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Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 14 November 2011

President

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Security Policy

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Main results of the Council

*The Council prepared the EU position for the international conference on **Afghanistan** in Bonn on 5 December. It reiterated the EU's firm commitment to remain a strong and reliable partner to Afghanistan, also after the transition has been completed. It approved a negotiating mandate for a cooperation agreement for partnership and development with Afghanistan and prolonged the EU police mission in Afghanistan in principle for three more years, until the end of 2014.*

*The Council exchanged views on the situation in the EU's Southern neighbourhood, in the light of the latest developments in the region. It adopted conclusions on **Libya, Syria and Tunisia**. In view of the gravity of the situation in Syria, the Council reinforced the EU restrictive measures against the country's regime.*

*The Council adopted a strategic framework for the **Horn of Africa**, which is to guide EU action for greater peace, stability and prosperity in the region. The strategic framework sets out five areas for EU action: building robust and accountable political structures; contributing to conflict resolution and prevention; mitigating security threats emanating from the region; promoting economic growth, and supporting regional economic cooperation.*

*During lunch, ministers debated current and future operations under the **Common Security and Defence Policy**. They also exchanged views on a new report by the International Atomic Energy Agency concerning **Iran's** nuclear programme. The Council adopted conclusions on Iran, expressing its increasing concern on the Iranian nuclear programme and the lack of progress in diplomatic efforts.*

*Ministers in charge of development cooperation established the EU position for the upcoming fourth high-level forum on **aid effectiveness** in Busan, Korea. They also discussed proposals on the **future of EU development policy**, the "agenda for change" and a refocused approach to budget support.*

*Over a working dinner, ministers debated relations between the **EU and the Russian Federation**.*

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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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ITEMS DEBATED**Afghanistan**

The Council prepared the EU position for the international conference on Afghanistan in Bonn on 5 December.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The international engagement in Afghanistan is evolving from its focus on security and stabilization towards political and economic cooperation. After 2014, a fully sovereign Afghanistan will exercise complete responsibility for its own security and will strive to transform itself into a stable and responsible member of the international community, in the service of all its people and in full respect of agreed international commitments. To ensure the successful completion of these processes the international community will need to continue supporting Afghanistan on its path from Transition to Transformation.
2. In this context, the Council looks forward to President Karzai's formal announcement of the second tranche of provinces, districts and cities where full responsibility for security will be transferred to the Afghan authorities, as part of the transition process. Nearly 50% of the people of Afghanistan live in areas which have been or are expected to be transitioned.
3. The International Afghanistan Conference will be held in Bonn under the chairmanship of Afghanistan on 5 December 2011. The Council fully subscribes to the aims of the Conference, and in particular that of mobilizing the international community to stay engaged in Afghanistan in the long term. Therefore, the Council reiterates the EU's firm commitment to remain engaged, as a strong and reliable partner to the Afghan government and people, also after transition has been completed.
4. The Council also expects the Bonn Conference to lay emphasis on the further strengthening of Afghan institutions of governance. It is of the view that if the democratic structures the EU has helped to build are to develop and work in a sustainable way they need to have the full support of the Afghan people, many of whom turned out to vote in the 2009 and 2010 elections in the face of intimidation, threats and doubts about the integrity of the process.
5. At the same time, Afghanistan needs to show tangible results in the implementation of the Kabul Conference commitments in particular in the fields of governance and respect for human rights and the rule of law and as concerns the accountable management of public funds. In taking stock of civilian aspects of transition, the Bonn Conference should accordingly send a clear message of support while urging the Afghan authorities to show strong leadership and commitment and to make rapid progress in these crucial domains.

6. Therefore during the transition process leading up to 2014, the EU will, further to its Conclusions of 18 July 2011 and to the EU Action Plan of October 2009, reiterate at Bonn its readiness to support Afghanistan, as appropriate in coordination and cooperation with the UN and NATO and other relevant international bodies, inter alia through:
- encouraging better oversight by elected bodies at both national and subnational levels, in particular as regards the flows and use of public finances;
 - in this context, assisting Afghanistan to ensure that provincial and national institutions function together effectively and transparently;
 - reinforcing the role of the parliament, the judiciary and audit authorities;
 - promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, with particular attention to the rights of women;
 - stepping up its assistance for capacity building, inter alia in the fields of subnational governance, civil service, civilian policing, the justice sector and electoral reform;
 - The Council agreed to an extension in principle of the mandate of EUPOL Afghanistan until the end of 2014. The Council also expressed the EU's commitment beyond 2014 to support Afghan efforts in strengthening policing and the rule of law.
 - continuing its development cooperation with Afghanistan in order to foster economic and social progress and combat poverty.

