republic (*OJ L 70, 11.3.2014, p. 22*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/382/CFSP of 23 June 2014 implementing Decision 2013/798/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Central African Republic (*OJ L 183, 24.6.2014, p. 57*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/863/CFSP of 1 December 2014 implementing Decision 2013/798/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Central African Republic (*OJ L 346, 2.12.2014, p. 52*)

Côte d'Ivoire

Council Implementing Decision 2014/271/CFSP of 12 May 2014 implementing Decision 2010/656/CFSP renewing the restrictive measures against Côte d'Ivoire (*OJ L 138, 13.5.2014, p. 108*)

Council Decision 2014/460/CFSP of 14 July 2014 amending Decision 2010/656/CFSP renewing the restrictive measures against Côte d'Ivoire (*OJ L 207, 15.7.2014, p. 17*)

Crimea/Sebastopol

Council Decision 2014/386/CFSP of 23 June 2014 concerning restrictions on goods originating in Crimea or Sevastopol, in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol (*OJ L 183, 24.6.2014, p. 70*)

Council Decision 2014/507/CFSP of 30 July 2014 amending Decision 2014/386/CFSP concerning restrictions on goods originating in Crimea or Sevastopol, in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol (*OJ L 226, 30.7.2014, p. 20*)

Council Decision 2014/933/CFSP amending Decision 2014/386/CFSP of 18 December 2014 concerning restrictive measures in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol (*OJ L 365, 19.12.2014, p. 152*)

Democratic Republic of Congo

Council Decision 2014/147/CFSP of 17 March 2014 amending Decision 2010/788/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*OJ L 79, 18.3.2014, p. 42*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/862/CFSP of 1 December 2014 implementing Decision 2010/788/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*OJ L 346, 2.12.2014, p. 36*)

Egypt

Council Decision 2014/153/CFSP of 20 March 2014 amending Decision 2011/172/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Egypt (*OJ L 85, 21.3.2014, p. 9*)

FRY (Milosevic)

Council Decision 2014/742/CFSP of 28 October 2014 repealing Common Position 2000/696/CFSP on the maintenance of specific restrictive measures directed against Mr Milosevic and persons associated with him and related Common Positions 98/240/CFSP, 98/326/CFSP, 1999/318/CFSP and 2000/599/CFSP (*OJ L 308, 29.10.2014, p. 99*)

Republic of Guinea

Council Decision 2014/213/CFSP of 14 April 2014 amending Decision 2010/638/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Republic of Guinea (*OJ L 111, 15.4.2014, p. 83*)

Council Decision 2014/728/CFSP of 20 October 2014 amending Decision 2010/638/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Republic of Guinea (*OJ L 301, 21.10.2014, p. 33*)

Iran (WMD)

Council Decision 2014/21/CFSP of 20 January 2014 amending Council Decision 2010/413/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Iran (*OJ L 15, 20.1.2014, p. 22*)

Council Decision 2014/222/CFSP of 16 April 2014 amending Decision 2010/413/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Iran (*OJ L 119, 23.4.2014, p. 65*)

Council Decision 2014/480/CFSP of 21 July 2014 amending Decision 2010/413/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Iran (*OJ L 215, 21.7.2014, p. 4*)

Council Decision 2014/776/CFSP of 7 November 2014 amending Decision 2010/413/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Iran (*OJ L 325, 8.11.2014, p. 19*)

Council Decision 2014/829/CFSP of 25 November 2014 amending Decision 2010/413/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Iran (*OJ L 338, 25.11.2014, p. 1*)

Iran (human rights)

Council Decision 2014/205/CFSP of 10 April 2014 amending Decision 2011/235/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities in view of the situation in Iran (*OJ L 109, 12.4.2014, p. 25*)

Iraq

Council Decision 2014/484/CFSP of 22 July 2014 amending Common Position 2003/495/CFSP on Iraq (*OJ L 217, 23.7.2014, p. 38*)

North Korea (Democratic Republic of North Korea)

Council Decision 2014/212/CFSP of 14 April 2014 amending Decision 2013/183/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (*OJ L 111, 15.4.2014, p. 79*)

Council Decision 2014/700/CFSP of 8 October 2014 amending Decision 2013/183/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (*OJ L 293, 9.10.2014, p. 34*)

Liberia

Council Decision 2014/141/CFSP of 14 March 2014 amending Common Position 2008/109/CFSP concerning restrictive measures imposed against Liberia (*OJ L 76, 15.3.2014, p. 45*)

Libya

Council Implementing Decision 2014/41/CFSP of 28 January 2014 implementing Decision 2011/137/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya (*OJ L 26, 29.1.2014, p. 41*)

Council Decision 2014/380/CFSP of 23 June 2014 amending Decision 2011/137/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya (*OJ L 183, 24.6.2014, p. 52*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/487/CFSP of 22 July 2014 implementing Decision 2011/137/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya (*OJ L 217, 23.7.2014, p. 48*)

Council Decision 2014/727/CFSP of 20 October 2014 amending Decision 2011/137/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya (*OJ L 301, 21.10.2014, p. 30*)

