

## **FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL**

### **16 July 2018**

The Foreign Affairs Council, chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, will start at 9.00 with a discussion on **current affairs** allowing ministers to review pressing issues on the international agenda. This will include the **Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan Of Action (JCPOA)**, following the meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission on 6 July. The High Representative and foreign ministers may also refer to the **Western Balkan Summit** taking place in London on 10 July.

The Council will have an exchange of views on the **Eastern Partnership**, in preparation for the Eastern Partnership ministerial foreseen on 15 October. Ministers will discuss the implementation of the 20 deliverables for 2020. This framework aims to achieve stronger economy, governance, connectivity and society in the six Eastern partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The Council will discuss **Libya**. The discussion will focus on the political process, including in view of the upcoming elections. It will be the opportunity to reiterate the EU's support to UN Secretary General's Special Representative Ghassan Salamé. Ministers may also touch upon the country's economic situation, in particular in relation to the trade in Libyan oil.

Over lunch, foreign ministers will discuss **North Korea**, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The discussion follows the inter-Korean Summit on 27 April and the Singapore Summit between US President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on 12 June, as well as the latest visit by US Secretary of State Pompeo to the DPRK on 5-7 July. Ministers will also look at ways to support inter-Korean talks and efforts towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the DPRK.

The Council is expected to adopt a number of decisions and conclusions without debate, including its intention not to object to the Commission delegated act to add the US sanctions on Iran to the list of US sanctions falling under the scope of the blocking statute and Council Conclusions on the International Criminal Court.

#### Press opportunities:

+/- 08.45 Doorstep by High Representative Federica Mogherini  
+/- 15.15 Press conference following the Foreign Affairs Council

[Press conferences and public events via video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

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<sup>1</sup> This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

## Current affairs

Foreign ministers will review pressing issues on the international agenda. The High Representative and ministers may refer to the meeting of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in Vienna on 6 July. The High Representative and foreign ministers may also refer to the Western Balkan Summit which took place in London on 10 July. The High Representative may also refer to the EU-CELAC ministerial meeting (16-17 July) and the Somalia Partnership Forum (Brussels, 17 July).

[Statement from the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, 6 July 2018](#)

[Western Balkans Summit: London 2018](#)

## Eastern Partnership

Foreign ministers will discuss the Eastern Partnership, in preparation for the Eastern Partnership ministerial foreseen in October in the margins of the Foreign Affairs Council and in the run-up to the 10th anniversary of the partnership (in 2019). Ministers will discuss the implementation of the '20 deliverables for 2020'. This framework aims to achieve a stronger economy, governance, connectivity and society in the six Eastern partners: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The discussion will be an opportunity to take stock of the progress made since the Eastern Partnership Summit, which took place on 24 November 2017. EU and Eastern partners' leaders agreed on a joint declaration reconfirming their commitment and the high importance they attach to the Eastern Partnership. They acknowledged the European aspirations and European choice of partners who signed association agreements with the EU, namely Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine; while recognising the right for each of the six partner countries to choose the level of ambition they aspire to in their relations with the EU. Leaders also welcomed the '20 deliverables for 2020'.

Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova signed association agreements with the EU, including deep and comprehensive free trade areas (DCFTAs) in 2014. The DCFTA with Georgia and the Republic of Moldova entered into force on 1 July 2016, and with Ukraine on 1 September 2017.

The EU and Armenia signed a comprehensive and enhanced partnership agreement for deepening bilateral relations in the margins of the Eastern Partnership Summit on 24 November 2017 and this has been provisionally applied since 1 June 2018. Negotiations on a new comprehensive agreement with Azerbaijan are in progress and on 11 July, the EU and Azerbaijan, marked the end of negotiations of the EU-Azerbaijan Partnership Priorities. While tangible steps by Belarus to respect democracy and human rights continue to be necessary for the shaping of the EU's future policy towards this country, the EU-Belarus coordination group provides for a more comprehensive approach to bilateral relations.