The Council stressed the importance of adequate security for EU presence in Afghanistan and the role of the Afghan authorities in this regard, including as concerns EUPOL.

7. The Council reiterates that as part of its work on the rule of law, the EU intends to give attention to assisting Afghanistan to improve the legal framework for private sector activities and in particular direct investment, with a view to improving the overall investment climate, thereby reducing as far as possible political risk, so promoting the conditions for sustainable economic growth.

8. The Council has adopted a decision authorising the European Commission and the High Representative to negotiate a Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development with Afghanistan. The mandate specifically refers to cooperation in the fields referred to above as well as a range of areas including development, counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, combating international crime, migration, trade, the environment, including climate change, and economic and cultural cooperation. For the first time the Agreement will create a coherent, legally binding overall framework for the EU's relations with Afghanistan, setting out common values as well as mutual rights and obligations, so constituting a long-term commitment to cooperation with Afghanistan up to and beyond 2014.
9. In the context of the abovementioned principles, the EU will seek to maintain funding for its cooperation and assistance programmes to Afghanistan and the region, bilaterally as well as through the EU's budget, at least at current levels in the years to come.
10. The EU reiterates its support for Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration in accordance with the conditions set out in the Council Conclusions of 18 July 2011.
11. The EU notes that the Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia, held at Istanbul on 2 November 2011, has, by launching the Istanbul Process, laid a useful basis for a process of political cooperation in Afghanistan's neighbourhood, owned and led by the countries of the region. The EU welcomes the follow-up action agreed at Istanbul, including the Confidence Building Measures proposed there and technical meetings which will prepare the Kabul ministerial meeting in 2012. All countries in the region need to participate in efforts to achieve a peaceful solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, thus allowing the international community's long-term commitment to Afghanistan's development to be successfully implemented. The EU considers that, fundamentally, it is in the interests of each country in the region to contribute to stability in Afghanistan.
12. The EU and its Member States therefore stand ready to facilitate any initiatives aimed at reconciling the legitimate interests of Afghanistan's neighbours, through active diplomacy. The Council reiterates that it is vital that all countries in the region and beyond accept that Afghanistan must be allowed to seek the way to peace without outside interference. The EU is ready, should the Government of Afghanistan so wish, to provide any practical assistance in furthering regional cooperation.
13. In the course of the bilateral or multilateral discussions following the Istanbul conference, all countries of the region should also be encouraged to open up trade, transit and investment possibilities for Afghanistan, and, through Afghanistan, for each other. International standards and criteria should as far as possible provide a basis for this. Relevant international bodies such as WTO, WCO, ICAO and others could play a very useful role in following up.
14. The Council considers that the UN can play a central role in supporting any commitments entered into by the countries in the region in all these areas."

Southern neighbourhood

The Council discussed the situation in the EU's Southern neighbourhood, in the light of the latest developments in the region.

