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THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

3091st Council meeting

### **Foreign Affairs**

Brussels, 23 and 24 May 2011

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 Foreign Affairs Council discussed the **Southern Neighbourhood Region** and adopted conclusions on **Syria, Libya, Bahrain and Yemen**.*

*It condemned in the strongest terms the ongoing repression in **Syria** and the unacceptable violence used by the military and security forces against peaceful protesters which have led to hundreds of fatalities and many more people being injured. It indicated that as part of an ongoing review of all aspects of its cooperation with Syria, the EU has decided to suspend all preparations in relation to new bilateral cooperation programmes and to suspend the ongoing bilateral programs with the Syrian authorities under ENPI and MEDA instruments. It also extended the EU's restrictive measures agreed on 9 May to 10 more individuals, including President Bashar al-Assad.*

*The Council underlined that the EU remained gravely concerned by the serious situation in **Libya** and reiterated its call for full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973. It welcomed the initiative by High Representative Ashton to open a technical EU office in Benghazi, in order to foster EU assistance in coordination with member states and other actors and as a signal of EU solidarity with the Libyan people. The Council also extended the EU's restrictive measures to an additional individual and an additional entity in Libya.*

*On **Yemen**, the Council condemned President Saleh's repeated failure to sign up to the GCC-sponsored initiative, despite agreement by all the political parties including the ruling party and the relentless efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its Secretary General, which have full EU backing.*

*The Council noted that the fundamental changes across the Arab world have made the need for progress on the **Middle East Peace Process** all the more urgent. It welcomed President Obama's recent speech which sets out important elements contributing to the resumption of negotiations. It looks forward to an early meeting of the Quartet Principals to take the process forward.*

*The Council also extended its restrictive measures on **Iran** and on **Belarus**.*

*Defence ministers reviewed developments in the **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)**. The Council adopted conclusions on **pooling and sharing of military capabilities**, calling for a structured and long-term approach based on a high level of ambition, in a wide array of capability areas, and leading to concrete results.*

*Development ministers adopted the first annual **report to the European Council on official development aid targets**. The Council debated joint programming of aid to **South Sudan** and allocated EUR 200m in support of Southern Sudan.*

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<sup>1</sup> 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>).

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**ITEMS DEBATED****FOREIGN MINISTERS****Southern Neighbourhood Region**

The Council discussed the Southern Neighbourhood Region in the light of the latest developments in Syria, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen, Egypt and Tunisia, as well as Morocco and Jordan.

It adopted the following conclusions:

**Syria**

- "1. The EU condemns in the strongest terms the ongoing repression in Syria and the unacceptable violence used by the military and security forces against peaceful protesters which have led to hundreds of fatalities and many more people being injured. Those responsible for this violence should be held accountable. The EU expresses its condolences to the families of the victims and salutes the courage of the Syrian people.
2. The EU urges the Syrian leadership to agree and grant access to an urgent mission of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the country, as requested by the United Nations Human Rights Council on 29 April.
3. The EU is deeply concerned at continuing mass arrests, intimidations and instances of torture and calls for their immediate halt. The EU calls for the immediate release of all those arrested for their participation in peaceful protests, as well as of all political prisoners and human rights defenders. Syria must abide by its international commitments, in particular its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and uphold the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. The EU is equally concerned by the refusal of the Syrian authorities to grant access to foreign media to report freely on the unfolding events in the country. It also condemns the arrests and intimidations of Syrian journalists by the authorities.
4. The EU is deeply troubled by the military closure of a number of cities, such as Deraa, Baniyas and Homs and by reported hindrance of access to medical treatments and to basic services. The EU calls on the Syrian Government to guarantee free and independent access to humanitarian organisations and provision of humanitarian aid to these areas and to fully respect humanitarian principles.