The EaP was launched in 2009. It sets out to promote political association and economic integration with the EU, as well as multilateral dialogue and cooperation among the EaP countries. It is based on the common values of democracy and the rule of law, respect for human rights and freedoms, and commitment to market economy principles.

[Eastern Partnership \(background information\)](#)

[Eastern Partnership Summit, 24 November 2017](#)

## Libya

The Council will discuss Libya. The High Representative is expected to inform on her high-level contacts with the Libyan authorities. The discussion will focus on the political process, including in view of the upcoming elections. It will be the opportunity to reiterate the EU's support to UN Secretary General's Special Representative Ghassan Salamé. Ministers may also touch upon the country's economic situation, in particular on recent attempts to trade Libyan oil outside the internationally recognised official channels. The discussion also takes place in the context of the follow-up to the European Council conclusions on migration.

The EU supports a political transition and a negotiated settlement acceptable to all legitimate groups in the country. The EU High Representative attended the meeting hosted by President Macron on 29 May 2018, which gathered for the first time Prime Minister Sarraj, all the major Libyan stakeholders and representatives from the international community, including UNSG Special Representative Ghassan Salamé. At this meeting, the participants pledged to support a constitutional process leading to elections.

The EU coordinates the efforts towards a political solution in the framework of the Libya Quartet. The last meeting of the Quartet took place on 30 April 2018 in Cairo and discussed progress in the UN mediation efforts led by Ghassan Salamé.

The EU provides bilateral assistance to Libya in the field of governance, health, youth and mediation, as well as humanitarian support. It also cooperates with Libya on migration and protection of migrants. The EU supports in particular the work of UN agencies, including the IOM to voluntary return from Libya to their country of origin. The EU is also engaged in providing focussed support to Libya through its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations EUBAM Libya and EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia.

The Council last discussed Libya at its meeting in January 2018, with Ghassan Salamé via videoconference. The UN Secretary General's Special Representative Ghassan Salamé gave an overview of the state of play of the political process, including progress towards the adoption of a new Constitution and the forthcoming elections. He received the full support of foreign ministers in his efforts to bring about unity and reconciliation in the country.

[Statement by the Spokesperson on the trade in Libyan oil, 28 June 2018](#)

[Speech by High Representative Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on Libya, 29 May 2018](#)

[EU-Libya relations, factsheet](#)

## North Korea

Over lunch, foreign ministers will discuss North Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The discussion follows the inter-Korean Summit on 27 April, and the Singapore Summit between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on 12 June, as well as the latest visit by US Secretary of State Pompeo to the DPRK on 5-7 July. In this context, ministers will discuss how to support efforts towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the DPRK.

Foreign ministers last discussed the Korean peninsula in March 2018, during an informal lunch with the South Korean Foreign Minister, Kang Kyung-wha. They welcomed the efforts of South Korea aimed at the de-escalation of tensions in the peninsula and improved inter-Korean relations.

The EU fully supports the objective of the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and is committed to the full implementation of UNSC resolutions by all UN member states, aimed at achieving this goal.

The EU continues to follow its policy of 'critical engagement' vis-à-vis the DPRK, as set out in the Council Conclusions of 17 July 2017. It combines a strong pressure through sanctions with maintaining open channels of communication. The EU sanctions' regime on the DPRK includes both the transposition of UN sanctions and additional and complementary autonomous sanctions in order to bring about a change in the regime's policy and make it comply with its international obligations. The EU remains ready to facilitate and support steps aimed at ensuring long-lasting peace, security and prosperity on a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

[Statement by High Representative Federica Mogherini on the outcome of the summit between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 12 June 2018](#)

[Council conclusions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea \(DPRK\) of 17 July 2017](#)

[The EU and the DPRK \(EEAS factsheet\)](#)

[EU restrictive measures against North Korea \(background information\)](#)

## Other items

The Council is expected to adopt a number of decisions and conclusions without debate, including its intention not to object to the Commission delegated act to add the US sanctions on Iran to the list of US sanctions falling under the scope of the blocking statute, Council Conclusions on the International Criminal Court and the annual report on Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

### Blocking statute

The Council is expected to indicate its intention not to object to the "Commission delegated regulation amending the Annex to Council Regulation (EC) No 2271/96 of 22 November 1996 protecting against the effects of extra-territorial application of legislation adopted by a third country, and actions based thereon or resulting therefrom."

