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Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 27-28 May 2013

President **Catherine Ashton**
High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

P R E S S

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Main results of the Council

*The Council discussed the latest developments in the **Syrian crisis** and repeated its call for an end to all violence. It also reemphasised the urgent need for a political solution to the conflict and welcomed the joint US-Russia call for a peace conference on Syria to promote a political process based on the principles included in the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012. The EU will spare no effort in helping to create the appropriate conditions for the conference to be convened successfully.*

The Council also approved elements on the renewal of EU sanctions against Syria. It agreed to adopt financial and economic sanctions when the current sanctions regime expires. At the same time, it took note of commitments by member states concerning possible arms exports to Syria.

*The Council welcomed the outcome of the high-level donor conference for development in support of the plan for the sustainable recovery of **Mali** and was encouraged by the efforts made by the Malian authorities to accelerate the implementation of the transition roadmap.*

*Development ministers held their six-monthly meeting with the Foreign Affairs Council. The Council established the EU position on the financial protocol concerning the **11th European Development Fund** for 2014 to 2020. In total, EUR 31.5 billion will be available for ACP states in that period.*

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (http://www.consilium.europa.eu).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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Mr Jean-Pascal LABILLE	Minister for Public Enterprises and Development Cooperation
Bulgaria:	
Mr Ivan NAYDENOV	Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Emil YALNAZOV	Director-General for Global Affairs and Human Rights
Czech Republic:	
Mr Karel SCHWARZENBERG	First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Vladimír GALUŠKA	Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Denmark:	
Mr Villy SØVNDAL	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Christian FRIIS BACH	Minister for Development Cooperation
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Mr Guido WESTERWELLE	Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Dirk NIEBEL	Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development
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Mr Matti MAASIKAS	Permanent Representative
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Mr Eamon GILMORE	Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade
Mr Joe COSTELLO	Minister of State with the responsibility for Trade and Development
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Mr Dimitrios AVRAMOPOULOS	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Théodoros SOTIROPOULOS	Permanent Representative
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Mr Jesús Manuel GRACIA ALDAZ	State Secretary for International Cooperation and Latin America
France:	
Mr Laurent FABIUS	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Pascal CANFIN	Minister with responsibility for Development, attached to the Minister for Foreign Affairs
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Ms Emma BONINO	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Lapo PISTELLI	Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Cyprus:	
Mr Ioannis KASOULIDES	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Kornelios KORNELIOU	Permanent Representative

Latvia:	
Mr Edgars RINKĒVIČS	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Viktors MAKAROVS	Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Lithuania:	
Mr Linas A. LINKEVIČIUS	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Rolandas KRIŠČIŪNAS	Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Luxembourg:	
Mr Jean ASSELBORN	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Marc SPAUTZ	Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs
Hungary:	
Mr János MARTONYI	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Szabolcs TAKÁCS	Deputy State Secretary for Global Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Malta:	
Mr George VELLA	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Netherlands:	
Mr Frans TIMMERMANS	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mrs Lilianne PLOUMEN	Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation
Austria:	
Mr Michael SPINDELEGGER	Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for European and International Affairs
Mr Hubert HEISS	Ambassador, Acting Permanent Representative
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Mr Radosław SIKORSKI	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ms Katarzyna PEŁCZYŃSKA-NAŁĘCZ	Deputy State Secretary for Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Mr Paulo PORTAS	Ministro de Estado, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Francisco ALMEIDA LEITE	State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
Romania:	
Mr Titus CORLĂȚEAN	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Adrian BRATU	Ambassador, Representative to the Political and Security Committee
Slovenia:	
Mr Karl ERJAVEC	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Mitja ŠTRUKELJ	Ambassador, Director General for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Mr Miroslav LAJČÁK	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Peter BURIAN	State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Finland:	
Mr Erkki TUOMIOJA	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ms Heidi HAUTALA	Minister for International Development
Sweden:	
Mr Carl BILDT	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ms Sofia STRAND	State Secretary to the Minister for Development Assistance
United Kingdom:	
Mr William HAGUE	First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Ms Justine GREENING	Secretary of State for International Development

Commission:

Ms Maria DAMANAKI	Member
Ms Kristalina GEORGIEVA	Member
Mr Štefan FÜLE	Member
Mr Janez POTOČNIK	Member
Mr Andris PIEBALGS	Member

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The Government of the Acceding State was represented as follows:

Croatia:

Ms Vesna PUSIĆ	First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs
Mr Vladimir DROBNJAK	Ambassador, Head of Mission of the Republic of Croatia to the EU

ITEMS DEBATED

Southern neighbourhood - Syria

The Council held an in-depth discussion on the situation in Syria, in particular on recent efforts to revive political negotiations between the parties as well as on EU sanctions against Syria.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. The EU is appalled by the escalating violence and the continued widespread and systematic gross violations of human rights in Syria, reiterates its condemnation of the atrocities committed by the Syrian regime, which according to the report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry amount to crimes against humanity, and calls for the end of all violence. The EU is seriously concerned with the ongoing military operations conducted by the regime and its supporters in the city of Qusayr. The EU condemns the recent massacres committed by the Syrian armed forces and its militias in Bayda and Baniyas that claimed the lives of more than 140 people, including women and children.