– *Libya*

The Council discussed the situation in Libya and adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The EU welcomes the Declaration of Liberation of Libya made on October 23, which marks the beginning of a new era for the country and its people. It also welcomes the appointment of Abdurrahim al-Keib as Libya's new Prime Minister and looks forward to the rapid appointment of a Transitional Government. It recognises the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people expressed during the revolution, and encourages the continuation of reconciliation efforts. It also reiterates its call for this transition to be inclusive and to pave the way for the establishment of a state based on the rule of law and democratic principles to which Libyan people aspired during the revolution, such as fundamental freedoms, respect for human rights, gender equality, including participation of women in the political process, and non discrimination.
2. The EU encourages the National Transitional Council to pursue its calls for justice and respect for human rights in line with its Constitutional Charter. It notes with concern reports of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law including revenge attacks and summary executions. It welcomes the commitment of the Libyan authorities to take action to bring an end to such acts, to carry out thorough and impartial investigations into any such incidents and ensure that those responsible for violations of human rights are held accountable. The EU welcomes the promise of cooperation between the Libyan authorities and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commission of Inquiry of the UN Human Rights Council, as well as the International Criminal Court.
3. The EU notes the end of Operation Unified Protector in Libya and expresses appreciation for the critical role it has played in the protection of civilians. It also recalls that it has taken swift action to implement the provisions on UNSCR 2016 (2011) on the termination of the No-Fly Zone.
4. The EU underlines its concerns regarding the proliferation of all arms and related materiel of all types in line with UNSCR 2017 (2011), in particular Man-portable air defence system (MANPADS) and chemical weapons stockpiles in Libya and the danger of their dissemination across the region. It stresses the need for a response based on close coordination with international partners and countries of the region, and it recalls the relevance of the EU Sahel Strategy in this regard.

5. In full respect of the principle of Libyan ownership and in cooperation with the UN, the EU is ready to combine all its instruments, including CSDP if appropriate, in order to provide further assistance to the new Libya across a range of sectors, as already set out in the FAC Conclusions of 10 October. Together with the Libyan authorities and the international community, the EU will continue to work to lift restrictions on Libyan assets frozen abroad in conformity with the wishes and needs of the Libyan people and the relevant UNSCRs. A quick re-launch of the Libyan economy is needed to support the transition process. The EU will continue to respond to requests for humanitarian assistance.
6. The Council reaffirms its readiness to support Libya during the transition and welcomes the inauguration of an EU Delegation to Libya by High Representative Ashton.
7. The EU is committed to deepening and strengthening its relationship with the Libyan people and looks forward to the participation of Libya within the European Neighbourhood Policy and regional initiatives such as the Union for the Mediterranean."

– *Syria*

The Council discussed the situation in Syria.

In view of the gravity of the situation, the Council suspended further disbursements of project loans to the Syrian government from the European Investment Bank as well as the bank's technical assistance contracts for sovereign projects in Syria. It also added 18 persons responsible for human rights violations to the list of those targeted by an asset freeze and travel ban pursuant to decision 2011/273/CFSP and regulation 442/2011. For more information, see press release [16724/11](#).

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The European Union continues to be deeply concerned by the deteriorating situation in Syria where according to the United Nations more than 3,500 people have been killed since March. The EU again condemns in the strongest terms the ongoing brutal repression and widespread human rights violation.

The Council discussed today the situation in Syria as well as the outcome of the Arab League meeting that took place last Saturday in response to the failure of the Syrian government to implement the Arab League plan to which Syria committed on 2 November. The EU deplors that once again the Syrian government has not lived up to its own commitments, pursuing instead the repression against its own people.

The European Union welcomes the efforts of the Arab League to end violence and bring about the democratic transition that the Syrian people have bravely demanded in the last eight months. The European Union salutes and fully supports the decisions taken by the Arab League meeting on 12 November, which show the increasing isolation of the Syrian regime.

The European Union will continue to press for strong UN action to increase international pressure and urges all members of the Security Council to assume their responsibilities in relation to the situation in Syria.

In the light of the continued repression in Syria, the EU has decided today to place new restrictive measures against the regime, by suspending the disbursement of European Investment Bank loans and by targeting additional individuals responsible or associated with the repression and supporting or benefiting from the regime. In line with the European Council Conclusions of 23 October, the EU will continue to impose additional and more comprehensive measures against the regime as long as the repression of the civilian population continues.

The EU stresses its strong support to the Syrian people and welcomes the ongoing efforts by the Syrian opposition to establish a united platform and to work for a shared vision for the future of Syria and the transition to a democratic system. The EU stands ready to engage with representative members of the opposition which adhere to non-violence and democratic values such as the Syrian National Council. The European Union shares the vision of those who strive peacefully for a life in freedom and dignity, committed to rule of law and human rights.

The EU demands that the Syrian authorities immediately grant access to humanitarian agencies and workers and to fact-finding missions, in particular from the independent international commission of inquiry appointed by the Human Rights Council in August, and to allow independent and international media to operate in Syria without restrictions.