Following the request by European leaders on 16 May, the European Commission launched a formal process to activate the blocking statute by updating the list of US sanctions on Iran falling within its scope on 6 June 2018. The blocking statute allows companies to recover damages arising from US extraterritorial sanctions, from the person causing them, nullifies the effect in the EU of any foreign court judgements based on them and requires EU persons not to comply with such sanctions, unless explicitly authorised by the Commission to do so. The aim is to have the measure in force on 7 August 2018, when the first batch of US sanctions takes effect.

By indicating its intention not to object, the Council allows for a swifter adoption of the Commission delegated regulation. The European Parliament also needs to either pronounce itself before the deadline of 6 August 2018 or let the deadline pass without objecting for the delegated act to enter into force and produce effects.

[European Commission acts to protect the interests of EU companies investing in Iran as part of the EU's continued commitment to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, 18 May 2018](#)

### Council conclusions on the International Criminal Court

The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the International Criminal Court (ICC) on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute (17 July). The Council is expected to highlight the valuable contribution of the ICC to the fight against impunity. At a time when the rules-based international order is facing increased pressure, the Council is expected to state that the strengthening of its criminal justice system is more important than ever.

The Council is expected to recall that the EU has been a strong supporter of the Court since its creation and has used the instruments at its disposal to help increase support of the Court. It is set to state that, as the world's first and only permanent international criminal court for the investigation and prosecution of the most serious crimes, the ICC demonstrates the international community's resolve to end impunity for the most heinous crimes and to foster a culture of accountability.

[Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the occasion of the day of international criminal justice, 17 July 2017](#)

## EU-CELAC ministerial meeting

Ministers of foreign affairs from the EU and from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) will meet on 16-17 July in Brussels. "Building bridges and strengthening our partnership to face global challenges" is the theme of the meeting.

It will be co-chaired by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Carlos Castaneda, acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador and Pro Tempore President of CELAC.

On the first day, ministers will focus on consolidating multilateralism and strengthening the cooperation in global forums. They may discuss more specifically the rules based global order, the Paris Climate Agreement, the 2019 Global drug policy review and the global compact for migration.

They will also discuss common challenges and means for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. This may include discussion on new forms of international cooperation or emerging areas of engagement such as digital or urban development.

On the second day of the meeting, ministers will discuss how to further work together for inclusive and sustainable economies, as well as trade, investments, and productivity. Ministers may touch upon ongoing negotiations, investment environments or corporate social responsibility.

At the end of the meeting, EU and CELAC ministers are expected to adopt a declaration.

The EU and CELAC (the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) represent 61 countries – around one third of the UN membership – and over a billion people – 15% of the world's population. This means that the EU-CELAC partnership impacts in the lives of many people and has the potential to shape the rules-based global order. The EU and LAC both back Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. They have also been prime movers of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

In the margins, EU and Pacific Alliance ministers will have a working breakfast on Tuesday 17. They will discuss how to deepen mutual relations. The High Representative and Caribbean countries ministers will have a working lunch on Tuesday 17. They will discuss the future of their relationship after the expiry of the Cotonou agreement in 2020. The Cotonou agreement currently frames the relation of the EU with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

[EU-CELAC relations \(EEAS website\)](#)

[EU-CELAC summit, Brussels, 10-11/06/2015](#)

[Shaping our common future - EU-CELAC strategic partnership](#)