The EU is deeply concerned with the rise of religiously or ethnically motivated violence. The EU calls for the immediate release of the two recently kidnapped orthodox bishops.

The EU deplores serious abuses, including war crimes that are being committed by anti-Government armed groups documented in the report of the Commission of Inquiry, although such abuses do not reach the intensity and scale of those committed by the regime forces and affiliated militias. The EU calls on all sides to fully respect the freedom of movement and physical integrity of all UNDOF and UNTSO personnel. In this regard the EU condemns all instances of hostage taking of peacekeepers.

2. The EU reiterates the urgent need for a political solution of the conflict and welcomes the joint US-Russian call for a peace conference on Syria to promote a political process based on the principles included in the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012. The EU will spare no effort in helping to create the appropriate conditions for a successful convening of this conference. The EU calls on both sides of the conflict to respond positively to this call and to engage openly in a genuine Syrian-led process of negotiations, aiming at a democratic and peaceful political solution on the basis of the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012, which foresees inter alia the establishment, on the basis of mutual consent, of a transitional governing body, which would exercise full executive powers. The EU will continue to work with all interested parties, specifically with the UN, the League of Arab States, the Joint Special Representative Brahimi, and all those sincerely committed to the success of this initiative.

3. The EU welcomes the declaration of 20 April 2013 by the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (SOC) – which the EU accepts as legitimate representatives of the Syrian people – setting out the principles of a democratic, pluralistic and inclusive Syria respectful of human rights, including the rights of religious and ethnic minorities, and the rule of law, rejecting extremism and committing to guarantee the security of the chemical weapons present in Syria as well as to support non-proliferation international efforts and comply with its international obligations on that matter. The EU welcomes the adoption of the resolution on the situation in Syria by the United Nations General Assembly on May 15th that, inter alia, supported a political process based on the Geneva Communiqué and welcomed the establishment of the SOC as effective representative interlocutors needed for a political transition.

   The EU underlines the importance of the ongoing meeting of the SOC General Assembly in Istanbul. The EU calls on the SOC and all opposition groups to continue to work towards a political settlement and to enhance inclusiveness. A stronger and more united opposition that represents a credible alternative for all Syrians remains essential. The EU strongly encourages the Coalition to participate in the planned peace conference and to lead the opposition delegation. The EU stands ready to continue engaging with and to support the Coalition in these endeavours and its relations with the international community at large.

4. The EU urges all parties to the conflict to fully respect international humanitarian and human rights law. All those responsible for atrocities and human rights violations and abuses must be held accountable. The EU reaffirms that there should be no impunity for any such violations and recalls that the UNSC can refer the situation in Syria to the ICC, as requested in the Swiss letter to the SC of 14 January 2013, at any time. The EU calls on Syria to allow the Commission of Inquiry immediate, full and unfettered access throughout the country. The EU calls on the UNSC to urgently address the situation in Syria in all aspects, including these issues. The EU reiterates its condemnation of terrorist attacks of any nature.

5. The EU demands that all parties ensure safe and unimpeded access for aid organisations to those in need in all areas of Syria. It deplores the obstacles to the provision of humanitarian assistance and underlines to all parties, in particular the Government of Syria, the urgent need to remove them. It emphasises the need for all parties in Syria, and in particular the Syrian authorities, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and relevant humanitarian organisations. The provision of emergency assistance must be facilitated through all possible humanitarian channels, including across borders and across conflict lines, in order to reach all those in need. The EU reiterates its call to ensure the safety of all humanitarian workers and its demand for the specific protection provided to medical personnel and facilities.

The EU renews its commitment to respond to humanitarian needs in Syria and its neighbouring countries, notably Lebanon and Jordan as well as countries of the broader region in accordance with the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. The EU commends those countries that keep their borders open in order to provide safe haven for refugees and also expresses concern about the fate of Palestinian refugees.

The EU calls on all donors to fulfil their pledges made at the Kuwait humanitarian conference of 31 January and to commit to provide further support to those in need.

6. The EU remains deeply concerned by the spill-over of the Syrian crisis in neighbouring countries and supports their efforts to contain it.