Republic of Moldova

Council Decision 2014/381/CFSP of 23 June 2014 amending Decision 2010/573/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the leadership of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova (*OJ L 183, 24.6.2014, p. 56*)

Council Decision 2014/751/CFSP of 30 October 2014 amending Decision 2010/573/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the leadership of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova (*OJ L 311, 31.10.2014, p. 54*)

Myanmar/Burma

Council Decision 2014/214/CFSP of 14 April 2014 amending Decision 2013/184/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Myanmar/Burma (*OJ L 111, 15.4.2014, p. 84*)

Russia

Council Decision 2014/512/CFSP of 31 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine (*OJ L 229, 31.7.2014, p. 13*)

Council Decision 2014/659/CFSP of 8 September 2014 amending Decision 2014/512/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine (*OJ L 271, 12.9.2014, p. 54*)

Council Decision 2014/872/CFSP of 4 December 2014 amending Decision 2014/512/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, and Decision 2014/659/CFSP amending Decision 2014/512/CFSP (*OJ L 349, 5.12.2014, p. 58*)

Somalia

Council Decision 2014/270/CFSP of 12 May 2014 amending Council Decision 2010/231/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Somalia (*OJ L 138, 13.5.2014, p. 106*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/729/CFSP of 20 October 2014 implementing Decision 2010/231/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Somalia (*OJ L 301, 21.10.2014, p. 34*)

Sudan and South Sudan

Council Implementing Decision 2014/40/CFSP of 28 January 2014 implementing Decision 2011/423/CFSP of 18 July 2011 concerning restrictive measures against Sudan and South Sudan (*OJ L 26, 29.1.2014, p. 38*)

South Sudan

Council Decision 2014/449/CFSP of 10 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in South Sudan (*OJ L 203, 11.7.2014, p. 100*)

Sudan

Council Decision 2014/450/CFSP of 10 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Sudan and repealing Decision 2011/423/CFSP (*OJ L 203, 11.7.2014, p. 106*)

Syria

Council Decision 2014/74/CFSP of 10 February 2014 amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (*OJ L 40, 11.2.2014, p. 63*)

Council Decision 2014/309/CFSP of 28 May 2014 amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (*OJ L 160, 29.5.2014, p. 37*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/387/CFSP of 23 June 2014 implementing Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (*OJ L 183, 24.6.2014, p. 72*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/488/CFSP of 22 July 2014 implementing Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (*OJ L 217, 23.7.2014, p. 49*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/678/CFSP of 26 September 2014 implementing Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (*OJ L 283, 27.9.2014, p. 59*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/730/CFSP of 20 October 2014 implementing Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (*OJ L 301, 21.10.2014, p. 36*)

Council Decision 2014/901/CFSP of 12 December 2014 amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (*OJ L 358, 13.12.2014, p. 28*)

Common Position 2001/931/CFSP

Council Decision 2014/72/CFSP of 10 February 2014 updating and amending the list of persons, groups and entities subject to Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, and repealing Decision 2013/395/CFSP (*OJ L 40, 11.2.2014, p. 56*)

Council Decision 2014/483/CFSP of 22 July 2014 updating and amending the list of persons, groups and entities subject to Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, and repealing Decision 2014/72/CFSP (*OJ L 217, 23.7.2014, p. 35*)

Tunisia

Council Decision 2014/49/CFSP of 30 January 2014 amending Decision 2011/72/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities in view of the situation in Tunisia (*OJ L 28, 31.1.2014, p. 38*)

Ukraine

Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP of 17 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 16*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/151/CFSP of 21 March 2014 implementing Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 86, 21.3.2014, p. 30*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/238/CFSP of 28 April 2014 implementing Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 126, 29.4.2014, p. 55*)

Council Decision 2014/265/CFSP of 12 May 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 137, 12.5.2014, p. 9*)

Council Decision 2014/308/CFSP of 28 May 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 160, 29.5.2014, p. 33*)

Council Decision 2014/455/CFSP of 11 July 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 205, 12.7.2014, p. 22*)

Council Decision 2014/475/CFSP of 18 July 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 214, 19.7.2014, p. 28*)

Council Decision 2014/499/CFSP of 25 July 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 221, 25.7.2014, p. 15*)

Council Decision 2014/508/CFSP of 30 July 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 226, 30.7.2014, p. 23*)

Council Decision 2014/658/CFSP of 8 September 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 271, 12.9.2014, p. 47*)

Council Decision 2014/801/CFSP of 17 November 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 331, 18.11.2014, p. 26*)

Council Decision 2014/855/CFSP of 28 November 2014 amending Decision 2014/145/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine (*OJ L 344, 29.11.2014, p. 22*)

Ukraine (Misappropriation)

Council Decision 2014/119/CFSP of 5 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Ukraine (*OJ L 66, 6.3.2014, p. 26*)

Council Implementing Decision 2014/216/CFSP of 14 April 2014 implementing Decision 2014/119/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Ukraine (*OJ L 111, 15.4.2014, p. 91*)

