



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



11688/12

PRESSE 282
PR CO 41

PRESS RELEASE

3179th Council meeting

Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 25 June 2012

President

Catherine Ashton

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and
Security Policy

P R E S S

Main results of the Council

*The Council discussed developments in the EU's **southern neighbourhood**, focusing on Syria and Egypt. It strongly condemned the brutal violence and massacres of civilians in **Syria** and urged the Syrian regime once more to immediately end the killing of civilians and to allow for a peaceful transition for the sake of the country. The Council also condemned the unacceptable shooting down by Syria of a Turkish military plane on 22 June. In response to the escalating violence, the Council once more reinforced EU sanctions against the Syrian regime.*

*The Council welcomed the peaceful conduct of the presidential elections in **Egypt** and congratulated Mohammed Morsi on his election as President. The Council reiterated the EU's full support for Egypt's democratic transition and underlined the need for a full and swift hand-over to civilian authorities. At the same time, it expressed its serious concern about recent developments, which delay and hinder the transition and full handover to civilian rule.*

*The Council underlined the EU's determination to promote human rights and democracy throughout the world. It adopted a Strategic Framework on **Human Rights and Democracy** with an Action Plan for putting it into practice. The principles, objectives and priorities set out in the strategic framework are designed to improve the effectiveness and consistency of EU policy as a whole in the next ten years. The Council also prepared the appointment of an EU Special Representative for Human Rights.*

*During lunch, the EU High Representative briefed ministers on the talks with **Iran** on its nuclear programme, which took place on 23 May in Baghdad and on 18 and 19 June in Moscow. The Council reviewed the latest restrictive measures against Iran and confirmed that they would remain as approved in January.*

*Finally, the Council appointed Patricia Flor as **EU Special Representative for Central Asia**. She will succeed Pierre Morel, who has been in the post since October 2006.*

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 - Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
 - Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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PARTICIPANTS

High Representative

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High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Belgium:

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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, External Trade and European Affairs

Bulgaria:

Mr Nikolaï MLADENOV

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Czech Republic:

Mr Karel SCHWARZENBERG

First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Villy SØVNDAL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Guido WESTERWELLE

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs

Estonia:

Mr Matti MAASIKAS

Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Eamon GILMORE

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

Greece:

Mr Dimitrios KOURKOULAS

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr José Manuel GARCÍA-MARGALLO MARFIL

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

France:

Mr Laurent FABIUS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Italy:

Mr Giulio TERZI DI SANT'AGATA

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Cyprus:

Ms Erato KOZAKOU-MARCOULLIS

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Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Minister for Foreign Affairs

Malta:

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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr Uri ROSENTHAL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Vice Chancellor, Federal Minister for European and International Affairs

Poland:

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Minister for Foreign Affairs

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

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State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Slovenia:

Mr Karl Viktor ERJAVEC

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Slovakia:

Mr Miroslav LAJČÁK

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Mr Erkki TUOMIOJA

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Sweden:

Mr Carl BILDT

Minister for Foreign Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr William HAGUE

First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

.....
Commission:

Mr Stefan FÜLE

Member

Mr Andris PIEBALGS

Member
.....

The Government of the Acceding State was represented as follows:

Croatia:

Ms Vesna PUSIĆ

Minister for Foreign and European Affairs

ITEMS DEBATED

Southern neighbourhood

The Council held an in-depth discussion on the situation in the EU's southern neighbourhood, focusing on Syria and Egypt.

– *Syria*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The European Union strongly condemns the brutal violence and massacres of civilians, many of them children and women, such as in the town of Houla on 26 May, and in the villages of Qubair and Maarzaf in Hama province on 6 June. It is also appalled by reports on the use of children as human shields. The EU welcomes the UN Human Rights Council resolution adopted on 1 June, condemning the deteriorating human rights situation in Syria and the horrific killings in Houla. It urges the Syrian regime to end immediately the killing of civilians, withdraw the Syrian army from besieged towns and cities and to allow for a peaceful transition for the sake of the country. President Assad has no place in the future of Syria. The EU looks forward to the outcome of the investigation by the Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria into the massacre in Houla. The EU urges the Syrian authorities to fully and immediately cooperate with the Commission. The EU recalls that all those responsible for widespread, systematic and gross human rights violations must be held accountable.
2. The EU recalls its full support to Joint UN- League of Arab States Special Envoy Kofi Annan's mission and his six-point plan. It welcomes the full deployment of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), but regrets that the escalation of violence led to the suspension of UNSMIS observation activities on 16 June. It recalls that the Syrian authorities are responsible for ensuring the security and safety of the mission and for facilitating the resumption of the unobstructed work of the mission. It strongly condemns the attacks against UN monitors.
3. The EU condemns all actions aimed at obstructing the implementation of Annan's six point plan. It reiterates that the main responsibility for the ceasefire and the implementation of the plan lies with the Syrian authorities. The EU warns against further militarisation of the conflict and sectarian violence which will bring enormous suffering to Syria and risks having a tragic impact on the region. The EU calls on all parties to refrain from using violence and in particular on the regime to fully implement the Annan plan. The EU recalls that the six-point plan is not an open-ended offer.

