



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	20 May 2022
To:	Delegations

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Subject:	2021 Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's External Action Instruments in 2020 - Council conclusions (20 May 2022)
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Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on the 2021 Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's external action instruments in 2020, as approved by the Council at its 3870th meeting held on 20 May 2022.

**2021 Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's External Action
Instruments in 2020
Council conclusions**

1. The Council welcomes the Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's external action instruments in 2020. The report is an important means of communication to inform citizens and stakeholders, as well as to enhance the transparency and accountability on the implementation and results of EU external action and its contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), along with the Paris Agreement.
2. The Council appreciates that the report covers key aspects of the EU financial support in 2020 for international cooperation and development, European Neighbourhood Policy, humanitarian aid and civil protection, EU enlargement, peace, security and defence, crisis response and preparedness, human rights and democracy, gender equality and support to EU foreign policy objectives. It welcomes the report's effort to show progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. It also welcomes the report's effort to show how the EU's external action contributes to EU policy priorities and geopolitical role.
3. The Council calls for reinforced 'Shared Vision', 'Common Action' and 'working better together' as advocated in the Global Strategy for the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, and in the New European Consensus on Development, including the advancement towards a more joined-up, responsive, inclusive, efficient and stronger Union external action, bearing in mind the humanitarian-development-peace Nexus.
4. The Council highlights the importance of building strong international partnerships in line with EU values and interests, while pursuing effective multilateralism with the United Nations at its core, and strengthening rules-based international cooperation. The Council recalls that a multilateral order grounded in international law, including the principles of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is the only guarantee for peace and security at home and abroad.

5. The Council stresses the importance of focusing on the specific results of EU external action. It appreciates the improved reporting by Commission services and the EEAS on concrete results of EU projects and programmes, including by providing broader data coverage. It welcomes the integration of results reporting in the thematic chapters of the Report. It also welcomes efforts to respond to its call to closely coordinate and jointly design, implement and monitor Team Europe Initiatives in an inclusive manner.
6. The Council welcomes the stronger emphasis put in the Report on the geographic chapter, which reviews how the EU's external action contributes to EU policy priorities in every geographical region in which it operates.
7. The Council welcomes the reporting on the EU's global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including on the achievements of the Team Europe approach to the benefit of the people most affected by the crisis. It calls upon the Commission services and the EEAS to develop this focus on Team Europe, and its impact, including how EU funding has targeted the people most affected by the crisis, in the next iteration of the report.
8. The Council looks forward to future reports presenting progress made in implementing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-GE), in line with article 41 of that Regulation. With the objective of a timely publication, the Council asks the Commission services and the EEAS to reflect on possible ways to streamline future reports, notably descriptive parts of the staff-working document.
9. The Council calls upon the Commission services and the EEAS to continue to improve the strategic communication and outreach of the European Union on its external action, including through Team Europe initiatives. The Council also supports the scaling-up of successful communication measures aiming at all relevant target groups through campaigns and thematic events to increase impact and visibility of the EU external action and to tackle disinformation.