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European Union

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From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

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Subject: Council Conclusions on Bosnia and Herzegovina/Operation EUFOR Althea
- Council Conclusions (12 October 2020)

Delegations will find in the Annex the Council Conclusions on Bosnia and Herzegovina/Operation EUFOR Althea, as adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 12 October 2020.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA/OPERATION EUFOR ALTHEA**

1. The Council reiterates its unequivocal commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU perspective as a single, united and sovereign country. With local elections set to take place in the country on 15 November 2020, the Council welcomes that for the first time since 2008 local elections will also take place in the city of Mostar on 20 December 2020. The Council calls on all political actors to refrain from provocative and divisive rhetoric during the electoral period and to focus on addressing the 14 key priorities identified in the Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina application for EU membership as endorsed by the Council in 2019, and in line with the interests of all citizens to advance towards the European Union.
2. The Council welcomes the continued presence of Operation Althea, which in the follow up of the Strategic Reviews 2017 and 2019 has refocused on its core mandate, while retaining the collective training as a task of the Operation. In this context, as part of the overall EU strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council reaffirms the EU's readiness to continue the executive mandate of the Operation to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's authorities to maintain the safe and secure environment, under a renewed UN authorisation.
3. The Council notes the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and commends the Operation for remaining fully operational and continuing to support the country in these difficult times.
4. The Council looks forward to the presentation of the next Strategic Review by mid-2021 as a basis for discussion on EUFOR's future tasks and the way forward of the Operation, also bearing in mind the need to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress in its EU integration process and taking into account the security situation on the ground.

5. The Council recognises the importance of continued coordination of EUFOR Althea with other international actors on the ground.

 6. The EU continues to urge the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the international community, to maintain their efforts in the further disposal of ammunition, weapons and explosives surplus, as well as in demining.
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