5. The EU urges the Syrian authorities to respond to the legitimate demands of the Syrian people by launching an inclusive and genuine national dialogue and by implementing without delay and through a concrete timetable, meaningful political reforms. This is the only way to initiate a peaceful transition to democracy and provide stability for Syria in the long term.
6. As part of the ongoing review of all aspects of its cooperation with Syria, the EU has decided to suspend all preparations in relation to new bilateral cooperation programs and to suspend the ongoing bilateral programs with the Syrian authorities under ENPI and MEDA instruments. The EU Member States stand ready to review their bilateral cooperation in this regard. The Council invites the EIB to not approve new EIB financing operations in Syria for the time being. The EU will consider the suspension of further Community assistance to Syria in light of developments.
7. The EU recalls that it will not take further steps with regard to the Association Agreement with Syria and therefore the signing of the Agreement is not on the agenda.
8. On the 9th of May the EU decided to impose restrictive measures against Syria and persons responsible for the violent repression against the civilian population with a view to achieving a fundamental change of policy by the Syrian leadership without delay. The Council has decided to further strengthen these restrictive measures by designating additional persons, including at the highest level of leadership. The EU is determined to take further measures without delay should the Syrian leadership choose not to change swiftly its current path. "

## Libya

- "1. The EU remains gravely concerned by the serious situation in Libya and reiterates its call for full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1970 and 1973. Recalling its previous Conclusions on this issue the Council once more underlines that the cessation of violence and the protection of civilians, including through unhindered humanitarian assistance, remains the top priority.
2. The Council welcomes the first two meetings of the Contact Group on Libya, held respectively in Doha on 13 April and in Rome on 5 May, and looks forward to the third meeting of the Contact Group in the UAE. It welcomes the emphasis of the Chairs' Conclusions on the need to intensify the political, military and economic pressure on the Kadhafi regime in fulfilment of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973. The Council reiterates its call for an immediate and genuine ceasefire, the fact that Colonel Kadhafi has lost legitimacy and that he must relinquish power immediately. Colonel Kadhafi remains a threat to the Libyan people. The Council welcomes and supports the role of the UN Special Envoy for Libya as the focal point for the political transition process and reaffirms the need for the international community to work with and through him in order to intensify the efforts towards an inclusive political solution. The Council underlines the importance of cooperation with international and regional partners, in particular the cooperation by the HR on behalf of the EU with the United Nations, League of Arab States, African Union, Organisation of the Islamic Conference and Gulf Cooperation Council, following the meeting in Cairo on 14 April.
3. The EU is determined to continue to actively support humanitarian assistance efforts to the civilian population as well as to refugees who fled to neighbouring countries and the repatriation of third country nationals. The EU stands ready to step up efforts in this regard. It recognises the burden on and particular role of neighbouring countries.
4. The EU reiterates that, if requested by UN OCHA, it will conduct a CSDP operation "EUFOR Libya" to support humanitarian assistance in the region, in full respect of the principles governing humanitarian action, particularly impartiality and neutrality. The EU has been preparing EUFOR, in close cooperation and complementarity with the UN, NATO and others, in order to be able to react quickly to developments as regards the humanitarian and security situation.

5. The Council denounces the continuing repression and grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law against civilians by the Kadhafi regime including acts of sexual violence, the use of sea mines, use of cluster munitions, and shelling of humanitarian boats. Those responsible for these violations will be held accountable. In this respect, the Council welcomes the first Report to the UN Security Council by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on the Kadhafi regime's crimes against humanity and war crimes. It also underlines the significance of the request by the Prosecutor for arrest warrants against the three individuals it considers most responsible for crimes against humanity: Colonel Kadhafi, Saif al Islam Kadhafi and Abdullah al-Sanussi, as well as the continued investigations of the situation in Libya, including of war crimes. This request also sends a signal to those who support the Kadhafi regime to dissociate themselves from it and its crimes.
6. The Council has decided to intensify its efforts to block access of resources and funding to the Kadhafi regime, with the necessary humanitarian exemptions. In particular, the EU will continue its efforts to prevent the regime from replenishing its military arsenal and from recruiting mercenaries.
7. The Council stresses the important role played by the Transitional National Council (TNC) as a key political interlocutor representing the aspirations of the Libyan people. The EU supports the TNC efforts to fulfil its responsibilities vis-à-vis the Libyan population, notably to respond to essential social, economic and administrative needs in accordance with the relevant UNSCR. In this respect, it welcomes the establishment of a Temporary Financial Mechanism (TFM) that should provide a transparent channel for short-term financial support and structural needs. The EU offers to assist it with technical expertise and invites partners to also contribute to the TFM.

The Council recognises the need to explore legal possibilities of using frozen Libyan assets for the purpose of addressing the humanitarian needs of the Libyan population, within the framework of UNSCRs.

