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THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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3251st Council meeting

General Affairs

Brussels, 25 June 2013

President **Eamon Gilmore**
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Trade of Ireland

P R E S S

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Main results of the Council

*The Council agreed to recommend to the European Council to **open accession negotiations with Serbia**. The Council also agreed in principle on draft Council decisions authorising the **opening of negotiations on a stabilisation and association agreement (SAA) between the European Union and Kosovo**, to be adopted on 28 June 2013, following the necessary procedures.*

*The Council also **agreed to open chapter 22 on regional policy with Turkey** and underscored that the intergovernmental conference will take place after the presentation of the Commissions annual progress report.*

*In its preparations for the **European Council meeting on 27-28 June**, the Council held a videoconference with European Council President Herman Van Rompuz and had an exchange of views on the basis of draft conclusions.*

*The Council took note of the state of play as regards an initiative for a new and more effective mechanism to **safeguard fundamental values in member states**.*

*The Council took note of the state of play in the discussions between the Irish presidency and representatives of the European Parliament and of the Commission on the EU's **multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020**.*

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- 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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PARTICIPANTS

Belgium:

Mr Dirk WOUTERS

Permanent Representative

Bulgaria:

Mr Kristian VIGENIN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Czech Republic:

Mr Vojtěch BELLING

Mr Jiří SCHNEIDER

Secretary of State (Office of the Government)

Secretary of State and First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Nicolai WAMMEN

Minister for European Affairs

Germany:

Mr Guido WESTERWELLE

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Estonia:

Mr Urmas PAET

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ireland:

Mr Eamon GILMORE

Ms Lucinda CREIGHTON

Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade

Minister of State for European Affairs (Departments of the Taoiseach and Foreign Affairs and Trade)

Greece:

Mr Dimitrios KOURKOULAS

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr Íñigo MÉNDEZ DE VIGO Y MONTOJO

State Secretary for the European Union

France:

Mr Thierry REPENTIN

Minister for European Affairs

Italy:

Mr Enzo MOAVERO MILANESI

Minister responsible for European Affairs

Cyprus:

Mr Ioannis KASOULIDES

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Latvia:

Mr Edgars RINKĒVIČS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Lithuania:

Mr Linas LINKEVIČIUS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean ASSELBORN

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Hungary:

Mr János MARTONYI

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Malta:

Mr Louis GRECH

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto

Netherlands:

Mr Pieter de GOOIJER

Permanent Representative

Austria:

Mr Reinhold LOPATKA

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Poland:

Mr Piotr SERAFIN

State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Miguel MORAIS LEITÃO

State Secretary attached to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, with responsibility for European Affairs

Romania:

Mr George CIAMBA

State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Slovenia:

Mr Igor SENČAR

State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Slovakia:

Mr Miroslav LAJČÁK

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Mr Alexander STUBB

Minister for European Affairs and Foreign Trade

Sweden:

Mr Carl BILDT

Ms Birgitta OHLSSON

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Minister for EU Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr David LIDINGTON

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

High Representative

Ms Catherine ASHTON

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

.....

Commission:

Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ

Mr Janusz LEWANDOWSKI

Mr Štefan FÜLE

Vice President

Member

Member

.....

The Government of the Acceding State was represented as follows:

Croatia:

Ms Vesna PUSIĆ

Minister for Foreign and European Affairs

ITEMS DEBATED

Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process

The Council adopted the following conclusions on the Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process:

Serbia

1. In line with the Council conclusions of 11 December 2012 and further to the Council discussion of 22 April 2013, the Council examined Serbia's progress in achieving the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria, notably the key priority of taking steps towards a visible and sustainable improvement of relations with Kosovo*.
2. The Council commends the leaders of Serbia and Kosovo for the progress achieved in the EU-facilitated dialogue, and welcomes the "First agreement of principles governing the normalisation of relations" of 19 April as a significant milestone, as well as the subsequent implementation agreement and concrete steps taken in recent weeks, as set out in the joint letter of the HR/VP and Commissioner Füle of 21 June 2013.
3. The Council recommends that, following completion of national parliamentary procedures and subject to the endorsement of the June European Council, accession negotiations be opened with Serbia.
4. The Council recommends to the June European Council, with a view to holding the first intergovernmental conference with Serbia in January 2014 at the very latest, to invite the Commission to submit without delay a proposal for a framework for negotiations in line with the European Council's December 2006 conclusions and established practice, also incorporating the new approach to the chapters on the judiciary and fundamental rights and justice, freedom and security. The steps leading to the normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina will also be addressed in the framework. Prior to the first intergovernmental conference, this negotiating framework will be adopted by the Council and confirmed by the European Council. The Council also recommends to the June European Council to invite the Commission to carry out the process of analytical examination of the *acquis communautaire* with Serbia, starting with the above-mentioned chapters, in order to facilitate rapid early progress in these negotiations.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

5. Recalling its conclusions of December 2012, the Council reiterated that continued visible and sustainable progress in the normalisation of relations, including the implementation of agreements reached so far, remains essential so that Serbia and Kosovo can continue on their respective European paths, while avoiding that either can block the other in these efforts and with the prospect of both being able to fully exercise their rights and fulfil their responsibilities.

Kosovo

6. In line with the Council conclusions of 11 December 2012 and further to the Council discussion of 22 April 2013, the Council examined Kosovo's progress in addressing issues set out in the December Council conclusions.
7. The Council commends the leaders of Serbia and Kosovo for the progress achieved in the EU-facilitated dialogue, and welcomes the "First agreement of principles governing the normalisation of relations" of 19 April as a significant milestone, as well as the subsequent implementation agreement and concrete steps taken in recent weeks, as set out in the joint letter of the HR/VP and Commissioner Füle of 21 June 2013.
8. The Council notes the assessment of the Commission that Kosovo is ready to open negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the envisaged adoption of the decisions on 28 June 2013 following the necessary procedures. These decisions are without prejudice to Member States' positions on status.
9. Recalling its conclusions of December 2012, the Council reiterated that continued visible and sustainable progress in the normalisation of relations, including the implementation of agreements reached so far, remains essential so that Kosovo and Serbia can continue on their respective European paths, while avoiding that either can block the other in these efforts and with the prospect of both being able to fully exercise their rights and fulfil their responsibilities.

10. As far as the 19 April agreement and associated implementation plans are concerned, the Commission and the HR/VP are invited to continue to report to Council on Serbia and Kosovo's progress in implementation. This will inform the start, the subsequent decisions, including on the negotiating framework, and progress in the respective negotiations.

Accession negotiations with Turkey

The Council agreed the following outcome of proceedings:

"The Council agrees to open Chapter 22 and underscores that the intergovernmental conference with Turkey will take place after the presentation of the Commission's annual progress report and following a discussion of the GAC which will confirm the common position of the Council for the opening of Chapter 22 and determine the date for the accession conference."

Initiative on democracy, human rights and rule of law

The Council took note of the state of play as regards an initiative from Denmark, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands for a new and more effective mechanism to safeguard fundamental values in member states.

The Council will return to this subject after the summer break and hold a discussion on the basis of a Commission non-paper laying down and assessing the current instruments in this area. Work will be pursued in close cooperation with the Justice and Home Affairs Council.

The Justice and Home Council of 6-7 June 2013 adopted conclusions on fundamental rights and rule of law and on the Commission 2012 Report on the Application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU ([10168/13](#)).

The conclusions set out some elements that could be considered in taking forward the debate on the possible need for and shape of a future initiative to better safeguard fundamental values of the Union in particular the rule of law and the fundamental rights of the persons in the Union.

In this context the conclusions call on the Commission to take that debate forward still in 2013 with all member states, EU institutions and all stakeholders.

Preparations for the June European Council

In preparation of the European Council to be held on 27-28 June, the Council examined the draft conclusions and held a videoconference with the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy.

