



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**NOTE**

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From: The General Secretariat

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To: Delegations

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Subject: Guidelines on marking EU classified information

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Delegations will find attached the "Guidelines on marking EU classified information" as approved by the Council Security Committee on 25 July 2011.

## GUIDELINES ON MARKING EU CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

### I. Introduction

1. These guidelines on marking EUCI are designed to support implementation of the Council Security Rules (hereafter the 'CSR')<sup>1</sup> and of the policy on creating EUCI<sup>2</sup>.
2. These guidelines list the security classification markings and other markings that must or may be affixed on EUCI. They explain how these will be applied and provide guidance on how to mark cover pages and parts of a given document.
3. The Council and the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) will apply these security guidelines in their structures and communication and information systems (CIS).
4. When EU classified information is handled in national structures, including national CIS, the Member States will use these security guidelines as a benchmark.
5. EU agencies and bodies established under Title V, Chapter 2, of the TEU, Europol and Eurojust should use these security guidelines as a reference for implementing security rules in their own structures.

### II. Types of marking

6. EUCI must always bear a security classification marking corresponding to its security classification level. In addition, it may bear other markings specifying, for example, the field to which it relates or a particular distribution on a need-to-know basis.

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<sup>1</sup> Council Decision 2011/292/EU of 31 March 2011 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 141, 27.05.2011, p.17).

<sup>2</sup> Doc. 10872/11 + COR 1.

## **Security classification markings**

7. A security classification level will be assigned, in accordance with the CSR and the policy on creating EUCI, where the unauthorised disclosure of any information or material could cause varying degrees of prejudice to the interests of the EU or of one or more of the Member States. Information is classified in accordance with the CSR at one of the following levels:

RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED

CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET UE/EU SECRET

TRES SECRET UE/EU TOP SECRET.

8. EUCI must be marked conspicuously with the appropriate marking, for example by affixing the marking at the top and bottom centre of a page or by using a colour other than the colour of the text.

### **Marking EUCI in electronic form**

9. EUCI in electronic form may only be handled or stored in CIS accredited by the responsible Security Accreditation Authority.
10. In accordance with these guidelines, it must be assured by approved means, whenever possible, that for the complete life cycle of EUCI in electronic form the marking remains an inseparable attribute of the information itself.
11. When classified information is handled or stored in CIS or portable storage media (such as floppy disks, CDs, memory sticks, SD-cards, hard disk drives or notebooks), the classification marking must be clearly visible on the displayed information itself as well as on the filename and on the storage device.

## Originator identifiers

12. The originator must be clearly identifiable. Where necessary, an originator identifier may be placed alongside or below every occurrence of the security classification marking. Two examples of this are:

CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL – BELGIUM

CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL  
EULEX KOSOVO

## Copy numbers

13. Copies of documents classified CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL and above must be marked with the copy number on every page. The number must be affixed by means which prevent its deletion.

## Caveats

14. EUCI may bear security caveats in addition to security classification markings. This kind of marking gives specific instructions on how to handle and manage the document or material. Caveats are not classifications in their own right.
15. Caveats may be of different types:
- (a) access limitation markings. Such markings should be clearly visible on the envelope in which the document is transmitted and on every page of the document. Two examples of this are:

PSC AMBASSADORS' EYES ONLY

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

- (b) restrictions on use. Such markings should be affixed on the first page of the document.  
Two examples of this are:

NOT TO BE COPIED OR TRANSLATED WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN  
CONSENT OF THE ORIGINATOR

NOT TO BE FURTHER DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN  
CONSENT OF THE ORIGINATOR

- (c) descriptors to describe the area or user community to which the document relates. Such markings should appear on the first page of the document. Apart from the subject-matter codes used in official Council documents, two examples are:

CSDP

CRYPTO

- (d) releasability markings. Such markings should be affixed alongside every occurrence of the security classification marking. Two examples are:

RELEASABLE TO [THIRD STATE]

RELEASABLE TO THE FADO COMMUNITY

- (e) indications for downgrading and declassification. Such markings should be affixed on the first page of the document. Any date given should appear in the format "Day.Month.Year". Two examples are:

RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED from [dd.mm.yyyy]

DECLASSIFIED WHEN PUBLISHED IN THE OJ

16. The GSC will keep an up-to-date list of markings used in the Council and distribute it to the Council Security Committee.

## Marking cover pages

17. A letter or note covering enclosures may have a lower classification level than its enclosures when detached from them. In that case, the classification level of the letter or note when detached from its enclosures must be clearly marked below the higher security classification marking, e.g.:

CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL Without attachment(s) RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED
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## The use of abbreviated security classification markings

18. Individual parts of a given document (i.e. pages, paragraphs, sections, annexes, appendices, attachments and enclosures) may require different classifications and will be marked accordingly, including when stored in electronic form. The following standard abbreviations may be used to indicate the classification level of such parts:

TRES SECRET UE/EU TOP SECRET	TS-UE/EU-TS
SECRET UE/EU SECRET	S-UE/EU-S
CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL	C-UE/EU-C
RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED	R-UE/EU-R

19. Examples of paragraph 18 are provided in Annex.
20. Abbreviated security classification markings may also be used whenever the available space does not allow for the use of the full marking.