Yemen

Council Decision 2014/932/CFSP of 18 December 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Yemen (*OJ L 365, 19.12.2014, p. 147*)

Zimbabwe

Council Decision 2014/98/CFSP of 17 February 2014 amending Decision 2011/101/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Zimbabwe (*OJ L 50, 20.2.2014, p. 20*)

Annex II: Appearances before the European Parliament in 2014

1. Appearances of the High Representative/Vice-President before the European Parliament in 2014

Date	Meeting	Subject
11-Feb	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Debriefing on the Foreign Affairs Council of 10 Feb.2014
03-Apr	Plenary	Main aspects and basic choices of the common foreign and security policy and the common security and defence policy (art 36 TEU) – EU comprehensive approach and coherence of EU external action
06-Nov	Interparliamentary Conference (Rome)	Interparliamentary Conference (Rome)
12-Nov	Committee on Foreign Affairs Enlarged Bureau	Meeting ahead of the Foreign Affairs Council of 17-18 November
26-Nov	Plenary	Recognition of Palestine statehood
26-Nov	Plenary	25th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
01-Dec	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Exchange of views
11-Dec	Committee on Foreign Affairs Enlarged Bureau	Meeting ahead of the Foreign Affairs Council of 15 December

2. Appearances on behalf of the High Representative/Vice-President before the European Parliament in 2014

Date	Meeting	HR/VP representative	Subject
15-Jan	Plenary	EL Presidency	Situation in South Sudan
16-Jan	Plenary	Commissioner Kallas	Human Rights debate - Situation of rights defenders and opposition activists in Cambodia and Laos
16-Jan	Plenary	Commissioner Kallas	Human Rights debate - Recent elections in Bangladesh
16-Jan	Plenary	Commissioner Kallas	Human Rights debate - Recent moves to criminalise LGBTI people
20-Jan	Committee on Budgetary Control	Chief Operating Officer Mr O'Sullivan	EEAS budgetary discharge 2012
05-Feb	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Situation in Ukraine
05-Feb	Plenary	IT Presidency	EU's role in Central African Republic (CAR)
05-Feb	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Situation in Syria
05-Feb	Plenary	IT Presidency	Situation in Egypt
06-Feb	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Human Rights debate - The situation in Thailand
06-Feb	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Human Rights debate - Right to education in Transnistrian region
06-Feb	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Human Rights debate - Bahrain, in particular the case of Nabeel Rajab, Abdulhadi al-Khawaja and Ibrahim Sharif
26-Feb	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Situation in Ukraine

Date	Meeting	HR/VP representative	Subject
26-Feb	Plenary	EL Presidency	Situation in Iraq
26-Feb	Plenary	EL Presidency	Use of armed drones
27-Feb	Plenary	Commissioner Semeta	Venezuela
10-Mar	Plenary	Commissioner Borg	Eradication of torture in the world
10-Mar	Plenary	Commissioner Borg	Saudi Arabia
10-Mar	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Priorities for EU relations with the Eastern Partnership countries
12-Mar	Plenary	IT Presidency	EU's priorities for the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council
13-Mar	Plenary	Commissioner Lewandowski	Human Rights debate - Russia: sentencing of demonstrators involved in the Bolotnaya Square events
13-Mar	Plenary	Commissioner Lewandowski	Human Rights debate - Launching consultations to suspend Uganda and Nigeria from the Cotonou Agreement in view of recent legislation further criminalising homosexuality
13-Mar	Plenary	Commissioner Lewandowski	Human Rights debate - Security and human trafficking in Sinai
18-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Commissioner Füle	Strategic dialogue on the programming priorities under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) and of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)

Date	Meeting	HR/VP representative	Subject
31-Mar	EP-PAP Parliamentary Summit	EL Presidency	Policy Headlines of the European Union with regard to Africa
03-Apr	Plenary	EL Presidency	Situation in Iran
16-Apr	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Situation in Ukraine and the Russian pressure on Eastern Partnership countries and in particular destabilisation of eastern Ukraine
16-Apr	Plenary	EL Presidency	Religious freedoms and cultural diversity
17-Apr	Plenary	Commissioner Almunia	EU-Japan strategic partnership agreement
17-Apr	Plenary	Commissioner Almunia	Human Rights debate - Pakistan
17-Apr	Plenary	Commissioner Almunia	Human Rights debate - Syria
17-Apr	Plenary	Commissioner Almunia	Human Rights debate - North Korea
15-Jul	Plenary	Commissioner Füle	Situation in Ukraine
16-Jul	Plenary	IT Presidency	Violence between Israel and Palestine
16-Jul	Plenary	IT Presidency	Crime of aggression
16-Jul	Plenary	IT Presidency	Destruction of Syria's chemical weapons
16-Jul	Plenary	IT Presidency	Situation in Iraq