The European Union condemns the unacceptable shooting down by Syria of a Turkish military plane on 22 June. It offers its sympathies to the families of the airmen involved, and commends Turkey's measured and responsible initial reaction. The European Union notes that this is a matter which needs to be investigated thoroughly and urgently. It calls on Syria to cooperate fully with Turkey and allow full access for an immediate investigation, and for the international community to give its support to such efforts. The European Union urges Syria to ensure that it complies by international standards and obligations.

4. The EU calls on all the States concerned, and in particular the Members of the UN Security Council, to continue to support Kofi Annan and use all their influence to ensure that UNSC resolutions 2042 and 2043 are fully implemented. The EU calls for united action by the UNSC to add more robust and effective pressure, including the adoption of comprehensive sanctions under Chapter VII. In this respect, it welcomes Annan's efforts to work with key international partners exercising a positive influence in the region to move the political process forward. The EU takes note of the discussion on Syria during the EU-Russia Summit on 3-4 June and reiterates the importance of Russia's engagement in support of a peaceful political process which must lead to a democratic transition.

The EU looks forward to the next meeting of the Friends of the Syrian People Group that will be held in Paris on 6 July to maintain international pressure on the Syrian regime and support Annan's six-point plan.

5. The European Union remains committed to the Syrian people's struggle for freedom, dignity, democracy and human rights. The EU continues to urge the Syrian National Council and other opposition groups to put aside their differences and to agree on a set of shared principles and start working towards an inclusive, orderly and peaceful transition in Syria. A stronger and more united opposition that represents a credible alternative for all Syrians is essential. The EU calls on all opposition groups to actively and fully support the implementation of the Annan plan.
6. The EU welcomes the outcome of the third Syria Humanitarian Forum held on 5 June. The EU calls on the Syrian authorities to fully cooperate and ensure the rapid implementation of the humanitarian response plan, including immediately allowing full unhindered and safe access to humanitarian workers and delivery of humanitarian aid. The EU fully supports the humanitarian initiative to urgently evacuate non-combatants and the wounded from Homs and calls on all parties to allow the evacuation of children, women, elderly and injured from conflict zones. The EU will continue to support the efforts made by neighbouring countries to host Syrian refugees who fled violence in Syria.

7. The EU approved today the designation of new persons and entities to be subject to restrictive measures. The EU will continue its policy of imposing additional measures targeting the regime, not the civilian population, as long as repression continues. The EU will also continue to urge the international community to join its efforts, in taking steps to apply and enforce restrictive measures on the Syrian regime and its supporters. In this context, the EU welcomes the second meeting of the International Working Group on Sanctions which was held in Washington on 6 June. It calls on all Syrians to dissociate themselves from the repressive policy of the regime in order to facilitate a political transition."

In response to the escalating violence in Syria, the Council once more reinforced EU sanctions against the Syrian regime once more. For details, see press release [11606/12](#).

– ***Egypt***

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The EU welcomes the peaceful conduct of Presidential elections and congratulates Mohammed Morsi on his election as President of Egypt. The EU congratulates the Egyptian people for this significant milestone in Egypt's democratic transition and historic moment for the people, the country and the region. The EU looks forward to working with President Morsi and welcomes his statement that he intends to form an inclusive government that governs on behalf of all the Egyptian people and reaches out to all political and social groups.
2. The EU reiterates its full support to Egypt's democratic transition and underlines the need for a full and swift hand-over to civilian authorities, and recalls previous commitments in this regard. The EU stresses the fundamental importance of the democratic process and institutions and separation of powers, as well as the duty to respect the rule of law and to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including freedoms of expression, assembly, and religion or belief. In this context, the EU recalls the important role of an active and independent civil society as a key component of any democratic society.
3. The EU is seriously concerned about recent developments, in particular the dissolution of the Parliament and the Constitutional Declaration by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces of 17 June, which delay and hinder the transition and full handover to civilian rule.
4. The EU emphasises the importance of an inclusive and transparent drafting process of Egypt's new Constitution, which should reflect the aspirations of the Egyptian people for dignity and justice by ensuring human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and safeguard the democratic separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers.

