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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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Subject: Council Conclusions on the first anniversary of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the appointment of the EUSR for Human Rights

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on the first anniversary of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the appointment of the EUSR for Human Rights, as adopted by the Council on 22 July 2013.

Council Conclusions

on the first anniversary of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the appointment of the EUSR for Human Rights

1. One year after the adoption of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the appointment of Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis as EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the Council reaffirms its determination to promote and protect human rights and democracy throughout the world.
2. The Council welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Framework and Action Plan, as reflected in the implementation report contained in the 2012 Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy, including the adoption of new EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief as well as on the promotion and protection of the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons.
3. The Council reiterates the importance of placing human rights at the centre of the EU's policies and relations with third countries and of effectively addressing human rights issues making use of the full range of instruments at the EU's disposal as expressed in the Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy. The Council reaffirms its strong commitment to work towards the full implementation of the Strategic Framework and of the specific actions contained in the Action Plan which is a joint responsibility of the EU and its Member States, in close connection between Headquarters and the country level.
4. The Council welcomes the important work undertaken by the EUSR for Human Rights in enhancing the effectiveness, coherence and visibility of the EU Human Rights Policy, in particular through his engagement with partner countries, international and regional organizations and civil society, and expresses its full political support to his work.

5. The Council is committed to continue to work in close cooperation with the European Commission and the European Parliament and in a spirit of genuine partnership with civil society in order to step up its efforts to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law across all aspects of its external action.
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