The EU strongly condemns attacks on diplomatic premises. The Syrian authorities are under an international obligation to ensure the protection of diplomatic missions and personnel in Syria in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations."

– *Tunisia*

Ministers discussed the situation in Tunisia and adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The European Union congratulates Tunisia on the holding, on 23 October 2011, of the first democratic Constituent Assembly elections, in which the Tunisian people voted freely and peacefully. It congratulates the Tunisians on their active participation in the electoral process. The EU welcomes the preliminary report of its election observation mission and the latter's positive assessment of the electoral process. These elections are a turning point for Tunisia and, moreover, the whole region.
2. The EU congratulates the candidates and parties that took part in the democratic process and is committed, on that basis, to working with the new Tunisian government resulting from the elections, in which the Ennahda party gained the most votes. It welcomes the anticipated speedy start of work by the newly elected Constituent Assembly, which will need to fulfil the historic task of establishing the framework for a State based on democratic principles, respect of fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination.
3. The EU stands ready to deepen and intensify its support for the newly elected authorities and civil society in implementing reforms, with a view to providing tangible responses to the legitimate aspirations of the Tunisian people for democracy and a fairer society based on inclusive and sustainable economic growth.
4. The EU has approved a new, more ambitious approach for its Neighbourhood Policy aimed at providing greater support to the countries of the region involved in transition, as indicated in the Council conclusions of 20 June 2011. Within that framework, the EU and Tunisia have established a very broad agenda for cooperation, which includes the recent launch of the dialogue on migration, mobility and security. The EU would also draw attention to its financial support, which has been significantly increased. The EU reiterates its commitment to launching negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA), aimed at improving access to markets, as part of the reforms undertaken by Tunisia to secure its progressive economic integration into the EU's internal market. It confirms its willingness to provide this support quickly, in line with Tunisia's needs and with its progress in implementing its reform programme. The EU also confirms its commitment to renewing and completing negotiations on the new Action Plan, which will clearly mark the strengthening of relations between the EU and Tunisia through a renewed partnership. The European Union will support the new authorities in their efforts to secure democratisation and sustained economic development, including through the EU/Tunisia Task Force launched on 28 September 2011 in Tunis."

Horn of Africa and Somalia

The Council debated the situation in the Horn of Africa and in Somalia.

The Council adopted a strategic framework for the Horn of Africa, which is to guide EU action for greater peace, stability, security, prosperity and accountable government in the region. The strategic framework sets out five areas for EU action: building robust and accountable political structures; contributing to conflict resolution and prevention; mitigating security threats emanating from the region; promoting economic growth, and supporting regional economic cooperation.

– Horn of Africa

The Council adopted the following conclusions on the Horn of Africa:

1. "Underlining the importance attached by the EU to its relations with the Horn of Africa, the Council has adopted today a Strategic Framework to guide the EU's engagement in the region. It welcomes the High Representative's proposal to appoint an EU Special Representative (EUSR) for the Horn of Africa, focusing in the first instance on Somalia, the regional dimension of the conflict and piracy, and looks forward to the development of action plans to support implementation of the Strategic Framework.
2. The EU's long-term commitment to the Horn of Africa is rooted in the region's geo-strategic importance, the EU's desire to support the welfare of the people of the Horn and to help lift them from poverty into self-sustaining economic growth. Instability in the region poses a growing challenge not only to the security of its peoples but also to the rest of the world. Continued EU engagement will be in support of both regional efforts, including through the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU), and national efforts to achieve lasting peace, security and justice, good governance based on the democratic principles of inclusion, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The Strategic Framework also recognises the need to protect European citizens from the threats that emanate from some parts of the region, including terrorism, piracy and the proliferation of the arms. It also identifies a number of common challenges such as climate change and migration.
3. The EU remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian crisis affecting several countries in the Horn of Africa. Building on existing support provided to date (over € 760 million), the EU will continue to provide neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations and calls for increased assistance from and coordination of all donors. The Council calls on all parties to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian actors in accordance with international humanitarian principles.

