



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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PRESS RELEASE

3011th Council meeting

Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 10 May 2010

President

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

P R E S S

Main results of the Council

*The Council discussed the prosecution of suspected pirates captured by ships taking part in Operation EU NAVFOR Atalanta off the coasts of **Somalia**, ahead of High Representative Ashton's upcoming visit to Africa, notably Kenya.*

*The Council approved the **EU report on human rights 2009**. The report documents the range of the EU's activities through its external policies in the field of human rights. It covers thematic issues as well as the EU's action on human rights situation in various countries. High Representative Ashton underlined that "human rights, democracy and the rule of law are the basic values on which EU foreign policy is built. They are a silver thread running through all that we do."*

*The Council adopted a decision on the signing of the **framework agreement between the EU and the Republic of Korea**. The agreement was signed in the margins of the Council meeting.*

*The Council also adopted a decision on agreements between EU and Latin-American most-favoured nations and between the EU and the United States providing for the settlement of the respective disputes concerning **trade in bananas** with these countries.*

*Development ministers participated in the Foreign Affairs Council and held a first discussion of the EU position for the UN summit that is to review the **Millennium Development Goals** in September 2010.*

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¹ 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 meeting was chaired by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton. The governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Steven VANACKERE

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
and Institutional Reforms
Permanent Representative

Mr Jean DE RUYT

Bulgaria:

Mr Konstantin DIMITROV

Mr Boyko KOTZEV

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative

Czech Republic:

Mr Jan KOHOUT

Ms Helena BAMBASOVÁ

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Denmark:

Ms Lene ESPERSEN

Mr Søren PIND

Mr Ib PETERSEN

Foreign Minister
Minister for Development and Cooperation
Director for Development

Germany:

Mr Werner HOYER

Mr Dirk NIEBEL

State Secretary, Federal Foreign Ministry
Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development

Estonia:

Mr Urmas PAET

Mr Raul MÄLK

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Dick ROCHE

Mr Rory MONTGOMERY

Minister of State at the Departments of An Taoiseach and
Foreign Affairs with special responsibility for European
Affairs
Permanent Representative

Greece:

Mr Dimitris DROUTSAS

Mr Theodoros N. SOTIROPOULOS

Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative

Spain:

Mr Miguel Ángel MORATINOS CUYAUBÉ

Mr Diego LOPEZ GARRIDO

Mr Soraya RODRÍGUEZ RAMOS

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
Secretary of State for European Affairs
Secretary of State for International Cooperation

France:

Mr Bernard KOUCHNER

Mr Alain JOYANDET

Minister for Foreign and European Affairs
State Secretary

Italy:

Mr Franco FRATTINI

Mr Mario SAMMARTINO

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Deputy Director General for Development Cooperation

Cyprus:

Mr Markos KYPRIANOU

Mr Leonidas MARKIDES

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ambassador, Development

Latvia:

Mr Aivis RONIS

Ms Elita KUZMA

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Lithuania:

Mr Audronius AŽUBALIS

Mr Rytis MARTIKONIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean ASSELBORN

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Immigration

Ms Marie-Josée JACOBS

Hungary:

Mr Péter BALÁZS
Mr László VÁRKONYI

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Malta:

Mr Richard CACHIA CARUANA

Permanent Representative

Netherlands:

Mr Maxime VERHAGEN
Mr Tom de BRUIJN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative

Austria:

Mr Michael SPINDELEGGER
Ms Irene FREUDENSCHUSS-REICHL

Federal Minister for European and International Affairs
Ambassador, Federal Ministry for European and
International Affairs

Poland:

Mr Radoslaw SIKORSKI
Mr Pawel WOJCIECHOWSKI

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Manuel LOBO ANTUNES

Permanent Representative

Romania:

Mr Teodor BACONSI
Mr Doru COSTEA

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for Global Affairs

Slovenia:

Ms Dragoljuba BENČINA
Mr Igor SENČOR

State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative

Slovakia:

Mr Miroslav LAJČÁK
Ms Olga ALGAYEROVA

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Mr Alexander STUBB
Mr Jan STORE

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative

Sweden:

Mr Carl BILDT
Mr Joakim STYMNE

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for International Development
Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr Kim DARROCH

Permanent Representative

High Representative

Ms Catherine ASHTON

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and
Security Policy

Commission:

Mr. Andris PIEBALGS

Member

ITEMS DEBATED**SOMALIA AND PIRACY**

The Council discussed the situation in Somalia, focusing on piracy and the issue of the prosecution of suspected pirates captured by ships taking part in Operation EU NAVFOR Atalanta. The High Representative briefed ministers on ongoing contacts with the Kenyan authorities. She indicated that she would be visiting the region shortly, beginning with Kenya.

The EU has concluded transfer agreements with Kenya and the Seychelles. Agreements with other countries in the region are under discussion. The EU is committed to a regional approach, based on regional ownership and EU support for the countries in the region in their efforts to ensure the prosecution and detention of suspected pirates.

EUNAVFOR Somalia - Operation ATALANTA was launched in December 2008 to contribute to the protection of World Food Programme vessels delivering food aid to displaced persons in Somalia, to the protection of vulnerable vessels sailing in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia and to the deterrence, prevention and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery. As part of its efforts to support stability and security in Somalia, the EU just launched a training mission (EUTM) in Uganda to train Somali troops.

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

The Council had an exchange of views on nuclear issues, against the background of increased global attention as illustrated by the new START treaty, the Washington Nuclear Security Summit in April and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference that is currently under way in New York (3-28 May). The High Representative, who participated in the opening session of the NPT Review Conference, briefed the Council on the conference and on meetings held in the margins.

In 2003, EU heads of State and government adopted an EU Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The EU provides significant political and financial support to international organisations such as the IAEA and to international instruments such as the NPT and the CTBT.

IRAN

The Council discussed the situation in Iran, notably human rights and the Iranian nuclear programme and Iran's failure to meet its international obligations under UN Security Council and IAEA resolutions. The High Representative reported on her discussions on this issue with various foreign ministers during her visit to the United Nations in New York. Ministers reaffirmed the EU's dual-track approach. The EU supports the UN Security Council process on new restrictive measures against Iran. It will also continue to keep the door open for negotiations if Iran shows real willingness to negotiate constructively over its nuclear programme.

EU-RUSSIA SUMMIT

The Council discussed preparations for the 25th EU-Russia summit to be held in Rostov-on-Don on 31 May and 1 June. Ministers focused in particular on priorities for the Partnership for Modernisation, proposed at the Stockholm Summit in November. In this respect the EU will advocate a broad approach encompassing the rule of law and citizens' rights. The Council also discussed the issue of visas, on which the EU is committed to the shared long-term objective of visa-free travel following a step-by-step approach focusing on substance. The global economic crisis, climate change and energy issues, the question of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), as well as regional and international issues will also be addressed at the summit.

EU RELATIONS WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Over lunch, ministers continued the discussion they had started at their informal meeting in March and at the Foreign Affairs Council on 26 April concerning the EU's relations with its strategic partners, this time focusing in particular on China and Japan.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Haiti

The Council discussed the situation in Haiti, in particular the state of play following the donors' conference in New York and the prospects for joint programming of development assistance.

At the donors' conference on 31 March, the EU pledged over 1.2bn euros in support of Haiti's reconstruction and development after a magnitude 7 earthquake hit the country in January.

Millennium Development Goals

The Council held a policy debate to prepare the EU position for the UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) review summit, which will take place in New York in September.

The purpose of the discussion was to identify key messages for conclusions to be adopted at the June Foreign Affairs Council. These conclusions will contain the EU's position and political messages for the UN event in New York.

The MDGs constitute the first ever set of shared development goals at international level. World leaders agreed in 2000 to take decisive action to combat world poverty in its different dimensions by 2015, using time-bound and measurable targets. With only five years remaining before the agreed 2015 deadline, they will gather in New York in September for the UN MDG review high level plenary meeting.