The EU is seriously concerned with the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fuelling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability.

The EU remains committed to the sovereignty, independence and the territorial integrity of Syria.

7. The EU expresses its great concern regarding the possible use of chemical weapons in Syria. The EU reiterates the importance of the role of the fact-finding mission established by the United Nations Secretary General to investigate the allegations of use of chemical weapons in Syria. The EU calls on the Syrian authorities to co-operate fully with the investigation and allow it full and unfettered access throughout the country without delay. The use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances is completely unacceptable. The EU will increase coordination with international partners on the threat of chemical and biological weapons and explore ways of cooperation, also with partners in the region and relevant international organisations and bodies in particular to prevent and combat the risk of voluntary or accidental spread of such weapons to neighbouring countries.

8. The EU will pursue its efforts to reinforce its assistance and support to the civilian population, in coordination with the Assistant Coordination Unit of the SOC and with local civilian structures in order to maintain or re-establish basic services for the benefit of the civilian population.

The EU remains committed to deliver non-humanitarian assistance through all possible channels in order to reach as many people in need as possible and continues its efforts within the Working Group on Economic Recovery to ensure close coordination with other international actors. In order to ensure effective delivery of help to those most in need inside Syria, the EU welcomes the work to establish the Syrian Recovery Trust Fund being taken forward by the co-chairs of the Working Group on Economic Recovery.

The EU will continue to work closely with international partners on planning to ensure that the international community is ready to provide rapid support to Syria once transition takes place. The EU will start without delay to work on articulating a comprehensive response to challenges that shall arise in the post-crisis context, including on justice and security."

The Council agreed the following declaration:

"The Council agreed the following elements on the renewal of the restrictive measures against Syria:

1) At the expiry of the current sanctions regime, the Council will adopt for a period of 12 months restrictive measures in the following fields, as specified in Council Decision 2012/739/CFSP:

– Export and import restrictions with the exception of arms and related material and equipment which might be used for internal repression;

– Restrictions on financing of certain enterprises;

– Restrictions on infrastructure projects;

– Restrictions of financial support for trade;

– Financial sector;

– Transport sector;

– Restrictions on admission;

– Freezing of funds and economic resources.

2) With regard to the possible export of arms to Syria, the Council took note of the commitment by Member States to proceed in their national policies as follows:

– the sale, supply, transfer or export of military equipment or of equipment which might be used for internal repression will be for the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces and intended for the protection of civilians;

– Member States shall require adequate safeguards against misuse of authorisations granted, in particular relevant information concerning the end-user and final destination of the delivery;

– Member States shall assess the export licence applications on a case-by-case basis, taking full account of the criteria set out in Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment.

Member States will not proceed at this stage with the delivery of the equipment mentioned above.

The Council will review its position before 1 August 2013 on the basis of a report by the High Representative, after having consulted the UN Secretary General, on the developments related to the US-Russia initiative and on the engagement of the Syrian parties."

Common Security and Defence Policy

The Council discussed the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), in preparation for the European Council on security and defence in December 2013.

The December 2012 European Council asked for preparatory work on three issues: increasing the effectiveness, visibility and impact of the CSDP; enhancing the development of defence capabilities; and strengthening Europe's defence industry. The EU High Representative is expected to present by September 2013 proposals on strengthening CSDP and improving the availability of the required capabilities (see *European Council conclusions*, paras 20 to 25).

Mali

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. The European Union (EU) welcomes the outcome and the conclusions of the high-level donor conference for development in Mali held on 15 May in Brussels in support of the Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali. The EU calls on Mali and all international partners to implement their mutual commitments as part of an effective and coordinated follow-up to the conference. The EU emphasises that Mali is entirely responsible for implementing the Transition Roadmap.

2. The EU is encouraged by the efforts made by the Malian authorities to accelerate the implementation of the Transition Roadmap, in particular the adoption of a revised legal and administrative framework for the presidential elections in July. The EU reiterates its support for the preparation of a credible electoral process and its readiness to continue to provide technical and financial assistance for such a process, in close coordination with the United Nations, under the direction of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations for Mali, and the other parties involved on the ground. In that context, the Council supports the decision of the High Representative to deploy an election observation mission at the request of the transitional authorities.

3. The EU recalls the importance it attaches to the protection of civilian populations, to the observance of human rights and to compliance with international humanitarian law. The fight against impunity and the full implementation of justice must constitute a fundamental element of reconciliation.

4. The EU reiterates its support for the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission and encourages it to start work as soon as possible in order to ensure a national, inclusive dialogue open both to civilian representatives and to non-criminal and non-terrorist armed groups that have laid down their weapons. The EU also welcomes the appointment of a Government representative to lead talks with those groups provided that they are committed to respecting Mali's unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty. It is of the utmost importance that conditions should exist for State administration to be re-established throughout the territory of Mali and for elections to be held, including in the Kidal region and in refugee camps.