5. The EU stresses that security and public order should be maintained with restraint and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. While the end of the State of Emergency on 31 May was an important step forward, the EU is concerned about the decree issued on 13 June granting the military broad powers of arrest and detention of civilians for a wide range of offenses.
6. The EU fully recognizes the serious social and economic challenges Egypt is facing and reiterates the EU's readiness to provide assistance, in close partnership with Egypt's new democratic authorities in coordination with the international community. In this context, the EU underlines the importance for Egypt to engage in the necessary social and economic reforms, to allow the effective use of available international assistance and to improve the business environment.
7. Egypt remains a key partner in the region. The EU stresses therefore the importance of Egypt's continued commitment to the goal of building stability, peace and prosperity in the Mediterranean and Middle East region."

Pakistan

During lunch, the EU High Representative briefed ministers about her visit to Pakistan on 5 and 6 June and ministers exchanged views on the situation in that country.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The Council welcomes the visit of the High Representative to Pakistan on 5-6 June 2012, and the launch of the Strategic Dialogue under the 5-year Engagement Plan. Together these are an expression of the deepening and widening of the EU's relationship with Pakistan.
2. The Council takes note of the political developments in Pakistan and expects that any steps taken will be in accordance with the Constitution and laws of Pakistan. The EU strongly supports Pakistan's democratic institutions and civilian government, as well as the role of civil society.
3. The EU looks forward to Pakistan's forthcoming elections, and expects these to see a democratic transfer from one elected government to the next. The EU is ready to consider deploying an election observation mission (EOM) and to offer technical assistance should Pakistan request this. The Council reiterates the importance of ongoing electoral reform, and considers that the recommendations of the 2008 EOM should facilitate this.

4. The EU has undertaken to offer improved market access to Pakistan through the implementation of the autonomous trade preferences under the WTO waiver and the commitment to provide for Pakistan's eligibility to GSP+ as from 2014, provided that it meets the necessary criteria. In this context, Pakistan should ensure that the international conventions listed in the GSP regulation are effectively implemented.
5. The EU encourages Pakistan to intensify efforts on political, economic, fiscal and energy reform. The EU expects that Pakistan will respond positively to EU concerns on these questions. In particular, the EU reiterates its expectations regarding the promotion and respect of human rights, including the protection of the rights of minorities and of freedom of religion. The EU and Pakistan have agreed to strengthen their dialogue in this field.
6. The EU recognises the many difficult security challenges Pakistan faces, particularly the sacrifices it has made in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. The EU calls on Pakistan to meet those challenges with renewed strength and stands by it in doing so. As part of our cooperation under the Engagement Plan the EU and Pakistan are launching sector dialogues on non-proliferation and counter-terrorism. The EU will work closely with the Pakistani authorities to finalise and implement Action Plans on counter-terrorism under the EU counterterrorism/security Strategy adopted today. The EU is also in dialogue with Pakistan on organised crime and migration. The Council calls for full implementation by Pakistan of the 2010 readmission agreement.
7. The EU welcomes the positive momentum in broader Pakistani external relations, most notably the improved relations with India, and encourages Pakistan to play an active role in all endeavours to strengthen regional political and economic co-operation, including in the context of the 'Heart of Asia' initiative. Pakistan's role in promoting a secure Afghanistan and in facilitating an Afghan-led process of reconciliation is vital. The EU emphasises the importance of Pakistan's continued constructive cooperation during the gradual withdrawal of ISAF troops from Afghanistan.
8. The Council notes that the Strategic Dialogue could lead, in the light of progress achieved, to a third EU-Pakistan Summit at the earliest possible time."