4. The Council highlights the need to address the underlying causes of the current humanitarian crisis, in particular structural food insecurity, recurrent drought and conflict. The EU will continue to support the countries of the region in strengthening their national capacities through disaster risk reduction strategies and long-term development cooperation programmes in the areas of drought-preparedness, agriculture, rural development and food security. The effectiveness of such support is, however, dependent upon local ownership and the political commitment of the countries of the region to put structural policies in place to support sustainable agricultural and livestock production, including cross-border movements, natural resource management, in particular water resources, as well as trade and regional integration.
5. Piracy off the coast of Somalia continues to negatively impact on international maritime security and regional and international economic activities. The Council remains committed to the commendable work of the EU naval counter-piracy operation, EUNAVFOR Atalanta, which provides protection to World Food Programme and AMISOM shipping, and contributes to deterring piracy and protecting vulnerable shipping. The EU will advance work to enhance the capacity of Somalia and the wider Horn of Africa region to fight piracy, including through further strengthening of maritime capacities as well as prosecution and detention capacities. The EU will continue to work towards the tracking of financial flows from piracy. The EUSR for the Horn of Africa will contribute to developing and implementing a coherent, effective and balanced EU approach to piracy, encompassing all strands of EU action.
6. The Strategic Framework, in Annex, sets out the way in which the EU will pursue its strategic approach, working in partnership with the region itself and key international partners."

The complete Strategic Framework is set out [16858/11](#).

– *Somalia*

The Council adopted the following conclusions on Somalia:

1. "The EU remains concerned about the situation in Somalia and its regional implications and is actively engaged in alleviating the consequences of the worsening humanitarian situation, restoring security and contributing to peace, development and internal reconciliation in the country. The famine has expanded to six regions of southern Somalia, including Mogadishu, and threatens to further expand across the south affecting nearly half of the population. The EU appeals to all concerned that international humanitarian actors should be given free and safe access to all in need of assistance. The EU will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable population and encourages others to do so.

2. The EU condemns the continued attacks on Somali civilians by Al Shabaab, including the bomb attacks of 4 and 18 October in Mogadishu. It is particularly concerned about the extension of such attacks to neighbouring countries, including Kenya, and the kidnap of European citizens and calls for their immediate release. Such attacks threaten not just neighbouring countries but the international community as a whole. The EU supports efforts to counter the threat of such attacks, consistent with international law; in this respect the EU reminds all parties of their obligations to protect civilians and safeguard humanitarian access in full accordance with international humanitarian principles. Recalling that military action alone will not create lasting security in Somalia, the EU underlines the need for coordination of all military and security actions in Somalia with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the Inter-Governmental Agency for Development (IGAD), the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) to ensure that military action against Al Shabaab is consolidated in the context of a sound civil and political strategy able to ensure a sustainable peace.
3. The EU reaffirms its commitment to continue political and financial support for AMISOM and encourages AU efforts to secure additional donors. It praises the commitment and bravery of the AMISOM peacekeeping troops who, together with the security forces of the TFG, have paid a high price to help build security in Mogadishu. The EU encourages AMISOM and the TFG forces to continue their efforts to prevent civilian casualties and to further develop their capacities to protect civilians and their human rights. The EU underlines that its support must be matched by complementary political efforts by the TFG, including initiatives to demonstrate peace dividends to people in safe, freed areas of the Somali capital.
4. Consistent with its commitment to assist the development of the Somali security sector, the EU has recently decided to extend the EU training mission (EUTM Somalia) for the provision of military training to the National Security Forces (NSF) of Somalia, with a special emphasis on the strengthening of the chain of command and self-training capacities of the NSF. The mandate will be carried out in cooperation with the TFG, Uganda, AMISOM, the US and others. The EU commends the efforts and commitment of the first intake of trained Somali soldiers in the recent security developments in Mogadishu.
5. The EU welcomes the outcome of the consultative meeting held in Mogadishu from 4 to 6 September, where key Somali leaders including representatives of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), of the regions of Puntland and Galmudug, as well as of the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a group signed together a "Roadmap for Ending the Transition".
6. The EU will continue to participate actively in the Technical Committee established to monitor progress on the Roadmap and reiterates that the pace and degree of such progress will determine the extent of continued or additional EU support to the TFIs.

