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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	EU Priorities for the 68th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations

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At its meeting on 24 June 2013, the Council adopted the EU Priorities for the 68th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations set out in the Annex to this note.

**EU PRIORITIES FOR THE 68<sup>th</sup> SESSION**  
**OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

During the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA 68), in line with the EU's medium-term priorities at the United Nations (2012-2015)<sup>1</sup>, the EU and/or its Member States will strongly focus on the following issues:

- a) promotion of Peace and Security;
- b) follow-up and implementation of the Rio+20 outcome, including the work on SDGs and Sustainable Development financing; work on MDG acceleration, including by following-up to the outcome of the MDG September 2013 event; as well as work towards a coherent approach for a single overarching post- 2015 development framework, also supportive of climate objectives;
- c) promotion of Human Rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- d) strengthening of the effectiveness of the UN; the support of the necessary reforms in key areas, such as management, peacekeeping, field support, and the financial sustainability of the Organisation.

Efforts will be made, so that EU coordination, as well as EU positions and strategies in the different fields of UN activities will have been established well in advance. In this light, during UNGA 68, the EU and/or its Member States<sup>2</sup>, as appropriate, will:

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 9820/1/12 REV1, PESC 583 CONUN 68 ONU 56 COHOM 99 DEVGEN 132 ENV 349 COJUR 11 CODUN 23 CONOP 86 COTER 49 CODRO 1 COSDP 388 CRIMORG 52.

<sup>2</sup> The implementation of the priorities will involve action both at the level of the EU itself and, in the areas falling within their responsibility, its Member States.

## **PEACE AND SECURITY**

1. support the reinforcement of EU-UN operational cooperation in crisis management, also by working together with the UN on both sharing analyses (in order to come to a joint analysis) and planning (in order to facilitate the operational aspects);
2. continuously enhance support to UN peacekeeping, through a structured dialogue based on concrete needs and with a view to optimizing the use of available resources, which includes minimizing the environmental footprint of operations and maximizing the efficient use of natural resources;
3. continue to promote the respect for humanitarian principles and to advocate for International Humanitarian Law, for Human Rights Law, and for Refugee Law; continue to promote an overall effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, notably by the ongoing strengthening of the UN humanitarian system and transformative agenda, through advocacy for the necessary humanitarian space that is needed to access vulnerable populations; and work towards a strong resolution on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel;
4. support efforts towards water and climate diplomacy for conflict prevention and facilitating enhanced resilience of societies and economies;
5. support the concept of protection of civilians, including by facilitating discussion at the UN on robust peacekeeping and on how best to assist governments in protecting their own civilians;
6. support the efforts for better coordination and cooperation within the UN peacebuilding architecture, as well as with other peacebuilding actors; for promoting coherence in the implementation of the New Deal for engagement in fragile and conflict-affected countries, including by supporting the operationalisation and implementation of the review of civilian capacities in the aftermath of conflict, as well as the post conflict reconstruction and institutional building, notably in areas of rule of law and security sector reform;

7. strive towards a more effective Peacebuilding Commission by fostering a greater coherence and coordination among the multiple international actors engaged in peacebuilding processes, especially a strengthened interaction between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission;
8. continue to promote the responsibility to protect, as defined in the World Summit Outcome Document and its further operationalisation, including prevention as an integral part of the responsibility to protect;
9. continue to support the preventive diplomacy capacity of the UN, including the efforts and initiatives in the field of mediation;
10. support the objectives of the UN initiative of the Alliance of Civilisations and will continue to support the Alliance's delivery of substantive projects with cross-cultural band;
11. continue to promote the concept of Human Security;
12. promote the implementation of resolutions related to Women, Peace and Security, in particular UNSC Resolution 1325, concerning enhanced participation of women in peace processes and the protection of women in conflict situations against violence, including sexual violence;
13. support efforts to enhance the protection of children in armed conflicts;
14. support the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC), as well as the fight against impunity at the international and national levels, for the most serious crimes of international concern; promote the universality of the Rome Statute; support the work of other international courts and tribunals;
15. support the implementation and follow-up of the Declaration of the GA High Level Meeting on the Rule of Law at the national and international levels, as well as the activities of the UN Global Focal Point in the promotion of the Rule of Law;
16. support initiatives related to the promotion of the use of peaceful settlement of disputes;

17. support efforts to make the UN disarmament machinery properly functioning, including the revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and work constructively towards its enlargement;
18. continue to call for an immediate launch of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT);
19. support the early entry into force, universalisation, and full implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty;
20. support efforts to achieve an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT);
21. work towards a successful outcome of the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, based on a balanced approach to take into account all the three pillars of the NPT;
22. continue to promote the effective implementation of, and full compliance with, Security Council resolution 1540;
23. promote the entry into force of the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material as amended and the further ratification and implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism;
24. continue to support the establishment of a Middle East Free Zone of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, including the convening of an inclusive International Conference on the subject, in accordance with the decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference;
25. continue to promote the universalisation of the nuclear safeguards regime (including the IAEA Additional Protocol), as well as the IAEA nuclear safety standards and nuclear security guidelines;
26. promote the effective follow-up to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) intersessional period topics for 2013 and to the Convention on certain Conventional Weapons (CCW);