8. The Council welcomes the initiative by HR/VP Ashton to open a technical EU office in Benghazi, in order to foster EU assistance in coordination with Member States and other actors and as a signal of EU solidarity with the Libyan people. Reaffirming the principle of territorial integrity and unity of Libya the EU will open a Delegation in Tripoli as already foreseen before the outbreak of the crisis, as soon as circumstances allow.
9. The EU stands ready, as soon as conditions allow, to mobilize its instruments, including the ENPI, to support the Libyan people in their effort to build a prosperous and democratic state, based on the respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law."

**Bahrain**

"The Council remains seriously concerned by the situation in Bahrain.

The European Union is particularly concerned about the imminent risk of execution of two Bahraini nationals recently sentenced to death. The EU is firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances and calls on the Bahraini authorities to reinstate the de facto moratorium on capital punishment that prevailed until 2006. These death sentences risk further exacerbating recent tensions in Bahrain; as such, they present an obstacle to national reconciliation.

The European Union strongly encourages Bahrain to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, and accountability regarding allegations of human rights violations including reported cases of torture and ill-treatment. The EU also encourages fair and transparent administration of justice including in cases involving charges against medical professionals. Access for independent observers to ongoing legal proceedings should be allowed.

The EU welcomes the decree issued by King Hamad of Bahrain, according to which the state of emergency will be lifted on 1 June. We look forward to the practical actions which will support this move.

The EU once again urges all parties to engage rapidly in meaningful dialogue with a view to bringing about reforms which offer real prospects for successfully addressing the country's challenges."

## Yemen

"The European Union is following events in Yemen with extreme concern. The EU condemns President Saleh's repeated failure to sign up to the GCC-sponsored initiative. This is despite agreement by all the political parties including the ruling party and the relentless efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its Secretary General. Those efforts have the full backing of the EU. The EU appreciates the constructive response from the opposition to the GCC initiative and remains committed to an inclusive process, in the interests of the Yemeni people. The EU calls on President Saleh to follow through on his commitment to transfer power now.

The EU deplors the failure by President Saleh and the Yemeni security forces to ensure safe passage of diplomats from the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Sana'a on 22 May, including the GCC Secretary General and GCC, EU, United Kingdom and United States Ambassadors. This contradicts Yemen's responsibilities under the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations.

All use of violence against peaceful protesters must stop immediately. The EU supports the proposed visit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights which should serve as a first step towards assessing the human rights situation and helping Yemen to ensure accountability. Further deterioration in Yemen's economic and humanitarian situation is seriously affecting the Yemeni people and underlines the need for a political settlement.

The Council and the EU Member States will review their policies towards Yemen and prepare their response to developments accordingly."

## Middle East Peace Process

The Council exchanged views on the Middle East Peace Process and adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The fundamental changes across the Arab world have made the need for progress on the Middle East Peace Process all the more urgent. Recent events have indeed shown the necessity of heeding the legitimate aspirations of peoples in the region, including those of Palestinians for statehood, and of Israelis for security.
2. The EU is deeply concerned about the continuing stalemate in the Peace Process and calls for the urgent resumption of direct negotiations leading to a comprehensive solution on all tracks. Our goal remains a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition. A way must be found through negotiations to resolve the status of Jerusalem as the future capital of two States. Recalling the Berlin Declaration, the EU reiterates its readiness to recognize a Palestinian State when appropriate.
3. The EU believes that negotiations are the best way forward, if there is to be a lasting resolution to the conflict. The parties and the international community must contribute to the resumption of substantive talks as a matter of urgency, leading to a framework agreement by September 2011, as agreed by the parties and endorsed by the Quartet. In this regard the EU welcomes the recent consultations between the parties and the Quartet envoys.
4. The EU believes that clear parameters defining the basis for negotiations are key elements for a successful outcome, together with the avoiding of unilateral measures and acts on the ground which undermine confidence. The Council welcomes President Obama's speech which sets out important elements contributing to the resumption of negotiations. The EU has set out and will actively promote its position with regard to parameters in Council Conclusions of December 2009 and December 2010, and as expressed by the EU in the UN Security Council on 21 April 2011. On this basis, it looks forward to an early meeting of the Quartet Principals to take the process forward.
5. The EU supports the holding of an international donors' conference for the Palestinian State this June in Paris also in view of the resumption of negotiations.