Date	Meeting	HR/VP representative	Subject
17-Jul	Plenary	Commissioner Vassiliou	Human Rights debate - Case of Meriam Yahia Ibrahim in Sudan
17-Jul	Plenary	Commissioner Vassiliou	Human Rights debate - The recent attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria
17-Jul	Plenary	Commissioner Vassiliou	Human Rights debate - Freedom of expression and assembly in Egypt
17-Sep	Plenary	IT Presidency	Situation in Libya
17-Sep	Plenary	IT Presidency	Situation in Iraq and Syria and the IS offensive including the persecution of minorities
17-Sep	Plenary	IT Presidency	Israel-Palestine after the Gaza war and the role of the EU
18-Sep	Plenary	Commissioner Mimica	Human Rights debate - Persecution of human rights defenders in Azerbaijan
18-Sep	Plenary	Commissioner Mimica	Human Rights debate - Burundi and in particular on the case of Pierre Claver Mbonimpa
18-Sep	Plenary	Commissioner Mimica	Human Rights debate - Human rights violations in Bangladesh
22-Oct	Plenary	IT Presidency	Situation in Kobane and the threat of IS
22-Oct	Plenary	IT Presidency	Situation in Hong-Kong
22-Oct	Plenary	IT Presidency	Death penalty in Pakistan and the case of Asia Bibi
23-Oct	Plenary	Commissioner Borg	Human Rights debate - Closing of the NGO "Memorial" in Russia

Date	Meeting	HR/VP representative	Subject
23-Oct	Plenary	Commissioner Borg	Human Rights debate - Situation of human rights in Uzbekistan
23-Oct	Plenary	Commissioner Borg	Human Rights debate - Disappearance of 43 teaching students in Mexico
12-Nov	Plenary	Commissioner Hahn	Humanitarian situation in South Sudan
12-Nov	Plenary	Commissioner Hahn	Turkish actions creating tensions in the exclusive economic zone of Cyprus
27-Nov	Plenary	Commissioner Stylianides	Human Rights debate - Pakistan: blasphemy laws
27-Nov	Plenary	Commissioner Stylianides	Human Rights debate - Case of accused war criminal Seseli in Serbia
27-Nov	Plenary	Commissioner Stylianides	Human Rights debate - Kidnapping and mistreatment of women in Iraq
03-Dec	Subcommittee on Security and Defence	Deputy Secretary-General Mr Popowski	Debriefing on the FAC Defence of 18 November
17-Dec	Plenary	IT Presidency	Freedom of expression in Turkey
18-Dec	Plenary	IT Presidency	Human Rights debate - Persecution of the democratic opposition in Venezuela
18-Dec	Plenary	IT Presidency	Human Rights debate - Mauritania, in particular the case of Biram Dah Abeid
18-Dec	Plenary	IT Presidency	Human Rights debate - Sudan: the case of Dr Amin Mekki Medani

3. Appearances of Senior EEAS Representatives⁸⁰ before the European Parliament in 2014 and Exchanges of views with newly appointed Heads of Delegation

Date	Meeting	EEAS Representative	Subject
20-Jan	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Chief Operating Officer Mr O'Sullivan	Debriefing on the negotiations for an Institutional Framework Agreement governing EU-Switzerland relations
20-Jan	Committee on Development	Deputy Secretary-General Mr Popowski	Public Hearing on: " Place of humanitarian aid in EU external relations: the importance of respecting the humanitarian principles"
22-Jan	Subcommittee on Security and Defence	Deputy Secretary-General Mr Popowski	Public hearing "European Council on Defence: What's next for CSDP?"
22-Jan	Subcommittee on Security and Defence & Committee on Foreign Affairs	EU Special Representative for the Sahel Mr Reveyrand	Exchange of views on situation in Sahel
23-Jan	Subcommittee on Human Rights	EU Special Representative for Human Rights Mr Lambrinidis	Exchange of views
23-Jan	Subcommittee on Security and Defence & Committee on Foreign Affairs & Committee on Development	Managing Director for Africa Mr Westcott	Exchange of views on the current status of operations in the Central African Republic (CAR)

⁸⁰ Members of Corporate Board, Managing Directors, EUSRs, PSC Chair

Date	Meeting	EEAS Representative	Subject
23-Jan	Subcommittee on Security and Defence & Committee on Foreign Affairs & Committee on Development	Managing Director for Africa Mr Westcott	Exchange of views on the latest developments in South Sudan
27-Jan	Committee on Foreign Affairs Enlarged Bureau	Executive Secretary General Mr Vimont	Debriefing on the Geneve II Conf. (on Syria)
30-Jan	EPP Group	Managing Director for Asia and the Pacific Mr Isticioaia-Budura	Hearing on EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement
04-Feb	Breakfast meeting with members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs	EU Special Representative for South Mediterranean Mr Leon	Briefing on the situation in Egypt
17-Feb	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Chief Operating Officer Mr O'Sullivan	Exchange of views on the implications of the Swiss referendum on mass immigration
18-Feb	Parliamentary Forum	Deputy Secretary-General Mr Popowski	Europe's Parliaments in multinational organisations and international fora: From back seat to front row?
03-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Executive Secretary General Mr Vimont	FAC Debriefing (on Ukraine)
03-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq Mr Mingarelli	Exchange of views on the situation in Libya