27. promote the effective and full implementation of the Outcome Document of the Second Review Conference on the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small and Light Arms (SALW) and of the Third Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) Review Conference;
28. promote capacity building for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation, in particular through EU regional CBRN Centres of Excellence, including the creation of a climate of awareness in scientific and academic circles of the importance of the information security in relation to WMD;
29. promote the universalisation of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation; promote consensus-building on an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities;
30. promote transparency in military expenditures;
31. promote the implementation of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and the enhanced participation in counter-terrorism activities;
32. promote universal adherence to and effective implementation of the Ottawa Convention;
33. promote the implementation of and strengthen due process and fair and clear procedures in the UN sanctions regimes;
34. support the ratification process and the full and effective implementation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and of the Protocols thereto, as well as of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC); promote the strengthening of international cooperation against organised crime;
35. promote the strengthening of international cooperation against piracy, and other forms of maritime crimes, in accordance with relevant UN provisions;
36. further enhance participation in the fight against serious organized crime, including drug trafficking; falsified medicines; money laundering; cybercrime; and human trafficking;
37. promote consensus-building for confidence and security building measures in cyber space.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

1. intensify the efforts for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, as a basis for a future post-2015 agenda;
2. ensure effective and coherent follow-up to and implementation of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) outcomes, including follow-up of the institutional aspects of the UN architecture on sustainable development, such as linkages between ECOSOC reform and the new High Level Political Forum (HLPF);
3. work towards a single overarching post-2015 framework, in line with the relevant Council Conclusions, that integrates the elaboration of Sustainable Development Goals, incorporates the three dimensions of sustainable development, is supportive of climate resilient low carbon development and international objectives on climate change, while capturing issues relating to human rights, good governance, democracy, the rule of law, empowerment of women and gender equality, justice, equity, freedom from violence, peace and security. The work towards this framework should also integrate all relevant international processes, including the efforts related to the final phase of the MDG process, the work of the Open Working Group for the elaboration of Sustainable Development Goals and the work of the Sustainable Development Financing Committee into one coherent process, while taking note of the work of the Secretary General's High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and bringing together poverty eradication in all its dimensions;
4. address climate change, following Cancun, Durban and Doha Climate Conferences, aiming at adopting a comprehensive, robust and legally binding agreement by 2015, applicable to all countries, developed and developing alike, and raising the current level of mitigation ambition between now and 2020;
5. address biodiversity loss, following the Nagoya and Hyderabad CBD Conferences, aiming at implementing the Aichi targets, applicable to all countries, developed and developing alike;
6. conduct effective outreach, in particular towards G77, in order to ensure that the future post-2015 agenda reflects a vision shared by all stakeholders;

7. promote a common and comprehensive approach to financing for development beyond 2015, taking into account likewise the role of ODA and innovative sources of financing and the work of the Sustainable Development Financing Committee;
8. help further strengthen the role of UNEP, as a central platform for environment issues within the UN system and beyond, in view of its future upgrading as a specialized agency;
9. promote green economy, including, among others, through the involvement of the private sector and civil society in the transformation process;
10. increase efforts against wildlife crime and illegal logging and promote improved forest governance, as well as the reduction of deforestation and forest degradation;
11. promote the empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication and sustainable development with an emphasis on social integration, full employment and decent work for all, in particular through trade and capacity-building and with special emphasis on sustainable urban development;
12. promote the implementation of decisions as taken within the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification;
13. address the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, in particular with the view to take a decision on the development of an international instrument under UNCLOS in this respect, before the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> UNGA Session;
14. give special attention to food security and the fight against malnutrition, ensuring close linkage between humanitarian and development actions;
15. ensure that water–energy nexus is approached in a balanced manner to support sustainable economic, social and environmental development;



16. build community safety and resilience to disasters and conflicts, as vital component of development and humanitarian policies and actions;
17. ensure a rights-based approach encompassing all human rights; also address justice, equality and equity, good governance, democracy and the rule of law, with a strong focus on the empowerment and rights of women and girls and gender equality, and on preventing and combating violence against women as essential preconditions for equitable and inclusive sustainable development, as well as important values and objectives in themselves; remain committed to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of their review conferences and in this context sexual and reproductive health and rights<sup>1</sup>;
18. aim at a successful outcome of the High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development;
19. follow up on the outcome of the High-Level Meeting on Disabilities and Development;
20. promote increased attention to the problems faced by the LDCs and fragile countries, especially during the implementation process of the Istanbul Plan of Action, the SIDS (with special attention to the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on SIDS), and the LLDCs (with special attention to the 10-year Landlocked Developing Countries Review Conference);
21. highlight the special role of education in the global sustainable development process.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

1. remain committed to a strong and effective multilateral human rights system, to the promotion and protection of the universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing nature of all Human Rights and continuing to promote the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, as well as the 2013 Council conclusions on the EU Human Rights Priorities;
2. speak out against human rights violations worldwide;

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<sup>1</sup> See the statement by Malta to the Council minutes regarding post-2015 Council Conclusions in the Annex to the Annex.