The June European Council is due to focus on:

- *Economic policy*: Heads of State or Government will conclude this year's European Semester (the annual monitoring of budgetary policies and structural reforms), including the endorsement of country specific recommendations.
- *Compact for Growth and Jobs*; Leaders will evaluate efforts to boost competitiveness with an emphasis on initiatives to enhance youth employment and access to financing, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises. Other areas to be covered will be industrial competitiveness (ahead of a full debate in February 2014) and reduction of the overall burden of regulation.
- *Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)*: The European Council will take stock of progress and identify key short-term priorities for the completion of the European monetary union, essentially in regards to the “banking union”. It will also discuss Latvia's application to adopt the euro as its currency on 1 January 2014.
- *Enlargement*: the European Council is invited to take a decision on the opening of accession negotiations with Serbia.

An annotated draft agenda was discussed by the Council on 21 May ([9165/13](#)).

As part of the European Semester, the General Affairs Council also approved draft country's specific recommendations (CSR) and transmitted them to the European Council for endorsement. The draft CSR's have also been discussed in the EPSCO and ECOFIN Councils ([11281/13](#) + [COR 1](#)).

The Council furthermore approved a report from the EPSCO Council on recommendations on the national reform programmes 2012 to each Member State ([10958/13](#) + [COR 1](#)).

Multiannual financial framework

The Council took note of the state of play in the discussions between the Irish presidency and representatives of the European Parliament and of the Commission on the EU's multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020. The presidency presented the outcome of the negotiations between the Tanaiste and the chief negotiator of the European Parliament, Alain Lamassoure ([11295/13](#) + [11298/13](#) + [11307/13](#)).

In line with the treaty on the functioning of the EU the MFF regulation is adopted by the Council by unanimity after having obtained the consent of the European Parliament. The interinstitutional agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management is agreed by the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on equal footing.

The draft MFF regulation and the draft IIA presented today build on the conclusions of the European Council of 8 February and address the following four issues raised by the European Parliament:

- flexibility
- review/revision
- unity of the budget
- own resources.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**GENERAL AFFAIRS****Increase of the number of Advocates-General of the Court of Justice**

The Council adopted a decision increasing the number of Advocates-General of the European Court of Justice ([11009/13](#) + [7013/13 ADD 1 REV 1](#)). At the request of the Court of Justice and in line with declaration no 38 on article 252 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU the number of Advocates-General of the Court of Justice will be increased to nine, with effect from 1 July 2013, and to eleven, from 7 October 2015 onwards.

Integrated Maritime Policy - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council of the European Union

HAVING REGARD TO

- the Presidency conclusions of the European Council on June 2007¹;
- the Commission Communication on an Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union and Action Plan, presented on 10 October 2007²;
- the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council on 14 December 2007³;
- the Commission Progress Reports on the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy of 15 October 2009 and 11 September 2012⁴;
- the Council Conclusions on Integration of Maritime Surveillance of 17 November 2009 and 23 May 2011⁵;
- the Council Conclusions on the Integrated Maritime Policy of December 2008, 16 November 2009, of 14 June 2010, of 19 December 2011 and of 11 December 2012⁶.

¹ Doc. 11177/1/07 REV 1, § 43

² Doc. 14631/07

³ Doc. 16616/07 §58

⁴ Docs. 14363/09 and 13715/12

⁵ Docs. 15176/2/09 REV 2 and 9250/11

⁶ Docs. 16503/1/08 REV 1, 15175/09, 10300/10, 18279/11 and 16553/12

EMPHASISING the potential of **Blue Growth**¹ to unlock cutting-edge marine and maritime innovative technologies that support the sustainable growth, competitiveness and job-creating potential of the blue economy; REITERATES that the Limassol Declaration, a **Marine and Maritime Agenda for Growth and Jobs**², endorsed by the Council, is a substantial component of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;

RECALLING that all activities in the oceans and seas including those undertaken in the framework of the IMP, should be carried out in line with the legal framework set out by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (**UNCLOS**) and other relevant international conventions;

RECOGNISING the value of marine ecosystem goods and services and the protection of the marine environment as an important element for sustainable development and prosperity;