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Council took stock of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The Council reiterates its unequivocal support for Bosnia and Herzegovina's (BiH) EU perspective as a sovereign and united country enjoying full territorial integrity. To that end, the Council reaffirmed the March 2011, the October 2011 and December 2011 Council Conclusions and the strategy they set out. The Council also supports Peter Sorensen's active, effective and constructive approach as EUSR/Head of Delegation, who has significantly contributed to anchoring the EU agenda at the core of the political process in BiH. The Council also reaffirms its intention to further reinforce the EU role in the country as of July 2012, including by further increasing EU's presence in the field and on law enforcement, rule of law and economic matters, also following the closure of EUPM.
2. The Council welcomes political progress in BiH since the start of 2012, particularly the formation of the Council of Ministers at state-level, adoption of the State Aid and Population Census Laws, the passing of the 2012 State Budget, and the reaching of a political agreement on state and immovable defence property. However, the Council expresses concern over the lack of implementing political agreements, the continued use of divisive ethnic rhetoric, and a difficult economic situation. It condemns any attempts to minimise or deny the genocide which took place in Srebrenica. Noting the current political events, the Council calls on the political leaders to swiftly ensure that governments on all political levels retain their capacity to act and focus on the implementation of the EU agenda.
3. The Council reiterates that BiH, as a matter of priority, needs to bring its Constitution into compliance with the European Convention of Human Rights (Sejdic/Finci ruling). A credible effort in this regard remains necessary for the entry into force of the SAA (Stabilisation and Association Agreement).
4. Completing the implementation of the Sejdic/Finci ruling and having a satisfactory track record in implementing its obligations under the SAA/Interim Agreement would be key elements for a credible membership application to be considered by the EU. The Council also underlines that establishing an effective coordination mechanism for engagement with the EU as well as ensuring fiscal sustainability remain key priorities. In this context the Council looks forward to the European Commission's High-Level Dialogue on the EU accession process with BiH political leaders on 27 June 2012.

5. The Council welcomes the outcome of the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board held in Sarajevo on 22/23 May, including the decision of the Supervisor of Brcko to suspend his functions and the accompanying closure of the High Representative's office in Brcko. Positive and tangible developments on the ground contributed to this decision. The EU will continue to support and encourage further progress in this regard.
6. In the context of the EU overall strategy for BiH, the Council looks forward to continuing discussion with the international community on the reconfiguration of the international presence, including its downsizing and possible relocation of the OHR, in the appropriate forum. In this regard, it notes the ongoing discussions on overlapping tasks between the OHR and the EU. It calls on BiH to meet the outstanding objectives and conditions which remain necessary for the closure of the OHR."

Human rights

The Council held an in-depth discussion about the promotion of human rights and democracy in EU external relations. It adopted an EU strategic framework and an EU action plan for human rights and democracy. For details, see press release [11737/12](#).

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "Underlining the EU's determination to promote human rights and democracy throughout the world, the Council today adopts an EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy, to guide the EU's engagement in years to come. At the same time, the Council adopts an Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for implementation of the Strategic Framework.
2. The Council emphasises the importance of an EU Special Representative (EUSR) on Human Rights for enhancing the effectiveness and visibility of the EU's Human Rights policy, and looks forward to appointing this EUSR swiftly.
3. The Council is committed to working in close cooperation with the European Parliament and the European Commission, and in a spirit of genuine partnership with civil society.
4. The EU is committed to working with partners, multilateral forums and international organisations in the field of human rights and democracy."

Iran

During lunch, the EU High Representative briefed ministers on the talks with Iran on its nuclear programme, which took place on 23 May in Baghdad and on 18/19 June in Moscow. The Council reviewed the latest restrictive measures against Iran and confirmed that they would remain as approved in January. For details, see press release ([11808/12](#))

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**FOREIGN AFFAIRS****Relations with Central Asia**

The Council adopted conclusions on Central Asia and approved a progress report on the implementation of the EU strategy for the region, which includes an implementation review and an outline for future orientations.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council approved a Progress Report on the implementation of the EU Strategy for Central Asia with an Implementation Review and outline for Future Orientations.

On the Fifth Anniversary of the adoption by the European Council of the EU Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia the Council welcomes the progress made in implementing the strategy and the strengthening of EU relations with Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The Strategy has proven itself and remains valid.

The EU has developed its diplomatic presence in the region while the number of high level visits has been increasing. The EU welcomes the interest of Central Asian countries to further deepen our partnership. The EU is ready to deepen our dialogue and to build on the progress achieved in implementing the goals set out in 2007.

All priority areas of the strategy remain important: human rights, rule of law, good governance and democratization; youth and education; economic development, trade and investment; energy and transport; environmental sustainability and water; combating common threats and challenges.

The early EU response and contribution to overcome the crisis in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2010, through political engagement and financial assistance, is one example of the even-handed role the EU can play in the region in order to ensure long term development, regional cooperation, stability and peace.