Date	Meeting	EEAS Representative	Subject
05-Mar	Joint Consultation Meeting	Political and Security Chair Mr Stevens	CSDP missions, political updates on Libya, Mali, CAR, Afghanistan
10-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Chief Operating Officer Mr O'Sullivan	Strategic dialogue with Commissioner Piebalgs on the programming under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace and the Partnership Instrument
10-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Chief Operating Officer Mr O'Sullivan	Exchange of views on the international assistance package to Ukraine
18-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Managing Director for the Americas Mr Leffler	Debriefing on the state of play in negotiations of a Political Dialogue and Co-operation Agreement with Cuba and other developments in Latin America
18-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Newly appointed Head of Delegation in Ankara Mr Manservigi	Exchange of views with newly appointed Head of Delegations, in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP
18-Mar	Committee on Foreign Affairs Enlarged Bureau	Executive Secretary General Mr Vimont	Debriefing on the Foreign Affairs Council of 17 March
19-Mar	Subcommittee on Security and Defence	EU Special Representative for Horn of Africa Mr Rondos	Exchange of views on the situation in the Horn of Africa
08-Apr	Western Balkans WG	EU Special Representative Mr Sorensen	Exchange of views on the current situation in Bosna and Herzegovina
09-Apr	Delegation for relations with USA	Managing Director for the Americas Mr Leffler	Debriefing on the EU-US Summit of 26 March in Brussels
10-Apr	SME Global & SME Europe	Chief Operating Officer Mr O'Sullivan	Breakfast debate about the EU-Switzerland relations

Date	Meeting	EEAS Representative	Subject
04-Jun	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Executive Secretary General Mr Vimont	Exchange of views on the presidential elections in Egypt of 26 and 27 May 2014
04-Jun	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Executive Secretary General Mr Vimont	Exchange of views on the findings and conclusions of the presidential elections in Ukraine on 25 May 2014, and on the latest developments in Ukraine
14-Jul	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Newly appointed Head of the EU Delegation in Washington Mr David O'Sullivan	Exchange of views with newly appointed Head of Delegations, in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP
14-Jul	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Newly appointed Head of the EU Delegation to the Council of Europe Mr Vilen	Exchange of views with newly appointed Head of Delegations, in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP
22-Jul	Committee on Foreign Affairs Enlarged Bureau	Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq Mr Mingarelli	Crisis in the Middle East
22-Jul	Committee on Development	Chief Operating Officer Mr O'Sullivan	Exchange of views on EU development policy principles, state of play of programming and the role of the EP
28-Aug	Enlarged Bureau of the Committee on Foreign Affairs jointly with the Bureaus of external committees (DEVE, INTA, SEDE, DROI)	Executive Secretary General Mr Vimont	Latest crisis developments in Ukraine, Iraq, Libya and Gaza.

Date	Meeting	EEAS Representative	Subject
01-Sep	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Newly appointed Head of the EU Delegation in Georgia Mr Herman	Exchange of views with newly appointed Head of Delegations, in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP
01-Sep	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Newly appointed Head of the EU Delegation to China and Mongolia, Mr Schweisgut	Exchange of views with newly appointed Head of Delegations, in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP
02-Sep	Plenary Session followed by three parallel thematic sessions	Third Annual Conference of EU Heads of Delegation	- Revamping EU policy; - Toward and EU economic, political and security strategy in Asia-pacific; Challenges for EU development cooperation in Africa and Latin America
11-Sep	Subcommittee on Security and Defence	Deputy Secretary-General Mr Popowski	Debriefing on the informal Defence Council
17-Sep	Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly	Managing Director for the Americas Mr Leffler	Exchange of views on the state of play in EU-LAC relations
22-Sep	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Newly appointed Head of the EU Delegation in Albania Mrs Vlahutin	Exchange of views with newly appointed Head of Delegations, in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP
23-Sep	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Newly appointed Head of the EU Delegation in Japan Mr Isticioia-Budura	Exchange of views with newly appointed Head of Delegations, in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP

Date	Meeting	EEAS Representative	Subject
23-Sep	Joint meeting of the Committee on Budgetary Control and the Committee on Foreign Affairs	Managing Director Mr Child	Special Report No 11/2014 (2013 Discharge) "The establishment of the European External Action Service"
13-Oct	Subcommittee on Human Rights	EU Special Representative for Human Rights Mr Lambrinidis	Exchange of views
03-Nov	Committee on Foreign Affairs	EU Special Representative Mr Salber	Exchange of views
04-Nov	Committee on Foreign Affairs	EU Special Representative for Human Rights Mr Lambrinidis	Exchange of views on his recent visits to Egypt and Pakistan
05-Nov	Committee on Budgetary Control	Managing Director Mr Child	Special Report No 11/2014 (2013 Discharge) "The establishment of the European External Action Service"
05-Nov	Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	Managing Director Mrs Marinaki	Exchange of views on terrorism, foreign fighters and presentation of TE-SAT report
05-Nov	Others - Spring forward for women Conference	EU Special Representative for Human Rights Mr Lambrinidis	Keynote speaker at the opening session
05-Nov	Subcommittee on Security and Defence	Political and Security Chair Mr Stevens	CSDP priorities in the context of evolving security environment