1. ENCOURAGES Member States and relevant authorities to support the development of marine and maritime activities as an important source of innovation, sustainable growth and employment for the European Union through the implementation of the Operational Programmes of the **European Structural and Investments Funds** in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, and taking account, where appropriate, of relevant sea-basin and macro-regional strategies and without prejudice to the outcome of the on-going negotiations;
2. WELCOMES the efforts of the Commission and the Member States to deliver the **Blue Growth strategy** and to implement the Limassol Declaration in a timely manner, and especially:
 - (a) ENDORSES the **Action Plan for the implementation of the Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic Ocean area** adopted by the Commission on 13 May 2013 to create sustainable growth in coastal regions and drive forward the blue economy in the Atlantic Member States; RECOGNISES the invaluable contribution of the Atlantic Forum to its development; and INVITES the Commission; the concerned Member States, regional and local authorities; civil society; and the private sector to consider how to implement as appropriate the Action Plan through to 2020, acknowledging the respective competences and priorities of the various actors in the implementation process and without prejudice to the outcome of the ongoing preparation of the Operational Programmes; INVITES stakeholders to focus on priorities that can promote innovation and entrepreneurship, improve the Atlantic's marine environment and the connections between Atlantic coastal regions and their hinterland, support the move towards the low carbon economy, and create synergies for a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development based on cooperation, sharing of expertise and best practice between Member States and regions;

¹ Doc. 13908/12

² Doc. 14792/12

- (b) WELCOMES the signing on 24 May 2013 of the Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation Launching a Canada - European Union - United States of America Research Alliance to deepen our common understanding of the Atlantic ecosystem as a first step in developing the international dimension of the Atlantic Strategy, in consultation with the concerned States;
- (c) NOTES the adoption by the Commission of a Proposal for a Directive establishing a framework for **maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management** and AWAITS the outcome of on-going discussions between the co-legislators;
- (d) WELCOMES the new impetus given to the LeaderSHIP initiative by the adoption of the new **LeaderSHIP 2020 strategy** on 20 February 2013, jointly elaborated by all relevant stakeholders, and SUPPORTS the ambition to provide orientations on innovation, greening and diversification of the shipbuilding industry into new emerging markets, such as off-shore renewable energy, that can contribute to growth and economic recovery; INVITES Member States and the Commission to contribute to the implementation of the renewed initiative and thereby to the competitiveness of the European shipping industry;
- (e) WELCOMES the **Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture** adopted by the Commission on 29 April 2013 and STRESSES that European aquaculture offers good quality products that can contribute to fill the gap between consumption and production of seafood in a way that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; INVITES Member States to define their own national strategy for market led growth in aquaculture production, through multiannual plans, taking account of administrative simplification, spatial planning and the competitiveness of EU aquaculture;
- (f) URGES the Commission to further explore initiatives to enhance the competitiveness of EU **maritime transport** while improving its efficiency and environmental performance; NOTES the adoption by the Commission of the Clean Power for Transport package on 24 January 2013, which aims to facilitate the development of a single market for alternative fuels for transport in Europe and AWAITS the results of the studies launched by the Commission in 2013 to assess the use and benefits of Liquefied Natural Gas as a more environmentally friendly shipping fuel;
- (g) WELCOMES the cross-thematic Call for Proposals "**The Ocean of Tomorrow 2013**" focused on marine technologies under the Seventh Framework Programme and STRESSES that the development of competitive and innovative marine technologies supports Blue Growth and contributes to assessing the good environmental status of the seas;