7. Recalling the recommendations of the International Contact Group meeting on Somalia in Copenhagen, 29-30 September, the EU appeals to all signatories of the Roadmap to implement the agreed tasks emphasising: a viable constitutional process, a sustained attempt at reconciliation; effective parliamentary reform, the development and implementation of a National Security and Stabilisation Plan as well as an effective maritime security and counter piracy policy. The EU recognizes that these tasks are interdependent and it is committed to provide targeted support for their full implementation, provided the TFIs demonstrate the political will to deliver effectively, improve financial transparency and accountability, and take effective action to tackle corruption. The EU is concerned about the pace at which the Roadmap is being implemented and urges the TFIs to immediately implement the priority transitional tasks.
8. The EU stresses, in particular, the importance of a credible and inclusive constitutional consultation process leading to a constitutional framework being in place by the end of the transition period, i.e. August 2012. The successful conclusion of the political transition process will require full, transparent and broad-based Somali ownership. The EU notes the potential challenges in involving an increasing number of internally displaced persons in the consultation process. In this context, the EU encourages the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to pursue a process of outreach and reconciliation with local and regional actors, civil society including women, religious and community leaders as well as other groups who are willing to engage constructively in the process to return the rule of law and constitutional government to Somalia.
9. In addition the EU calls on the TFG to do all it can to combat terrorism and commits to support the TFG in these efforts.
10. Already the largest donor to Somalia, the EU is increasing its development assistance to central, regional and local actors to consolidate a civilian strategy to build stable and accountable governance, improved livelihood opportunities and the provision of basic services. Regions of Somalia such as Puntland, Somaliland, as well as other local actors, including Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, will be further supported by the EU as long as they continue to make progress in providing services, enhancing the Somali reconciliation process, combating Al Shabaab and developing their cooperation with the TFIs and other regional actors. The EU will ensure that its efforts in these regions are coordinated with other international actors.
11. The EU also underlines the need for a comprehensive approach to address piracy, including through capacity building in the maritime, judicial and penitentiary sectors, with a special emphasis on Somalia. To this end, it encourages the strengthening of cooperation between the TFG and the regions of Puntland, Galmudug and Somaliland.

12. The EU calls for further efforts to streamline and strengthen the coordination of all actors and international donors to Somalia. The establishment of the proposed Joint TFG-Donor Financial Management Board needs urgent attention.
13. The Council considers a sustained presence in Mogadishu will facilitate support to the Somali peace process, and invites the HR and the European Commission to examine how this may be assured in ways compatible with the security situation."

Iran

During lunch, ministers debated recent developments regarding Iran's nuclear programme following the publication of the latest report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"In the light of the new IAEA report, which is to be considered by the IAEA Board of Governors, the Council expresses its increasing concerns over the Iranian nuclear programme and the lack of progress in diplomatic efforts. It condemns the continuous expansion of Iran's enrichment programme, and expresses particular concerns over the findings of the IAEA Director General report on Iranian activities relating to the development of military nuclear technology. Iran has been found in violation of international obligations, including six UNSC and ten IAEA Board Resolutions.

We urge Iran to address the international concerns over the nature of its nuclear programme through full cooperation with the IAEA and by demonstrating readiness to engage seriously in concrete discussions on confidence building steps, as proposed by the HR on behalf of the E3+3.

The Council recalled the latest European Council conclusions inviting it to prepare new restrictive measures against Iran. The Council will continue to examine possible new and reinforced measures and revert to this issue at its next meeting, taking into account Iran's actions."

Common Security and Defence Policy

During lunch, ministers debated current and future developments, including operations, under the Common Security and Defence Policy, ahead of the meeting of defence ministers on 30 November.

SESSION ON DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Aid effectiveness

The Council established the EU position for the fourth high-level forum on aid effectiveness, which will take place in Busan (Korea), from 29 November to 1 December 2011 ([16773/11](#)).

At the Busan conference, the EU will promote initiatives that improve transparency, increase the use of joint planning at country level, strengthen accountability and the evaluation of results and introduce a new approach to situations of conflict and fragility. The EU will also support more public-private engagement for development matters.

In addition, the Council established an "EU Transparency Guarantee": It pledged to publicly disclose information on aid volumes and allocation, make available indicative forward-looking information and disaggregated information on relevant aid flows.