5. The EU welcomes the crucial contribution made by the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to the full restoration of Mali's territorial integrity and supports its conversion into a United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) under United Nations Security Council resolution 2100 (2013). MINUSMA will make a significant contribution to the protection of civilian populations throughout the country's territory.

6. The Council reiterates its readiness to discuss, in the context of the CSDP and other relevant instruments and in the light of the conclusions of the donors' conference, the options for urgent support for the Malian authorities in the area of internal security and justice in order to contribute to the lasting stabilisation of the whole country, in close collaboration with MINUSMA.

7. The Council welcomes the progress made by the EUTM Mali military mission in providing advice and training to the Malian Armed Forces, including in the areas of human rights and international humanitarian law. The Council encourages the Member States and Mali's international partners to provide or increase their support in order to endow the African and Malian forces with the resources and equipment necessary for the performance of their assignments. It welcomes the commitments already made and the contributions received in this context.

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Niger

8. Regarding the region as a whole, the EU reaffirms its commitment to the fight against terrorism and to fostering, in coordination with its international partners, security and development in the Sahel. In this regard, the Council condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks of 23 May 2013 in Agadez and Arlit, in Niger."

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Food and nutrition security

The Council adopted conclusions on food and nutrition security in external assistance (see *9328/13*).

Agenda for change

The Council debated the implementation of the "agenda for change" in connection with the planning of EU development aid in the coming years.

Overarching post-2015 framework

The Council discussed the overarching framework for the period after 2015 when the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expire. It endorsed Council conclusions that will be adopted by the General Affairs Council on 25 June.

Working lunch

During the working lunch, ministers exchanged views with UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson on preparations for the UN special event on the Millennium Development Goals, to take place in New York in September. They also discussed Afghanistan, Myanmar/Burma and what development cooperation can do to support transition processes.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Arms Trade Treaty

The Council authorised EU member states to sign the Arms Trade Treaty with respect to matters falling under the exclusive competence of the Union. It encouraged member states to sign the Arms Trade Treaty at the solemn ceremony in New York on 3 June or at the earliest possible date.

Libya - restrictive measures

The Council amended legislation implementing the EU restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya. Changes were made to take account of modifications adopted by the UN Security Council.

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

EU police mission in Afghanistan

The Council extended the EU police mission in Afghanistan until 31 December 2014. For more information, see press release *9481/13*.

EULEX Kosovo

The Council allocated a budget of EUR 110 million to the EU rule of law mission in Kosovo to cover the period from 15 June 2013 until 14 June 2014.

Annual report on CSDP-related training

The Council noted the comprehensive annual report on the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and CSDP-related training in 2012. It also approved its conclusions as a basis for further action to improve training in the field of CSDP.

EUBAM Libya

The Council authorised the opening of negotiations with Libya for an agreement on the status of the EU integrated border management assistance mission in Libya (EUBAM Libya).

Civilian CSDP missions

The Council took note of the third report on member states' progress in facilitating the deployment of civilian personnel to Common Security and Defence Policy missions.

Defence cooperation with Serbia

The Council approved an administrative arrangement between the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia, with a view to its conclusion by the EDA steering board. The arrangement sets out procedures for a mutual exchange of information as well as for Serbia's participation in EDA projects and programmes.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

EU approach to resilience

The Council adopted conclusions on the EU approach to resilience, as set out in document *9325/13*.

European Development Fund

The Council adopted conclusions on a special report by the EU Court of Auditors on "The European Development Fund contribution to a sustainable road network in sub-Saharan Africa", as set out in document *8857/13*.

Relations with ACP states

The Council approved the draft annotated agenda for the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, to be held in Brussels on 6/7 June.

Development cooperation with Somalia

The Council adopted the EU position for the upcoming ACP-EU Council of Ministers: The EU will accept the request of the Federal Republic of Somalia to accede to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement ("Cotonou Agreement").

11th European Development Fund

The Council established the EU position on the financial protocol concerning the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) for 2014 to 2020. The ACP-EU Council of Ministers on 6/7 June in Brussels is expected to finalise and adopt the protocol, which will be added to the Cotonou Agreement.

In total, EUR 31.5 billion will be available for ACP states between 2014 and 2020: EUR 29 billion of this amount will come from the 11th EDF while an additional EUR 2.5 billion will be made available by the European Investment Bank.

EU development aid targets

The Council adopted conclusions on the annual report to the European Council on EU development aid targets, set out in *9334/13*.