Fig. 1 - Example of a document containing parts (of less than a single page) with different classification levels:

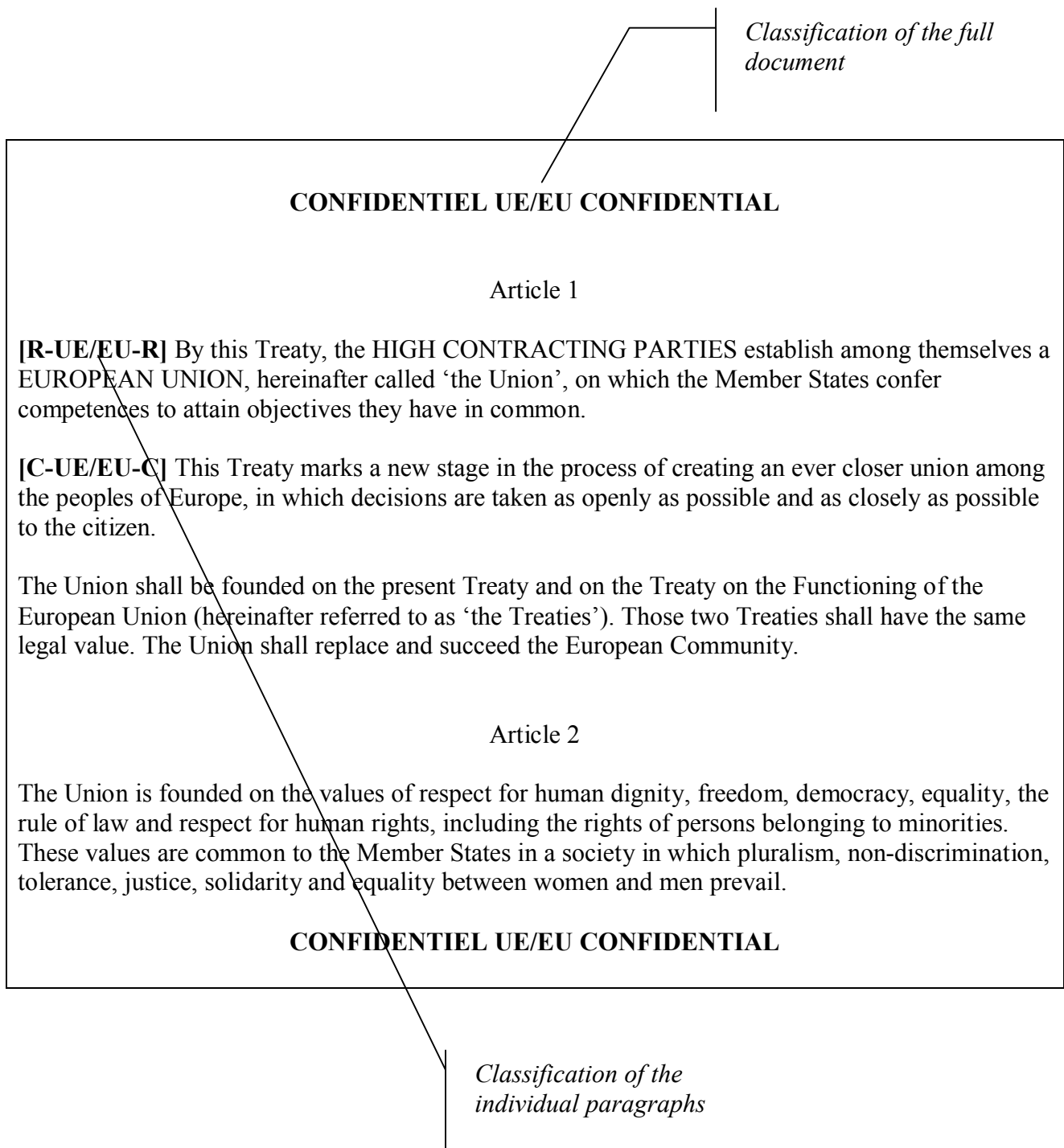


Fig 2 - Example of a web page containing documents with different classification levels:

The screenshot shows the CONSILIUM website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with 'Home', 'Council', 'Policies', 'Documents', 'Treaty of Lisbon', 'Contacts', and 'Press'. Below the navigation is a search bar and a language selector set to 'English (en)'. The main content area displays 'Simple Search Results' with a table of documents. The table has columns for 'Doc date', 'Classification', and 'Title'. The first row shows a document dated 22/03/2010 with classification [R-UE/EU-R]. The second row shows a document dated 3/06/2010 with classification [C-UE/EU-C]. The third row shows a document dated 8/06/2010 with classification [C-UE/EU-C]. The fourth row shows a document dated 24/06/2010 with classification [S-UE/EU-S]. Above the table, the text 'SECRET UE/EU SECRET' is displayed. Annotations with lines pointing to the browser window and the classification column of the table are labeled 'Classification of the web page' and 'Classification of referenced documents' respectively.

*Classification of the web page*

**SECRET UE/EU SECRET**

Simple Search Results

Doc date	Classification	Title
22/03/2010	[R-UE/EU-R]	"The importance of a visit by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to Gaza"
3/06/2010	[C-UE/EU-C]	Report on the implementation of the revised Strategy on Terrorist Financing
8/06/2010	[C-UE/EU-C]	Annual report from the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP
24/06/2010	[S-UE/EU-S]	Summary of the meeting of the Delegation for relations with Iran held in Brussels on 22 June 2010

*Classification of referenced documents*