



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Conclusions of the Council of the EU and the Member States meeting within the Council on ensuring respect for the rule of law

At its meeting on 16 December 2014, the Council (General Affairs) and the Member States meeting within the Council adopted the Conclusions set out in the Annex to this note.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL ON ENSURING RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW

- WELCOMING the note of the Presidency on “Ensuring Respect for the Rule of Law”¹;
- EMPHASIZING that the European Union and its Institutions are committed to promoting EU values, including respect for the rule of law as laid down in the Treaties ;
- UNDERLINING that the rule of law is one of the key values on which the Union is founded;
- EMPHASIZING the role of the Council in promoting a culture of respect for the rule of law within the European Union;

¹ 16862/14 + COR 1

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE MEMBER STATES MEETING
WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

1. commit themselves to establishing a dialogue among all Member States within the Council to promote and safeguard the rule of law in the framework of the Treaties;
2. underline that this dialogue will be based on the principles of objectivity, non discrimination and equal treatment of all Member States;
3. agree that this dialogue will be conducted on a non partisan and evidence-based approach;
4. emphasize that such an approach will be without prejudice to the principle of conferred competences, as well as the respect of national identities of Member States inherent in their fundamental political and constitutional structures, inclusive of regional and local self-government, and their essential State functions, including ensuring the territorial integrity of the State, maintaining law and order and safeguarding national security, and should be brought forward in light of the principle of sincere cooperation.
5. agree that this dialogue will be developed in a way which is complementary with other EU Institutions and International Organisations, avoiding duplication and taking into account existing instruments and expertise in this area;
6. agree that this dialogue will take place once a year in the Council, in its General Affairs configuration, and be prepared by the COREPER (Presidency), following an inclusive approach. The Council will consider, as needed, to launch debates on thematic subject matters. The Presidency will ensure the full respect of the principles mentioned above (paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5) throughout the organisation of the dialogue;
7. will evaluate, by the end of 2016, the experience acquired on the basis of this dialogue.