6. The EU has consistently called for intra-Palestinian reconciliation behind President Mahmoud Abbas as an important element for the unity of a future Palestinian state and for reaching a two state solution. Reconciliation should also be in the long term interest of Israel by helping to engage all parties in a process leading to a sustainable peace agreement. The EU welcomes that Palestinian reconciliation has led to the cessation of rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip and insists on the need for a permanent truce. In this regard, the EU reiterates its call for the lifting of Gaza closure.
7. The Council hopes that this new context will favour without delay the unconditional release of abducted Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.
8. The EU welcomes the agreement signed in Cairo on 3 May. The Council commends the successful mediation of the Egyptian authorities and encourages further efforts in support of the full implementation of the agreement. The EU welcomes that President Abbas, as Chairman of the PLO, will be the representative of the Palestinians in peace negotiations.
9. In this context, the EU stands ready to reactivate the EUBAM Rafah Mission, once political and security conditions allow, in order to ensure the EU third party role at the Rafah crossing point, as set out in the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access.
10. The EU looks forward to continuing its support, including through direct financial support, for a new Palestinian government composed of independent figures that commits to the principles set out in President Abbas' speech on 4 May. Such a government should uphold the principle of non-violence, and remain committed to achieving a two-state solution and to a negotiated peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict accepting previous agreements and obligations, including Israel's legitimate right to exist. The EU's ongoing engagement with a new Palestinian government will be based on its adherence to these policies and commitments. The EU calls on the international community, Israel, and regional partners to work with the government on this basis. The EU also looks forward to the holding of elections.
11. The EU calls on Israel and the PA to continue their cooperation in all fields, including in terms of security and transfer of revenues and to abstain from measures that could hamper progress and further reforms.

12. The EU calls on the future Palestinian government to continue the PA's institution-building efforts and to uphold current standards in terms of transparent and efficient public finance management, as consistently commended by the UN, the IMF and the World Bank, most recently during the AHLC meeting hosted by the High Representative on 13 April in Brussels. The EU welcomes the outcome of the reports which state that the PA is above the threshold for a functioning state in the key sectors studied. In this regard the EU expresses its full appreciation of the current Government's success in implementing the state building plan."

**South Caucasus**

The Council held an exchange of views on the current situation in the South Caucasus and a possible EU role in the region. It focussed on the need for regional stability and conflict resolution and the importance of making full use of the Eastern Partnership. The discussion took place against the background of rising tensions in the region, in particular concerning Nagorno-Karabakh and Georgia.

**Sudan**

The Council discussed the situation in Sudan ahead of South Sudan's declaration of independence, scheduled for 9 July 2011. The EU's comprehensive strategy for Sudan will be presented for endorsement at the Council in June.

Ministers voiced their concerns at the recent violence in Abyei and at the situation in South Kordofan and in Darfur. Commissioner Piebalgs reported on his recent visit to Sudan.

## **European External Action Service (EEAS)**

Over lunch, the High Representative led a discussion with ministers on cooperation between member state embassies and EU delegations in the field; on cooperation between the HR and ministers and on the preparation and conduct of Foreign Affairs Council meetings.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The Council discussed the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative reported in particular on her visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 13 May. Ministers welcomed the agreement by the President of Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik, to cancel the planned referendum and stressed the importance of the European perspective for the future of BiH.

**Human rights**

The Council began discussions on the EU's priorities in connection with the review of the EU human rights strategy that is currently under way. The discussion will be continued at the next Council meeting, in June, when the strategy will be presented for adoption. The High Representative emphasised that human rights should be incorporated as a silver thread running through all the EU's activities.

**Other business**

No items raised under "other business".

## **DEFENCE MINISTERS**

### **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)**

Defence ministers reviewed developments in CSDP and took stock of progress in following up the December 2010 and January 2011 Council conclusions on CSDP.

#### ***- Operations***

The Council discussed the state of play concerning the EU's military CSDP operations and considered the way forward. These operations include Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EUNAVFOR Atalanta counter-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia, and the EU Training Mission for Somali forces. The EU has also expressed its readiness to conduct a CSDP operation, EUFOR Libya, to support humanitarian assistance in the region, if requested by UN OCHA.

