



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



6755/07 (Presse 38)

PRESS RELEASE

2788th Council meeting

General Affairs and External Relations

General Affairs

Brussels, 5 March 2007

President **Mr Frank-Walter Steinmeier**
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany

* The 2789th meeting on External Relations is the subject of a separate press release (6756/07).

P R E S S

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6755/07 (Presse 38)

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Main results of the Council

*The Council approved a draft programme, entitled Daphne III, aimed at preventing and **combating violence against children**, young people and women and protecting victims and groups at risk. It provided for a financial envelope amounting to EUR 116.85 million for the 2007-13 period. The text will now be sent to the European Parliament for a second reading under the Parliament-Council codecision procedure.*

*The Council also approved the establishment of an instrument for the financing of Community action in the field of **civil protection**. It provided for a financial envelope amounting to EUR 189.8 million for the 2007-13 period.*

*And it decided not to accept the European Parliament's amendments regarding the EU's financial instrument for the **environment**, Life +. It accordingly decided to convene the Parliament-Council conciliation committee with a view to negotiating a joint text.*

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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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PARTICIPANTS

The governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Karel DE GUCHT
Mr Didier DONFUT

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for European Affairs, attached to the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Bulgaria:

Mr Ivailo KALFIN

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Czech Republic:

Mr Alexandr VONDRA

Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for European
Affairs

Mr Karel SCHWARZENBERG

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Per Stig MØLLER

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Frank-Walter STEINMEIER
Mr Günter GLOSER

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Estonia:

Mr Väino REINART

Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Noel TREACY

Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach and
Foreign Affairs (with special responsibility for European
Affairs)

Greece:

Ms Dora BAKOYANNI
Mr Ioannis VALINAKIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr Miguel Ángel MORATINOS
Mr Alberto NAVARRO

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
State Secretary for the European Union

France:

Ms Catherine COLONNA

Minister with responsibility for European Affairs

Italy:

Mr Massimo D'ALEMA

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Cyprus:

Mr Yiorgos LILLIKAS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Latvia:

Mr Artis PABRIKS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Lithuania:

Mr Zygimantas PAVILIONIS

Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean ASSELBORN

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister with responsibility for
Foreign Affairs and Immigration

Mr Nicolas SCHMIT

Minister with responsibility for Foreign Affairs and
Immigration

Hungary:

Ms Kinga GÖNCZ
Mr Gábor IVÁN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary (with special responsibility), Ministry of
Foreign Affairs

Malta:

Mr Michael FRENDU

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr Maxime VERHAGEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr Franciscus TIMMERMANS	Minister for European Affairs
<u>Austria:</u> Ms Ursula PLASSNIK Mr Hans WINKLER	Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<u>Poland:</u> Ms Anna Elżbieta FOTYGA	Minister for Foreign Affairs
<u>Portugal:</u> Mr Luís AMADO Mr Manuel LOBO ANTUNES	Ministro de Estado, Minister for Foreign Affairs Secretary of State for European Affairs
<u>Romania:</u> Mr Mihai-Răzvan UNGUREANU	Minister for Foreign Affairs
<u>Slovenia:</u> Mr Dimitrij RUPEL Mr Janez LENARČIČ	Minister for Foreign Affairs State Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister
<u>Slovakia:</u> Mr Ján KUBIŠ	Minister for Foreign Affairs
<u>Finland:</u> Mr Erkki TUOMIOJA	Minister for Foreign Affairs
<u>Sweden:</u> Mr Carl BILDT Ms Cecilia MALMSTRÖM	Minister for Foreign Affairs Minister for European Affairs
<u>United Kingdom:</u> Ms Margaret BECKETT Mr Geoff HOON	Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Minister of State for Europe
.....	
<u>Commission:</u> Ms Margot WALLSTRÖM	Vice President
.....	
<u>General Secretariat of the Council:</u> Mr Javier SOLANA	Secretary-General/High Representative for the CFSP

ITEMS DEBATED**PREPARATION OF THE SPRING MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL**

The Council examined draft conclusions prepared by the Presidency for the European Council meeting to be held in Brussels on 8 and 9 March.