Gender equality and development

Ministers debated gender equality and development over dinner, with a view to identifying how the EU can best use its policy instruments to promote women's rights.

Equality between women and men and the promotion of women's rights are not only part of the MDGs but are also a fundamental value and principle of the EU. Despite substantial progress over the past few decades, women and girls still constitute a large majority of the world's poorest. They are under-represented in governments and decision-making bodies, have fewer opportunities within the labour and financial markets and are paid significantly less than their male counterparts.

Development in the EU External Action Service

During dinner, the High Representative informed development ministers of the progress in establishing the European External Action Service, with special focus on the place of development in the EU's external action.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS IN THE MARGINS

The following meetings and events were held in the margins of the Council's meeting:

- Signature of the EU-Republic of Korea Framework agreement ([9662/10](#))
- European Economic Area Council ([EEE 1605/10](#))
- Stabilisation and Association Council with Albania
- Political Dialogue with South Africa
- Association Council with Tunisia

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**FOREIGN AFFAIRS****EU report on human rights 2009**

The Council approved a report on human rights covering 18 months, from July 2008 to December 2009.

The purpose of the report is to give an overview of the EU's policies and actions in the field of human rights. It covers the EU's actions in the field of human rights as regards third countries, in multilateral bodies and on certain specific thematic issues.

The report will be available on the Council's website: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/Human-Rights> and on the External Action website <http://www.eeas.europa.eu>.

For more details see document [9598/10](#).

Relations with Korea*

The Council adopted a decision on the signing of the framework agreement between the European Union and its member states, on the one part, and the Republic of Korea, of the other part ([8934/1/10 REV 1](#) + [6149/10](#) + [6151/10](#)). In accordance with this decision, the agreement will apply provisionally, pending completion of the necessary procedures for its entry into force.

The agreement is based on shared principles and values and aims to strengthen the partnership between the parties and to develop cooperation areas at bilateral, regional and global levels.

EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Council

The Council adopted the EU's position and the provisional agenda for the second meeting of the EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Council which will take place in Brussels on 11 May 2010.

EU-Tunisia Association Council

The Council approved the EU's position for the eighth meeting of the EU-Tunisia Association Council to be held in Brussels on 11 May 2010.

TRADE POLICY

Dispute on trade in bananas - signing and provisional application of agreements

The Council adopted a decision ([7778/10](#)) on the signing and provisional application of the following two agreements on trade in bananas:

- a Geneva agreement on trade in bananas between the EU and the Latin American most favoured nation (MFN) banana suppliers (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela) ([7968/10](#)) and
- an agreement on trade in bananas between the European Union and the USA ([7970/10](#)).

The Geneva agreement provides for tariff cuts on EU banana imports and allows the formal settlement of the pending disputes with the Latin American MFN banana suppliers. It also ensures that the EU final market access commitments for bananas in the next WTO multilateral market access negotiations for agricultural products do not exceed those provided for in the agreements concerning the tariff treatment of bananas.

The agreement between the EU and the United States provides for the settlement of their banana dispute.

DEVELOPMENT**Food security in developing countries - *Council conclusions***

As part of its preparation for the UN MDG review summit in September 2010, the Council adopted conclusions that establish a strategic EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges, set out in document [9653/10](#). The Council asked the Commission to propose an implementation plan for this framework before the end of 2010.

EU action in the area of commodities - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted conclusions on EU actions in the area of commodities, as set out in document [9648/10](#).

EPA development programme - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted conclusions on the EPA development programme for the West African region, see document [8950/10](#).

Humanitarian food assistance - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted conclusions on humanitarian food assistance, set out in document [9133/10](#).

The role of the EU in global health - *Council conclusions*

As part of its preparation for the UN summit to review MDGs in September 2010, the Council adopted conclusions on the EU's role in global health, set out in document [9644/10](#).