At the same time the region is facing increasing and new challenges, notably as regards developments in Afghanistan, and security issues have come to fore in relations with the EU. Central Asia and the EU share a common aim to promote a secure Afghanistan and a prosperous region as a whole. Close cooperation of Central Asian States with Afghanistan is an important element in promoting security as well as encouraging cross-border trade and people-to-people contacts. In order to enhance our ability to jointly tackle these challenges the EU is proposing a strengthening of co-operation in the security area, including through a regular High Level EU-Central Asia Security Dialogue, as part of the regional political dialogue.

Thanks to its reinforced presence in the region, the EU will be in position to assist partners and implement projects aiming at promoting long term security and stability.

While the Strategy remains valid there is scope for more targeted EU efforts in the framework of the priorities set out in the Strategy. Pursuing common interests and priorities in this strategic region should contribute to increasing the visibility and impact of EU actions and co-operation efforts and draw on the lessons learnt from implementing the Central Asia Strategy so far.

EU actions in relations with Central Asia over the coming years will focus in particular on:

- Reinforcing EU actions in the region in the key initiative areas of education, the rule of law, and environment and water, including through newly established support Platforms and targeted assistance.
- Enhancing support for the monitoring, promotion and protection of human rights, judicial independence, good governance, inter-community relations and civil society development. Continue to make the bilateral human rights dialogues more results-orientated taking into account best practices. Encourage democratic reforms and the development of national democratic reform agendas and support implementation by sharing EU experiences.
- Continuing to promote regional co-operation and to improve neighbourly relations in the region, including by support for confidence building measures as appropriate. Contributing to reduce possible tensions arising from disputes over the supply and use of water in the region.

- Consolidating energy cooperation, promoting diversification of energy supply and export routes and integration of energy markets. Concluding an agreement between the EU, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan featuring a legal framework for the Transcaspian Pipeline project as an important contribution to support the opening of a Southern Gas Corridor; in parallel mobilise private sector engagement for infrastructure realisation and promoting broader regional co-operation for Caspian basin development and further strengthen participation of Central Asia partners in the enhanced INOGATE programme, the Energy Charter Treaty and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.
- Strengthening and consolidating EU support actions for regional cooperation in Afghanistan and its neighbourhood, in close coordination with Central Asian states and international actors, to promote security and development between Afghanistan and its neighbours and in the region generally.
- Strengthening dialogue and cooperation on security matters of common concern, in particular through the establishment of a regular EU-Central Asia High Level Security Dialogue in a regional format. Strengthening co-operation on counter-terrorism, including through support for the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action to implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia.
- Strengthening cooperation on border management, migration and asylum, combating organised crime, including drug and human trafficking.
- Encouraging Kazakhstan to make the necessary final steps for swift WTO accession; supporting Tajikistan in their efforts to achieve accession and work with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to advance their accession negotiations and applications.
- Promoting economic diversification, inclusive growth and sustainable regional development policies addressing poverty reduction, business services and SME development; stepping up co-operation to strengthen our economic relations.
- Consolidating the network of EU Delegations in Central Asia by opening a Delegation in Turkmenistan as soon as possible; strengthening co-operation between EU Delegations and the embassies of EU Member States.

Through implementing the recommendations for action proposed by this review the EU aims to strengthen its political dialogue and co-operation with Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan bilaterally and regionally, to work on common security challenges over the coming years, and to give new impetus to political, trade and economic relations and reforms.

The EU is committed to continue to promote its policy objectives in Central Asia in co-operation with international actors and international and regional organisations active in the region, including international financial institutions.

The Council wishes to thank outgoing Pierre Morel for his outstanding work to develop and implement EU policies in favour of Central Asia during his six years as EU Special Representative.

The EU welcomed the appointment of Patricia Flor as the new EUSR for Central Asia."

Relations with the Republic of Moldova

The Council approved the EU position for the fourteenth meeting of the EU-Moldova Cooperation Council, to be held in Brussels on 26 June 2012.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Council adopted the following conclusions on the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo:

1. "The European Union (EU) is following with concern the worsening security and humanitarian situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The EU condemns the mutiny and the renewed fighting in the province of North Kivu. It calls on all countries in the region to cooperate actively with the Congolese authorities to demobilise the M23 group and all the other armed groups. The EU is concerned at the recent reports of outside support for the mutineers in contravention of the UN Security Council's sanctions regime. It requests that the credible reports should be the subject of a detailed investigation.
2. The EU urges the partners in the region, in particular the DRC and Rwanda, to continue talking so that the violence can be ended as soon as possible and a lasting political solution put in place.
3. The EU urges all players involved, including the armed groups, to make every effort to protect the population and allow access for humanitarian assistance.