#### ***- Capabilities***

The Council discussed recent work on pooling and sharing. It adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. Following its December 2010 Conclusions, the Council reiterates the need to turn the financial crisis and its impact on national defence budgets into an opportunity for greater cooperation in the area of capability development. It welcomes the High Representative's interim report on CSDP/"Military Elements" as an important contribution to this end.
2. The Council calls for a structured and long-term approach to pooling and sharing, based on a high level of ambition, in a wide array of capability areas, and leading to concrete results. While shorter-term quick-win initiatives can have a useful stimulating effect, the Council encourages Member States to apply pooling and sharing on a systematic and sustainable basis, promoting multinational cooperation, including on a regional basis, as a key method to preserve and develop military capabilities in Europe for sustaining and enhancing CSDP.
3. In this context, the Council welcomes the initial inputs and findings from Member States' national analyses as a first step towards enhanced transparency among Member States and more pooling and sharing initiatives. These initial findings, collected and compiled by the EU Military Committee supported by the Military Staff, have shown opportunities in a variety of areas, including research and technology, procurement, maintenance, logistics, education and training. As part of this effort, the Council stresses the need to further explore role specialization.

4. The Council, while reiterating the Member States' driving role in defining and committing voluntarily to concrete pooling and sharing projects, stresses the added value of work at the EU level to support and foster this, taking advantage of the political momentum, notably by mapping ongoing and forthcoming cooperation, identifying best practices, models for cooperation and criteria for success, and developing other supporting tools and providing expertise in other areas such as interoperability and standardisation as part of the work undertaken by various EU bodies.

The Council also encourages the European Defence Agency to continue to contribute to this work by further supporting participating Member States in identifying opportunities for pooling and sharing, including through senior-level external support offered by participating Member States on a voluntary basis, and analysing its potential industrial implications. It welcomes the intention of the Agency to submit proposals to that end.

5. The Council welcomes close contacts with NATO on pooling and sharing, including staff-to-staff contacts. It underlines the need to pursue such contacts in order to ensure coherence.
6. The Council welcomes the engagement of individual Member States to develop, on the basis of the proposals and ideas put forward, further pooling and sharing initiatives by extending existing projects to other partners and/or by setting up new cooperative projects, also building on the commitment by the national Chiefs of Defence to establish multilateral contacts to that end.
7. The Council will examine progress and achievements on a regular basis, first in the autumn of 2011, including on the basis of the High Representative's forthcoming report on CSDP and of inputs by Member States. As part of this, the Council will consider an extraordinary session at ministerial level where Member States could declare their intentions with regard to new cooperative initiatives."

**DEVELOPMENT MINISTERS****Sudan**

The Council discussed joint programming of development aid for South Sudan.

The Council also decided to allocate a further EUR 200 million for the purpose of supporting South Sudan's state- and capacity building and its development needs. This amount comes from de-committed funds of previous European development funds ([9953/11](#)).

Following its declaration of independence, expected for 9 July 2011, South Sudan will face numerous humanitarian and socio-economic challenges, making external aid all the more crucial.

## **EU development aid targets**

The Council adopted and discussed the first annual report to the European Council on EU development aid targets. The text is set out in [10593/1/11 REV1](#).

In 2010, official development aid (ODA) from the EU and member states reached a historical high of EUR 53.8 billion, up by EUR 4.5 billion from 2009 levels. This represents 0.43% of the EU gross national income (GNI), but still falls short of the intermediate target of 0.56% GNI that the EU had set itself for 2010. In spite of the economic and financial crisis, the EU remains the biggest donor worldwide and provided over half of global ODA in 2010.

The report stresses that aid alone will never be enough to sustainably address the development needs of partner countries and examines the qualitative aspects of aid as well as the quantitative aspects, looking for example at effectiveness and innovative financing mechanisms.

## **Water**

The Council debated development-policy aspects of water, in response to the Hungarian Presidency's initiative on water. The exchange of views was based on an issues paper ([10448/11](#)).

## **Other business**

### **Ivory Coast**

Commissioner Piebalgs reported on his recent visit to Ivory Coast.

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED****FOREIGN AFFAIRS****Iran**

The Council adopted legislation to strengthen the restrictive measures imposed on Iran owing to concerns about its nuclear programme.

It placed a number of additional names on the lists of designated persons and entities subject to EU autonomous measures (travel restrictions and assets freeze). It also suspended the application of the travel restrictions for one individual.

The decision and implementing regulation, together with the list of persons and entities subject to the measures, will be published in the Official Journal of the EU on 24 May 2011.

**Syria**

The Council adopted legislation to strengthen the restrictive measures imposed on the Syrian regime. It extended the visa ban and assets freeze imposed on 13 officials and associates of the Syrian regime on 9 May to 10 more individuals, including President Bashar al-Assad, in view of the continuing repression against the civilian population.

The implementing decision and implementing regulation, together with the list of persons subject to the measures, will be published in the Official Journal of the EU on 24 May 2011.