The European Council will focus on energy and climate policy, as well as on its annual review of the strategy for growth and jobs that it established at Lisbon in March 2000 and re-launched in March 2005. On the Lisbon strategy, it is due to endorse country-specific recommendations for economic and employment policies at national level, as well as specific recommendations for the euro area.

The European Council's agenda is as follows:

- Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs;
- the EU's "*better regulation*" initiative;
- an integrated energy and climate policy: "*energy policy for Europe*" action plan.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**EXTERNAL RELATIONS****International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia - Restrictive measures**

The Council adopted a common position extending for 12 months, until 16 March 2008, common position 2004/293/CFSP on measures in support of the effective implementation of the mandate of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) (6218/07).

In addition, following the death of Mr Ratomir Spajic, his name has been removed from the list of persons subject to the measures.

The measures are intended to prevent entry into the EU of persons who are engaged in activities that help persons at large continue to evade justice for crimes for which ICTY has indicted them, or are otherwise acting in a manner which could obstruct ICTY's effective implementation of its mandate. The list of persons, which was first drawn up in April 2003, now includes 35 persons subject to the travel ban.

Relations with Albania - Interim agreement

The Council approved the position to be adopted by the Community, within the joint committee referred to in the interim agreement on trade and trade-related matters with Albania, with regard to the adoption of its rules of procedure including the terms of reference and structure of EU-Albania working parties.

European Neighbourhood Policy - Agencies and programmes - Council conclusions

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council welcomed the Commission's Communication of 4 December 2006 as a substantial contribution to enhancing the EU's cooperation with its partners in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). It expressed its support for the general and gradual approach outlined in the Communication to enable ENP partners to participate in Community agencies and Community programmes on their merits and where the legal bases so allow. The Council encouraged stakeholders – the Commission, Community agencies and all ENP partners, in particular those implementing Action Plans – to explore, in direct consultations, their potential to this end. It recalled the need for the Council to approve individual agreements on participation in any Community agency on a case-by-case basis. Regarding Community programmes, the Council invited the Commission to recommend negotiating directives to establish relevant Protocols to partners' Association or Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, on a country-by-country basis. The Council further encouraged ENP partners to examine the possibilities to deepen their cooperation with third-pillar agencies in the field of justice, liberty and security."

Relations with Egypt - Implementation of the Egypt action plan

The Council approved the position to be adopted by the EU within the EU-Egypt Association Council with regard to the adoption of a recommendation on implementation of the EU-Egypt action plan (16412/06).

The action plan, established as part of the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy, is aimed at developing its strategic partnership with a significant degree of economic integration and a deepening of political, cultural and social cooperation.

The Council also approved a decision on the position to be adopted by the EU within the EU-Egypt Association Council on the establishment, under the Euro-Mediterranean agreement with Egypt, of working groups to deal in particular with migration, social and consular affairs (16413/06).

Afghanistan - Drugs and the rule of law - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council recognises the significant and detrimental impact that production and trafficking in drugs are having upon the stability and security of Afghanistan and the surrounding region as well as internationally, including on the EU Member States themselves.

The Council reaffirms its commitment to supporting the Government of Afghanistan, which has primary ownership of the process, in its efforts to tackle drugs through the National Drug Control Strategy, including anti-corruption efforts, and calls on Member States to continue their support, in particular through the rapid implementation of the recommendations in the EU's Action-Oriented Paper "Increasing EU support for combating drug production in and trafficking from Afghanistan, including transit routes".

The Council reaffirms its support for the Government of Afghanistan's efforts to promote and extend the rule of law through development of the police, courts, prisons and the wider justice system, and recognises the important role of counter-narcotics as part of this. The Council welcomes the Commission's current and planned activities in support of existing justice programmes, in particular an initiative under the North-South Drugs budget line to strengthen cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours against precursor diversion and its intention that an early project funded under the EU's new Stability Instrument will also target this region."