3. continue to participate actively, through statements and interventions, as well as by introducing (in close cooperation with other countries) thematic and country-specific initiatives, promoting accountability for human rights violations, and targeting key human rights concerns including:
- a. freedom of expression, including on the internet, as well as the freedom of assembly and the freedom of association;
  - b. efforts towards the abolition of death penalty;
  - c. engagement on Freedom of Religion or Belief with third countries with the aim at reaffirming and further developing the acquis of EU-tabled UNGA and HRC resolutions;
  - d. addressing the rights of LGBTI people;
  - e. combating gender-based discrimination and violence, including Female Genital Mutilation, forced and early marriage, and sexual violence;
  - f. combating torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
  - g. promoting the Elimination of all forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related intolerance, and paying close attention to the Durban follow-up for further improvements of the resolution;
  - h. promoting the realization of the rights of the child, including through a revised version of the omnibus resolution, of the rights of youth and persons with disabilities;
  - i. promoting the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples and participating actively in the preparations of the upcoming World Conference on Indigenous Peoples to be held in 2014;
  - j. promoting the realization of all Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including the Human Right to safe drinking water and sanitation and the Right to Food, as components of the Right to an adequate standard of living;

4. continue to support the strengthening of the human rights treaty body system, so that it would be in a better position to address the increased number of ratifications and reports in a more timely and effective manner, and provide sustainability with regards future developments, while respecting the competences and autonomy of the various stakeholders;
5. continue paying particular attention to the shrinking space for Non-Governmental Organisations and increasing pressure on Human Rights defenders in many countries;
6. promote the implementation of the UN guiding principles on Business and Human Rights among states and businesses;
7. avoid the duplication of the work, while increasing the complementarity and close collaboration between the Third Committee and the HRC, and trying to rationalise the ever-increasing workload of the HRC.

### **STRENGTHENING THE UN**

1. while preserving the budget ceiling agreed in 2012, reach an agreement on UN programme budget for the biennium 2014-15, by ensuring that UN financial resources are managed efficiently and effectively, according to the principles of budgetary discipline and coherence, in conformity with the highest international standards;
2. keep on inviting the UNSG to change working practices and to find efficiency savings from the 2014-2015 budget, as mandated by the UN MS, while showing support for his efforts;
3. call for action on the GA mandate for a review of possible obsolete activities and of staffing requirements;
4. monitor capital expenditure plans, in particular the Strategic Heritage Plan in Geneva, while ensuring that budgets are kept under control and lessons learnt from the Capital Master Plan;
5. encourage the SG to continue to pursue further budgetary reforms, building on the welcome precedent set by considering re-costing at the end of the year, so that decisions can be taken on the basis of actual spend and not of projected costs;

6. carefully consider before agreeing to calls for extra assessed resources for PBI's, in order to avoid unnecessary increases in resources for low priority activities;
  7. further promote the revitalization of the General Assembly, including through improving the working methods of the UNGA, its committees and subsidiary organs;
  8. seek a more structured, coherent and cost-effective process for proclaiming international days, years and decades;
  9. continue to promote the reform of the UN System and of its bodies and organs, including the comprehensive reform of the Security Council, the reform and strengthening of ECOSOC, the "Delivering as one" model, and the implementation of the QCPR, with the aim to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability and representativeness of the system;
  10. continue to support the UN System's efforts to work more effectively with gender equality and women's empowerment issues, including the implementation of the System-Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and its incorporation in i.a. Delivering as One actions, in order to promote real results and improvements in the lives of women and girls, men and boys in partner countries;
  11. continue to support the UNSG's management reform agenda, while being prepared to offer constructive criticism of proposals where necessary, and recognising that he should carefully judge when to seek GA approval for individual initiatives;
  12. encourage the UNSG to develop his mobility proposal to meet the concerns raised by the UN MS, aiming at agreeing a new framework in December;
  13. encourage the UNSG to do more on Human Resources, i.a on improving performance management and on a good outcome from ICSC review of the staff remuneration package;
  14. remind UN Secretariat of the need to report fully on long term accommodation needs and look carefully to all options;
  15. encourage the reinforcement of the cooperation between the UN and Regional International Organisations.
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STATEMENT BY MALTA

re Paragraph 16e (doc. 9943/13)

"The post 2015 process should indeed be based on a single comprehensive and coherent framework as this is imperative to achieve effective delivery and significant results at all levels.

Malta reiterates its position that any recommendation or commitment made by the European Union related to the Overarching Post 2015 Agenda should not in any way create an obligation on any party to consider abortion as a legitimate form of reproductive health or rights or commodities."

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