**Libya**

The Council adopted legislation to strengthen the restrictive measures imposed on the Libyan regime. It placed an additional person and an additional entity on the lists of designated persons and entities subject to travel restrictions and an assets freeze,

The implementing decision and implementing regulation, together with the names of the person and the entity subject to the measures, will be published in the Official Journal of the EU on 24 May 2011.

**Belarus**

The Council adopted legislation to strengthen the restrictive measures imposed on the Belarus regime, following the recent sentences on the former presidential candidate Sannikaw and on a number of members of the political opposition and civil society.

It placed a further 13 individuals on the list of designated persons subject to travel restrictions and an assets freeze, The implementing decision and the regulation, together with the list of persons subject to the measures, will be published in the Official Journal of the EU on 24 May 2011.

**Kazakhstan**

The Council authorised the Commission to start negotiations with Kazakhstan on an enhanced partnership cooperation agreement and published the following statement to the Council Minutes:

"The adoption of the negotiating directives for an enhanced EU-Kazakhstan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement by the Council opens the way for further advancing relations and strengthening the EU and its Member States' cooperation with Kazakhstan through the conclusion of an enhanced agreement. Kazakhstan is a key economic and political partner for the EU, which continues to provide support to the implementation of reforms.

As outlined in the Joint Statement endorsed by the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council in November 2009, "closer and stronger bilateral ties must go hand in hand with adherence to the common values of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights". In this context the Council is confident that the process of concluding a future enhanced agreement will provide a stimulus for Kazakhstan to make progress with regard to democratic and political reforms, notably in enhancing freedom of expression and media, freedom of association and assembly, and improvement of the conduct of electoral processes, to make them compliant with international standards. The Council emphasises that the successful conclusion of an enhanced agreement will be influenced by the advancement of reforms in these areas."

## **Russia**

The Council established the position of the EU for the eighth meeting of the EU-Russia Permanent Partnership Council (Foreign Ministers) meeting and took note of the preparations for the EU-Russia Summit (Nizhnii Novgorod, 9 and 10 June 2011).

## **EU Action Plan for Afghanistan and Pakistan**

The Council took note of the Third Implementation Report of the EU Action Plan for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

## **COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY**

### **Report by the Head of the European Defence Agency**

Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in her capacity as Head of the European Defence Agency, presented a Report to ministers of defence. This Report summarizes the EDA's on-going projects which are carried out on the basis of priorities outlined in the Capability Development Plan (CDP), according to the principle of cost-effective collaboration in support of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The report notably indicates that the Agency is pursuing a systematic approach to pooling and sharing, including addressing civil-military synergies, identifying and promoting best practice, and working with industry.

### **European Defence Agency (EDA) /European Space Agency (ESA)**

Following a negotiation mandate conferred on Catherine Ashton as Head of the Agency by the EDA Steering Board in March 2010, the Council approved an administrative arrangement between the European Defence Agency and the European Space Agency concerning the establishment of their cooperation. The administrative arrangement will be signed by the EDA and the ESA at the International Paris Air Show – Paris Le Bourget, on 20 June 2011.

The aim of the arrangement is to provide for a structured relationship and mutually beneficial cooperation between the EDA and the ESA through the coordination of their respective activities. The cooperation will aim in particular at exploring the added value and contribution of space assets to the development of European capabilities in the area of crisis management and the Common Security and Defence Policy.

## **Single Progress Report**

The Council adopted a Single Progress Report reflecting significant achievements in EU Military Capability Development conducted under the EU Military Committee (EUMC)'s responsibility during the period November 2010 to April 2011. Such a report is issued by the EUMC every six months between reviews of the Progress Catalogue. It aims to inform the political level on the significant aspects of progress in the field of EU Military Capability Development with the emphasis on current capability shortfalls, in the overall context of the Headline Goal 2010 and beyond, and to provide recommendations on the implications and the possible way ahead.

## **EUPOL Afghanistan**

The Council adopted a decision concerning the financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure related to EUPOL AFGHANISTAN until 31 July 2011.

## **European Union Satellite Centre (SATCEN)**

The Council adopted a Decision amending the Joint Action establishing the European Satellite Centre (SATCEN) regarding the transfer of certain residual administrative tasks of the Western European Union (WEU) to the SATCEN from 1 July 2011 after the dissolution of the WEU on 30 June 2011.

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