GENERAL AFFAIRS

The EU in 2006 - Annual report

The Council approved a draft report on progress of the European Union in 2006, with a view to its adoption by the European Council on 8/9 March. The report will then be submitted to the European Parliament pursuant to article 4 of the EU Treaty (6657/07).

Proceedings in the Council's different configurations

The Council took note of a report from the Presidency on proceedings in its different configurations (6709/07).

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**Civil protection financial instrument ***

The Council adopted a Decision establishing an instrument for the financing of Community action in the field of civil protection for the 2007-2013 period (5215/07 and 6974/07).

The new financial instrument will :

- form the financial basis for response and preparedness actions covered by the EU civil protection mechanism, enabling it from now on :
 - to provide the EU assessment and coordination experts with adequate supporting equipment, in particular communication tools,
 - to assist Member States in identifying transport resources and equipment that may be available from other sources, such as the commercial market,
 - to finance up to 50% of the cost of additional transport resources used by Member States for response under the mechanism; this is however subject to strict criteria regarding the necessity of both the assistance and the transport needed for the delivery of that assistance. There are also strict conditions of economy, efficiency and effectiveness of transport and as regards not releasing the Member States from their duty to create sufficient civil protection capabilities;
- form the legal and financial basis for a strengthened implementation of actions covered until now by the 2000-2006 civil protection action programme, such as prevention (study of the causes of disasters, forecasting, information and disaster awareness) and preparedness (training, networking, exercises, mobilisation of expertise) within the EU;
- cover new areas, in particular contributing to the development and establishment of detection and early warning systems through need and feasibility studies and through actions to promote their interlinkage and their linkages to the mechanism.

The financial envelope allocated to the instrument under the EU's 2007-2013 financial framework amounts to EUR 189.8 million.

The Community civil protection mechanism, established by Council Decision 2001/792/EC, Euratom, has a database of Member State civil protection resources, a 24-hour monitoring and information centre, and a common emergency communication and information system enabling a rapid spread and pooling of calls for and offers of assistance. The mechanism can provide technical support (satellite images) and allows training courses, exercises and exchanges of experts. The Council is currently preparing a revision of the mechanism, on the basis of a Commission proposal, which would among other things, promote a "modular approach" in the composition and operation of the civil protection intervention teams.

Schengen - Communication infrastructure - "SISNET"

The Council adopted a Decision amending financial rules relating to the communication network for the Schengen environment, mainly with a view to incorporating in the network Member States that joined the EU in 2004 (6606/07).

The Council also adopted a Decision authorising the deputy Secretary-General of the Council to act as representative of certain EU Member States for the purpose of concluding and managing contracts relating to the provision of services concerning a communication infrastructure for the Schengen environment, pending its migration to a communication infrastructure at the charge of the European Community (6605/07).

Schengen Information System - Budget

The representatives of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted a multiannual table of authorised C.SIS (Central site of the Schengen information system) installation expenditure as at 31 December 2005 (6412/07).

SOCIAL POLICY

Prevention of violence against children, young people and women - Daphne III programme*

The Council adopted a common position on a draft decision establishing for the 2007-2013 period a specific programme to prevent and combat violence against children, young people and women and to protect victims and groups at risk (Daphne III), as part of the EU's general programme "Fundamental rights and justice" (16367/06 and 6483/07 ADD1).

The common position will be sent to the European Parliament for a second reading under the Parliament-Council codecision procedure.

The aim of the programme is to fight all forms of violence occurring in the public and private domain, including sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings, by preventive measures, support and protection for victims and groups at risk.

The financial envelope allocated to the Daphne III programme amounts to EUR 116.85 million for the 2007-2013 period.

For more details see press release 15487/06, p. 41.

ENVIRONMENT

Financial instrument for EU environment actions

The Council decided not to accept all the European Parliament's second reading amendments to a draft Regulation concerning the EU's financial instrument for the environment (Life+).

It accordingly decided to convene the Parliament-Council conciliation committee with a view to negotiating a joint text.

Life+ is aimed at providing support for measures and projects with European added value for the implementation, updating and development of Community environmental policy and legislation.