Date	Meeting	EEAS Representative	Subject
11-Nov	Delegation for relations with Israel	Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq Mr Mingarelli	Current situation in the region
13-Nov	36th EP-Canada Interparliamentary meeting	Managing Director for the Americas Mr Leffler	State of play of the bilateral EU-Canada relationship
17-Nov	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Executive Secretary General Mr Vimont	Debriefing on the Foreign Affairs Council of 17 November 2014
17-Nov	Committee on Foreign Affairs	Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq Mr Mingarelli	Latest developments in Syria and Iraq
11-Dec	Delegation for relations with Maghreb countries	Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq Mr Mingarelli	Situation in Libya
11-Dec	Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries	Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq Mr Mingarelli	Exchange of views on Libya
11-Dec	Joint Consultation Meeting	Political and Security Chair Mr Stevens	Joint Consultation Meeting
17-Dec	Committee on Development Coordinators' Meeting	Deputy Secretary-General Mr Popowski	Debriefing on the Foreign Affairs Council of 12 December 2014

Annex III: Statements and Declarations

In 2014 a total of 539 *statements and declarations* were issued, belonging to one of the following four categories:

- **Declarations by the High Representative on behalf of the EU:** reflect the official position of the EU and are issued under the High Representative's authority with prior consultation of the Member States. Where no such official position exists, these declarations are agreed by Member States within the Council. Third countries can align when invited.
- **Statements by the HR/VP:** used most frequently to respond to events requiring quick EU reaction and issued under the HR/VP's authority without formal consultation of the Member States.
- **Statements by the Spokesperson of the HR/VP:** used for quick EU reaction in cases when the personal involvement of the HR/VP is not necessarily required.
- **Local EU Statements:** used in the context of a specific local/regional issue.

Breakdown per category

Category	Number (share of total)
HR declarations	49 (9.09%)
HR/VP statements	173 (32.10%)
Spokesperson's statements	235 (43.60%)
Local statements	82 (15.21%)
Total	539 (100%)

Geographic breakdown

Region	Number (share of total)
Africa	117 (21.71%)
Asia	85 (15.77%)
Eastern Europe / Western Balkans	136 (25.23%)
Latin America	18 (3.34%)
North Africa	44 (8.16%)
Middle East / Gulf	107 (19.85%)
Multi-lateral / North America	32 (5.94%)

Thematic breakdown

Region	Number (share of total)
Human Rights	110 (20.4%)
Elections / reform	83 (15.4%)
Conflict / stabilisation processes	181 (33.6%)
Security incidents	49 (9.09%)
Congratulations / condolences messages	43 (7.98%)
Non-proliferation	9 (1.67%)
Other	64 (11.9%)

Joint statements

A total of 9 statements were made jointly with one or more other Commissioners. Four statements were made jointly with representatives of third countries. The table shows the number of joint statements each Commissioner participated in.

Commissioner	Number
Johannes Hahn	4
Andris Piebalgs	1
Kristalina Georgieva	1
Andris Piebalgs/Kristalina Georgieva	2
Christos Stylianides	1

Annex IV: CFSP budget 2014

19.030101 EUMM Georgia

2014/35/CFSP EUMM Georgia – CD 2014/915/CFSP	18,300,000.00
Subtotal	18,300,000.00

19.030102 EULEX Kosovo

CFSP/2014/15/EULEX Kosovo – CD 2014/349/CFSP	34,000,000.00
CFSP/2014/32/EULEX Kosovo – CD 2014/685/CFSP	55,820,000.00
Subtotal	89,820,000.00

19.030103 EUPOL Afghanistan

CFSP/2013/07/EUPOL Afghanistan – CD 2013/240/CFSP	17,633,790.14
CFSP/2015/01/EUPOL Afghanistan – CD 2014/922/CFSP	57,750,000.00
Subtotal	75,383,790.14

19.030104 Other crisis management measures and operations

CFSP/2014/05/EUCAP Sahel Mali – CD 2014/219/CFSP	5,500,000.00
CFSP/2014/12/EUBAM Libya – CD 2014/294/CFSP	26,200,000.00
CFSP/2014/13/EUBAM RAFAH – CD 2014/430/CFSP	940,000.00
CFSP/2014/16/EUPOL COPPS – CD 2014/447/CFSP	8,975,000.00
CFSP/2014/27/EUCAP SAHEL Niger – CD 2014/482/CFSP	9,155,000.00
CFSP/2014/25/ESDC – CD 2014/491/CFSP	756,000.00
CFSP/2014/26/EUAM Ukraine – CD 2014/486/CFSP	2,680,000.00