3. INVITES Members States and the Commission to further pursue the delivery of the Limassol Declaration and LOOKS FORWARD to the Communications on **maritime and coastal tourism**, and on **marine renewable energy** in 2013, as well as Commission initiatives on the sustainable development of **blue biotechnologies** and on the safe and sustainable extraction of **minerals from the seafloor** in 2014;
4. REAFFIRMS its support for the appropriate development and implementation of integrated sea basin and macro-regional strategies as important platforms to drive sustainable growth in coastal regions, enhance connectivity of islands and coastal regions with the hinterland and promote social and territorial cohesion; LOOKS FORWARD to the adoption by the European Commission of a comprehensive Action Plan for the **Adriatic-Ionian** Macro-regional Strategy in spring 2014 and INVITES the Commission to highlight the maritime achievements of the **Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region** in the context of the overall assessment of the macro-regional strategies being undertaken in 2013; ENCOURAGES the Commission to consider the development of a **maritime strategy for the Black Sea**, in close cooperation with other countries in the region. WELCOMES the political commitment for supporting the blue economy of the **Mediterranean** as expressed at the 12th Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) Conference held on 18-19 April 2013 in Athens and LOOKS FORWARD to further marine and maritime cooperation across all coastal States on maritime clusters, networking of training institutes, safety and surveillance and the establishment of a Virtual Knowledge Centre in particular;
5. WELCOMES the initiative of the Irish Presidency to explore the **challenges and opportunities in maritime security and surveillance** for effective governance and innovation in the EU's Maritime Domain, including cross-sectoral innovation between the maritime sector and other high technology sectors, and INVITES Member States to pursue cross-sectoral cooperation; NOTES the intention of the Commission and the External Action Service to explore how to interlink internal and external maritime policies for a more coherent approach to safeguarding the EU's maritime strategic interests;
6. ENCOURAGES cooperation across sectors and borders between bodies participating in **coastguard functions** as promoted by i.a. the European Coast Guard Functions Forum or any regional coastguard functions fora, with a view to building upon mutual knowledge, synergies, experiences and best practices fostering effective and coordinated action at sea. INVITES Member States and the Commission to actively contribute to the work of the European Coast Guard Functions Forum and regional coast guard functions fora;
7. WELCOMES the launch of the Cooperation Project accompanying the design of the **Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE)** for the surveillance of the EU maritime domain; INVITES Member States and the Commission to continue improving cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation, including effective exchange of surveillance information and data to establish further interoperability between existing and future maritime surveillance systems; LOOKS FORWARD to the Commission White Paper on CISE before June 2014;

8. WELCOMES the launch of the second phase of the European Marine Observation and Data Network that should deliver low-resolution maps of the European seabed by the end of 2014 and the broad support for the **Marine Knowledge 2020** initiative shown in the recent public consultation; INVITES the Commission to continue building synergies between the various EU data, information and knowledge initiatives and to develop a roadmap towards a sustainable structure that is driven by the needs and priorities of public authorities, industry, the research community and other stakeholders;
9. WELCOMES the agreement reached by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on the **reform of the Common Fisheries Policy** and looks forward to implementation of a reformed CFP which will contribute to fisheries and aquaculture activities providing long-term sustainable environmental, economic and social conditions, and the availability of food supplies.
10. RECALLS the importance of the EU **Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)** and the need to apply the ecosystem based approach to the development of Blue Growth activities in order to achieve good environmental status of all European Seas and Oceans by 2020; RECOGNISES the importance of Member States' reports on the initial assessment of their marine waters, the determination of good environmental status and the establishment of environmental targets and indicators for their seas and oceans; AWAITS the Commission's assessment on whether the elements notified are appropriate to meet the requirements of the MSFD; RECOGNISES the need to ensure the coordinated development of marine strategies within each marine region or sub region, especially by strengthening existing cooperation between Member States within and across Regional Sea Conventions, and where relevant, involving other competent intergovernmental organisations and third countries concerned;
11. CONGRATULATES Malta on holding a successful European Maritime Day Conference in Valetta on 21-22 May 2013 and LOOKS FORWARD to the next Conference in Bremen, Germany in May 2014. RECALLS the Council Conclusions of 11 December 2012 inviting Member States to express interest for the organisation of **European Maritime Day** from 2015 and AGREES that the next European Maritime Day Conferences will be hosted in 2015 in Piraeus, Greece; in 2016 in Turku, Finland; in 2017 in Poole, United Kingdom; in 2018 in Burgas, Bulgaria and in 2019 in Lisbon, Portugal."EU Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements

EU Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements

The Council approved the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements (IPCR), thus finalizing the Crisis Coordination Arrangements review process.