Horn of Africa

Development ministers debated development cooperation and humanitarian aid to the Horn of Africa region.

According to the UN office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs (OCHA), drought and famine in the Horn of Africa affect around 13 million people. As of 8 November, the EU and its member states had committed EUR 682 million for food, water and sanitation in response to the drought crisis.

Future of EU development policy

The Council discussed proposals to refocus EU development aid, the "agenda for change" ([15560/11](#)).

Taking into account a changing world, it is proposed that development aid be targeted more efficiently in support of partner countries' efforts to eradicate poverty, the primary objective of EU development policy. The EU will therefore focus its aid on countries where it can have the greatest impact and concentrate on two main targets: supporting human rights, democracy and good governance, on the one hand, and inclusive and sustainable growth for development on the other hand. It is also proposed that partner countries be differentiated according to their level of development, that coordination between EU actors be increased and that coherence across different EU policies be improved.

The debate among ministers will feed into the preparation of Council conclusions that will fully set out the refocusing of EU development policy at a later Council meeting.

The EU and its member states are the biggest donor of official development aid globally. In 2010, they provided EUR 53.8 billion, more than half of the aid given worldwide.

EU budget support

The Council considered proposals for the future approach to EU budget support to third countries ([15561/11](#)).

Budget support is the channelling of development aid through the national treasury account of the partner countries, together with mutual accountability through a performance assessment. The Commission has proposed to make budget support from EU resources more efficient by strengthening contractual partnerships with countries receiving budget support. In addition, it has suggested that member states coordinate their approaches to the budget support they grant through their own means.

The debate among ministers will feed into the preparation of Council conclusions that will establish the new approach to EU budget support.

MEETINGS IN THE MARGINS OF THE COUNCIL

Uzbekistan

The tenth meeting of the EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council was held in the margins of the Council. For more information, see press release [UE-UZ 4503/11](#).

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Relations with Russia

The Council adopted the position of the European Union for the eighth EU-Russia permanent partnership council, to be held in Moscow on 17 November 2011.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Annual report on the EU's development and external assistance policies

The Council adopted conclusions on the annual report concerning the EU's development and external assistance policies and their implementation in 2010 ([16768/11](#)). The Council noted the Commission's efforts to increase the focus on results and aid effectiveness as well as the attempts to measure results and evaluate impact.

EU contributions channelled through UN organisations in conflict-affected countries

The Council adopted conclusions on the EU Court of Auditors' special report No 3/2011, assessing whether channelling EU contributions through United Nations organisations is an effective, efficient and sustainable way of delivering aid in conflict-affected countries (16769/11). The Council appreciated the Court's recognition that by channelling funds through the UN the Commission has delivered aid in areas which would otherwise have been very difficult to target. In particular, the Council welcomes the auditors' conclusion that, given the high inherent risk in conflict-affected countries, the activities funded had an overall positive impact and that the majority of the results achieved have reasonable chances of sustainability.

European Development Fund

The Council adopted conclusions that constitute the EU position with a view to conducting the performance review of the 10th European Development Fund together with the ACP states ([16461/11](#)). The performance review assesses the financial performance, as well as the quantitative and qualitative performance of the 10th EDF (2008-2013), and in particular the results and the impact, measured in terms of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**Restrictive measures against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism**

The Council adopted the updated statements of reasons concerning persons and groups subject to the restrictive measures in Council regulation 2580/2001. It also approved the letter of notification to be sent to groups concerned together with the updated statement of reasons. The notice will be published in the Official Journal ("C" series).

Under article 1(6) of common position 2001/931/CFSP and article 2(3) of Council regulation 2580/2001, the Council is required to review the names of persons, groups and entities listed pursuant to that common position and that regulation at regular intervals and at least twice a year to ensure that there are grounds for keeping them on the list.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA**Relations with the European Economic Area**

The Council adopted the EU's common position for the 36th meeting of the European Economic Area Council, to take place on 15 November 2011 in Brussels.

DECISIONS BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE**Libya - restrictive measures**

On 10 November, the Council decided by written procedure to repeal EU provisions concerning the prohibition to fly over Libya, implementing a decision by the UN Security Council to end the no-fly zone on 31 October 2011.