CFSP/2014/31/EUSEC RD Congo – CD 2014/674/CFSP	4,600,000.00
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CFSP/2014/29/EUCAP NESTOR – CD 2014/726/CFSP	17,900,000.00
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CFSP/2014/33/EUAM Ukraine – CD 2014/800/CFSP	13,100,000.00
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Subtotal	89,806,000.00
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19.030105 Emergency measures	0.00
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19.030106 Preparatory and follow up measures

328,776.63

Subtotal	328,776.63
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19.030107 European Union Special Representatives

CFSP/2014/02/EUSR South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia – CD 2014/22/CFSP	1,040,000.00
CFSP/2014/04/EUSR Sahel – CD 2014/130/CFSP	1,350,000.00
CFSP/2014/17/EUSR Afghanistan – CD 2014/383/CFSP	3,760,000.00
CFSP/2014/24/EUSR Bosnia and Herzegovina – CD 2014/384/	5,250,000.00
CFSP/2014/22/EUSR Human Rights – CD 2014/385/CFSP	550,000.00
CFSP/2014/21/EUSR Kosovo– CD 2014/400/CFSP	1,450,000.00
CFSP/2014/20/EUSR for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia– CD 2014/438/CFSP	1,380,000.00
CFSP/2014/30/EUSR Horn of Africa– CD 2014/673/CFSP	890,000.00
Subtotal	15,670,000.00

19.0302 Non-proliferation and disarmament

CFSP/2014/03/WHO II – CD 2013/668/CFSP	1,727,000.00
CFSP/2014/01/BAFA - ATT IV - CD 2013/768/CFSP	5,200,000.00
CFSP/2014/06/Think Tank II - CD 2014/129/CFSP	3,600,000.00
CFSP/2014/36/HCoC III - CD 2014/913/CFSP	990,000.00
CFSP/2014/34/ SALW Sahel-Libya - CD 2014/912/CFSP	3,561,257.06

Subtotal	15,078,257.06
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TOTAL	304,386,823.83
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Commitment appropriations carried over to 2015⁸¹:**19.030104 Other crisis management measures and operations**

CFSP/2015/02/EUCAP Sahel Mali – CD (CFSP) 2015/76 (total commitment amounts to EUR 11,400,000)	11,250,000.00
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19.0302 Non-proliferation and disarmament

CFSP/2015/10/OPCW VI - CD (CFSP) 2015/259	2,528,069.00
CFSP/2015/05/OUTER SPACE-UNIDIR and CFSP/2015/06/OUTER SPACE-UNODA - CD (CFSP) 2015/203	1,274,398.85

Total	15,052,467.85
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⁸¹ Commitment appropriations carried over to 2015 in accordance with Article 13(2) of the Financial Regulation

Annex V: Assessment of coordination and complementarity of CFSP with the EU's other external financial instruments

For coordination and complementarity of CFSP/CSDP with the EU's other external financial instruments, the main other external EU instruments under Heading IV of the EU budget of relevance for the Comprehensive Approach are: the Instrument for Pre-accession assistance (IPA), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), the Partnership Instrument (PI) and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). Also of importance is the European Development Fund (EDF), funded outside of the EU budget.

Embedded in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, these instruments were designed to support the European Union's external policies, each from a different angle and mutually reinforcing each other. Complementarity of instruments was especially ensured throughout the whole adoption process of the instruments.

Comprehensiveness in CSDP strategic and operational mission planning has become common practice, also in the year 2014. Representatives of EEAS and Commission services responsible for programming and implementation of EU instruments are closely engaged at all stages of the strategic and operational planning process e.g. during the process of the Crisis Management Concept (CMC), the Concept of Operations (CONOPS), the Operation Plan (OPLAN) and the Strategic Review (SR). Joint field missions with representatives from different EU-services are undertaken. The EU Delegations have an important role to play in the Comprehensive Approach, not only during mapping exercises and identification of security needs, but also during the identification of projects especially in the area of *security sector reform* (e.g. governance, police, justice) in full complementarity with CSDP.

Nevertheless, when comparing CFSP/CSDP to EU instruments under Heading IV (and EDF) it is important to take into account their differing legal frameworks, procedures and implementing actors. For example the Regulations on the IcSP, ENI, DCI, IPA, PI and EIDHR are adopted under the TFEU (ordinary legislative procedure). CFSP Council Decisions for civilian missions and military operations are adopted under the TEU. Furthermore, the time scales and start/end dates in the stages of programming of development aid often differ significantly to those of mission planning in crisis management. Matching of all needs and meeting all objectives with the right instruments at the right moment in time therefore remains a challenge. Finally, development aid projects are implemented by a variety of organisations as implementing agencies, whereas for the CSDP missions, the majority of the implementing actors are EUMS Government experts.

The below table provides examples of complementarity of CSDP missions with other EU external instruments. In reality coordination and complementarity encompasses the full range of activities and projects funded by the EU as well as activities by national and international actors (e.g. UN, OSCE, AU, NATO, US, China, bilateral actions EU Member States etc.).