The IPCR arrangements reinforce EU member states' ability to take decisions in a timely manner when facing major emergencies that require a response at EU political level. These arrangements are flexible and scalable, allowing to adapt the level of EU political response to the evolution of a crisis. IPCR arrangements will make use of existing means, structures and capabilities at EU level and fully respect member states' responsibilities when faced by a crisis. They support the Solidarity Clause (article. 222 of the EU treaty), building on the principle of a single set of crisis arrangements. The IPCR process is presidency-driven, with full support of the General Secretariat of the Council, the European Commission and the European External Action Service. An IPCR Council Web Platform allows all relevant stakeholders to rapidly exchange information in times of crisis.

Czech protocol on the Charter of Fundamental Rights

The Council approved a draft European Council decision on the examination by a conference of the governments of the member states of the amendment to the treaties proposed by the Czech government in the form of a protocol on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union to the Czech Republic, and not to convene a convention. The decision, expected to be adopted at a forthcoming European Council meeting, is intended to make the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights equal to that of Poland and the United Kingdom.

Recommendation on the composition of the European Parliament

The Council adopted a recommendation to the European Council to adopt a decision on establishing the composition of the European Parliament to bring it in line with the requirement of the Lisbon treaty of a maximum of 751 MEPs. This decision will take effect from next year's parliamentary elections that will take place from 22 to 25 May 2014.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Code of Conduct (Business Taxation)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"With regard to the Code of Conduct (Business Taxation), the Council:

- welcomes the progress achieved by the Code Group during the Irish Presidency as set out in its report (doc. [11465/13](#));
- asks the Group to continue monitoring standstill and the implementation of the rollback as well as its work under the Work Package 2011;
- encourages the Commission to continue discussions with Switzerland as set out in the Group's Report and to keep the Group regularly informed of the progress;
- invites the Group to continue its consideration of the draft guidance against hybrid entity mismatch planning under the Lithuanian Presidency;
- invites the Group to report back on its work to the Council by the end of the Lithuanian Presidency."

ENLARGEMENT

EU-Montenegro Association Council

The Council took note of preparations with a view to the 4th meeting of the EU-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Council to be held in Brussels on 26 June.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Cybersecurity strategy of the EU

The Council adopted conclusions on the Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Joint Communication on the Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace.

The conclusions are set out in ([11357/13](#)).

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Post-2015 framework

The Council adopted conclusions on the overarching post-2015 framework, as set out in *11559/13*.

APPOINTMENTS

Court of Auditors

The Council appointed Mr George PUFAN (Romania) as a member of the European Court of Auditors for the period running from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2019.

The Court of Auditors is made up of 27 members, one from each member state, appointed for a renewable term of six years. The members elect one of their number as president for a renewable term of three years.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

Amendment to protocol 30 to the EEA agreement

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be taken by the EU within the EEA joint committee concerning an amendment to protocol 30 to the EEA agreement ([10259/13](#)).

This decision aims to incorporate the new European statistical programme 2013-17 into protocol 30 to the EEA Agreement for the year 2013.

Amendment to annex XXI to the EEA agreement

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be taken by the EU within the EEA joint committee concerning an amendment to annex XXI to the EEA agreement ([10263/13](#)).

This decision aims to incorporate regulation No 70/2012 on statistical returns in respect of the carriage of goods by road into the EEA agreement with certain adaptations for the EEA EFTA States.

Amendment to protocol 31 to the EEA agreement

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be taken by the EU within the EEA joint committee concerning an amendment to protocol 31 to the EEA agreement ([10268/13](#)).

This decision aims to amend protocol 31 to the EEA agreement on cooperation in specific fields outside the four freedoms in order to allow for the EEA EFTA States' continued participation in EU actions funded from the general budget of the Union regarding the implementation, operation and development of the Internal Market.

WRITTEN PROCEDURE

The Council authorises the opening of negotiations on an SAA with Kosovo

The Council adopted on 28 June, by written procedure, two decisions authorising the opening of negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between the European Union and Kosovo.
