OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3765th Council meeting

Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 13 July 2020

President Josep Borrell
High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
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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.
JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

- Migration - Afghanistan

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- Authorisation to open negotiations with Georgia
ITEMS DEBATED

TURKEY

The Council had a debate on Turkey.

There was a consensus among member states that EU-Turkey relations were currently under strain because of worrying developments affecting the EU’s interests, in particular in the Eastern Mediterranean and Libya. Ministers agreed that several serious issues had to be addressed by Turkey in order to change the current confrontational dynamic, and create an environment of trust.

In line with the Council Conclusions on illegal Turkish drilling activities in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Cyprus of 15 July 2019 and the statement on the Eastern Mediterranean of 15 May 2020, it was stressed that Turkey's unilateral actions, in particular in the Eastern Mediterranean, which run counter to EU interests, to the sovereign rights of EU member states and to international law, must come to an end.

Ministers also called on Turkey to contribute actively to a political solution in Libya and to respect the commitments it had taken in the framework of the Berlin process, including the UN arms embargo. Member states underlined the importance of Operation IRINI to ensure the respect of the arms embargo by all actors and committed to consider ways to ensure its full effectiveness, with the aim of preventing escalation on the ground.

Ministers also condemned the Turkish decision to convert Hagia Sophia back to a mosque as this decision will inevitably fuel mistrust, promote renewed divisions between religious communities and undermine efforts at dialogue and cooperation. There was broad support to call on the Turkish authorities to urgently reconsider and reverse their decision.

Finally, there was broad support to task the High Representative to explore further paths that could contribute to lowering tensions and reach understandings on issues that are increasingly stressing the EU-Turkey relationship.
Latin America and the Caribbean (COVID-19)

The Council discussed relations between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean, in light of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ministers discussed in particular how the EU can support the region with a view to revitalising the EU's political engagement with the region at this critical moment.

Current affairs

Ministers discussed the entry into force of the national security legislation in Hong Kong. In this context ministers restated the EU's support for the autonomy and fundamental freedoms of the people of Hong Kong, and underlined that such a decision may have an impact on EU's relations with China.

The Foreign Affairs Council was then informed about Libya, where the situation on the ground remains bad, and blatant violations of the arms embargo continue to be recorded.

Ministers were also briefed about developments in the Belgrade Pristina Dialogue, which had been recently resumed, and its next meeting planned for Thursday 16 July in Brussels.

Finally, the High Representative also touched on Venezuela, for which he had proposed to convene a ministerial meeting of the International Crisis Group, followed by meetings with the Lima Group and other key actors.

Council conclusions

The Council adopted conclusions on:

- EU priorities at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 75) and
- EU priorities for cooperation with the Council of Europe 2020-2022 (9283/20)
ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

HR SatCen Report 2014-2019


Force Catalogue 2020

The Council noted the Force Catalogue 2020 agreed by the European Union Military Committee.

ASEAN Regional Forum: Maintaining Security in Digital Economy

The Council approved the entering into negotiations by the European External Action Service on the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Statement on Maintaining Security in Digital Economy.

EU-India Joint declaration on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy

The Council approved the EU-India joint declaration on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy.

The declaration restates EU’s and India commitment to cooperate and exchange best practices regarding resource efficiency and circular economy, and contribute to the implementation of the external dimension of the European Green Deal. The joint declaration will also build on existing dialogue and cooperation initiatives with India in the area of resource efficiency and circular economy and be one of the deliverables of the EU-India Summit planned on 13 March 2020.
EU proposal for an EU-India Roadmap 2025 - Approval

The Council approved the text of the 'EU-India Roadmap 2025', and agreed that if further adjustments of the text are required in order to ensure agreement by the time of the EU-India summit of 15 July 2020, the text may be adapted accordingly provided that the changes do not affect the substance and intent of EU positions.

The 'Roadmap 2025' was to be agreed between the EU and India as one of the main deliverables of the EU-India Summit planned on 13 March 2020. The EU-India Summit was postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and is due to take place in virtual format on 15 July 2020.

Conclusions on EU priorities at the UN and UNGA75

The Council adopted conclusions setting out the EU's priorities at the 75th General Assembly of the United Nations (September 2020 – September 2021), under the theme "Championing multilateralism and a strong and effective UN that delivers for all". (9401/20)

Conclusions on EU priorities for cooperation with the Council of Europe 2020-2022

The Council adopted conclusions on EU priorities for cooperation with the Council of Europe in 2020-2022 (9283/20).

EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa: extension of the mandate

The Council adopted a decision extending the mandate of the European Union Special Representative for the Horn of Africa. The Council also endorsed the related budgetary impact statement and decided to publish the above-mentioned Council Decision in the Official Journal.

Mr Alexander RONDOS was appointed as European Union Special Representative for the Horn of Africa on 8 December 2011. His mandate, which was due to expire on 31 August 2020, was extended for a further 6 months.
TRADE

Trade and sustainable development with the Pacific States

The Council approved the entering into discussions by the Commission on a joint declaration between the EU and the Pacific States.

The aim of the joint declaration will be to further detail and promote the principles of trade and sustainable development in the framework of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the Pacific States (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Solomon Islands). (9312/20)

Switzerland's WTO concessions on seasoned meat

The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of the agreement between the EU and the Swiss Confederation in the context of negotiations under Article XXVIII of the GATT 1994 on the modification of Switzerland's WTO concessions with regard to seasoned meat. The agreement will be concluded in the form of an exchange of letters. (12482/19, 12483/20, 9196/20)

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Migration - Afghanistan

The Council authorised the Commission to enter, on behalf of the EU, into negotiations on the prolongation of the Joint Way Forward on Migration Issues between Afghanistan and the EU beyond October 2020.

As part of the EU’s cooperation with Afghanistan in the area of migration, both sides committed to a joint way forward on migration issues, signed in 2016 and which expires in October 2020. The Joint Way Forward is not a legally binding instrument. It paved the way for a structural dialogue and cooperation on migration issues, based on a commitment to identify effective ways to address the needs of both sides.
TRANSPORT

Authorisation to open negotiations with Georgia

The Council authorised the opening of negotiations with Georgia on a revised high-level agreement between the EU and Georgia on transport infrastructure networks.

The negotiations concern the adaptation of the existing indicative maps of Georgia within the meaning of Article 49(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 (TEN-T Regulation). These indicative maps are intended to provide a reference point for cooperation on planning transport infrastructure development in Georgia as a neighbouring country, with a view to fostering transport connectivity with the EU.

At the end of the negotiations, the Commission will revert to the Council to seek the Council's authorisation for the signature of the revised high-level agreement on behalf of the EU. (9306/20)