CSDP MISSION OR OPERATION	RELATED EU EXTERNAL INSTRUMENTS – COUNTRY SPECIFIC	EXAMPLES OF COORDINATED AND COMPLEMENTARY EU ACTION
EUBAM Libya	ENI, IcSP	In 2014, for the pilot areas identified for EUBAM action, ENP and IcSP programmes and projects were envisaged to provide a comprehensive approach. E.g. training on border management would be accompanied by programmes to promote youth employment, improve health care and vocational training and to provide a much-needed focus at community level. Unfortunately due to the security situation these programmes could not materialise.

EUPOL Afghanistan	DCI, IcSP	DCI funding provided continued substantial support to the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) for police sustainment and capacity building and fully complements the training, advisory and monitoring activities under EUPOL. The EU funded through the IcSP two training centres.
EUAM Ukraine	ENI, IcSP	A review of existing EU instruments and programmes was carried out, before the CSDP mission on civilian Security Sector Reform was decided. The CSDP mission covers a need that could not be covered by other EU instruments. Coordination with other instruments will continue and EUAM will support the identification of future EU programmes in the civilian Security Sector.

<p>EUCAP Sahel Niger</p>	<p>EDF, IcSP</p>	<p>The EU Delegation coordinates all EU interventions in the security sector. This coordination is done through regular meetings and constant information exchange looking for synergies and increased EU impact. Examples of this coordination and cooperation are many training courses jointly organised by two or more EU projects and the joint intervention EUCAP-PAJED to set up and reinforce the capacity of crisis management centres in all regions.</p> <p>The security component of the EDF Support Programme for Justice and the Rule of Law (PAJED) includes one project implemented with EUCAP aimed at equipping and training Joint Operational Centres.</p> <p>An EDF project for local development of three northern regions (EUR 25.6 million) continues two short term IcSP interventions (EUR 29 million) with the objective of contributing to the stabilization of regions facing major security threats through structural and long term actions.</p> <p>EUCAP has taken over some activities of the CT-Sahel programme (IcSP long term), as its national component came to an end on October 2014.</p>
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EUCAP Sahel Mali	EDF, IcSP	<p>An EDF state-building contract supports the Malian Government to provide basic services through the process of transition and national reconciliation. In addition, a EUR 12 million EDF project aims at supporting justice reform</p> <p>Further, a first EUR 9 million ICSP program paved the way for the deployment of EUCAP Sahel Mali by equipping the Police and Gendarmerie units likely to benefit from the EUCAP trainings.</p> <p>A second program (EUR 5 million) is under consideration, aiming at renovating and equipping a central police station in Bamako. The technical assistance and the monitoring of the new structure would be provided by EUCAP.</p>
EUFOR RCA	EDF, IcSP	<p>Following a joint mission to CAR, EU instruments (mainly EDF and IcSP) re-focussed on-going programmes in order to achieve synergies with the Mission's efforts to contribute to a safe and secure environment in trouble spots in Bangui.</p> <p>This included a new IcSP decision (EUR 4 million) in favour of communities at risk, focussing on neighbourhoods where EUFOR is patrolling.</p>

<p>EUTM Somalia</p> <p>EUNAVFOR Atalanta</p> <p>EUCAP Nestor Horn of Africa</p>	<p>EDF, IcSP</p>	<p>Overall enshrined in the Somali Compact, also the three CSDP operations are having a specific coordination layer provided by the Activated OpCen that enables interaction with other EU instruments.</p> <p>To enhance the coherence, impact and visibility of the EU an EU Special Representative (EUSR) was appointed to contribute to the EU's regional approach to the interrelated challenges facing the Horn. EUSR has been instrumental for Somalia specific developments.</p> <p>IcSP Programme Critical Maritime Routes since 2009 conducts its activities to develop sustainable maritime security and maritime governance capacities in the region. EDF's Programme to Promote Regional Maritime Security (MASE) project also looks into long term capacity development in the area of maritime security.</p> <p>The EU's training mission (EUTM) aims at developing the Somali police forces. In addition, the EU contributes to an improved security situation in Somalia by providing substantial financial support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (almost EUR 771 million to date) through the African Peace Facility (APF) under the EDF.</p>
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EU BAM Rafah EUPOL COPPS	ENI	<p>EUPOL COPPS efforts to advance key reforms in both criminal justice and security sector are fully in line with the focus on Rule of Law of the EU's development cooperation with Palestine⁸² (focal sector n.1: Support to Governance at local and national level).</p> <p>The redeployment of EUBAM RAFAH at Gaza crossing points would be an important factor in allowing the successful implementation of the EU's development projects there (especially by facilitating the entry of building material into the Strip)</p>
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The EU is committed to further improve coordination and complementarity of its external action. Following up on the council conclusions on the comprehensive approach⁸³, the Commission presented an Action Plan in April 2015.

Also the enhanced role of the Vice-Presidents under European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker will foster a coherent and complementary application of the EU's external instruments. In this respect the High Representative of the Union/Vice-President of the Commission will steer and coordinate the work of all external relations Commissioners with regard to external action.

⁸² This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

⁸³ See Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach, 3312th Foreign Affairs Council meeting, 12.05.2014.