4. The EU also reiterates its call for all those responsible for serious violations to be brought to justice.
5. The EU encourages MONUSCO to continue the efforts at stabilisation that fall within its mandate, and in particular as regards the protection of the civilian population. It reiterates its commitment to promoting stability, security and development in region, including through the work done *inter alia* by European instruments in the key area of security sector reform."

European neighbourhood policy

The Council adopted conclusions on the European Neighbourhood Policy package, taking stock of progress made regarding several political instruments in this field, such as the Eastern Partnership between the Union and its Eastern neighbours (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), the Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity and the Union for the Mediterranean with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean.

The conclusions read as follows:

"Reaffirming the strategic importance of the European Neighbourhood and recalling the Council Conclusions on ENP of 20 June 2011, the Council welcomes the joint Communication of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission of 15 May which reports on the substantial progress made in the delivery of the new European Neighbourhood Policy. It welcomes the good progress made in advancing the Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean and looks forward to the implementation of the Roadmap accompanying the joint Communication, in dialogue and cooperation with partners, also with the aim of developing synergies with the Union for the Mediterranean and other regional initiatives. It also welcomes both the good progress made in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership and the joint Communication of the High Representative and the Commission proposing a Roadmap to guide bilateral and multilateral work in view of the autumn 2013 Summit. It looks forward to the Roadmap's endorsement at the forthcoming Eastern Partnership Ministerial meeting and to its subsequent implementation."

Relations with New Zealand

The Council authorised the Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to negotiate a framework agreement between the EU and its member states and New Zealand. At the same time, it adopted negotiating directives.

Guidelines on EU sanctions

The Council revised the guidelines on implementation and evaluation of restrictive measures within the framework of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Afghanistan - restrictive measures

The Council adapted the EU restrictive measures in view of the situation in Afghanistan to changes decided at UN level. The amendments update the information relating to persons targeted by sanctions, but do not add any new individuals to the list of those subject to the measures.

EU Special Representatives

The Council appointed Patricia Flor as EU Special Representative for Central Asia. For details, see press release [11613/12](#).

The Council also extended the mandates of several EU Special Representatives (EUSR) until 30 June 2013 and agreed the budget allocated to each. They are:

- Rosalind Marsden, EU Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan;
- Philippe Lefort, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia;
- Bernardino León, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean region;
- Alexander Rondos, EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa;
- Vygaudas Usackas, EU Special Representative in Afghanistan.

In addition, the Council adopted a new budget for the EUSR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr Peter Sørensen. While his mandate runs until 30 June 2015, a budget of EUR 5.25 million has now been allocated for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013.

Association Agreement with Central America

The Council authorised the signature, on behalf of the EU, of the Association Agreement with Central America, namely the Republics of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama ([16396/11](#)).

EU action on human rights and democracy in the world

The Council approved the 2011 report on EU action on human rights and democracy in the world, as set out in [9238/12](#).

Arms Trade Treaty

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

1. "The Council firmly expresses its strongest commitment to the success of the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty. This new legally binding international instrument should establish the highest possible common international standards to regulate legal trade in conventional weapons. The Council considers that the Arms Trade Treaty will make trade in arms more responsible and transparent, thus contributing to reinforcing peace and security, regional stability and sustainable social and economic development.
2. The Council looks forward to contributing to the success of the UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, to be held in New York on 2-27 July 2012. The Council welcomes the results achieved by the Preparatory Committee to the Conference that developed concrete and comprehensive recommendations as reflected in the Chairman's draft paper of 14 July 2011.
3. The Council will exert every effort to ensure that the UN Conference will agree on a robust and strong Arms Trade Treaty, which should be relevant to all UN Member States and can therefore be universal. To this end, the Council calls on all UN Member States to fully engage in the negotiation of the Treaty and to commit to its success.

4. The Council strongly supports an Arms Trade Treaty that will include in its scope all military conventional weapons and systems, including small arms and light weapons, munitions, related technology, and parts and components. The Treaty should require controls on transfers and brokering of conventional weapons covered by the scope of the Treaty. Different control provisions for different types of transfers should be foreseen.
5. The Council calls for an Arms Trade Treaty that contains clear and strong parameters, against which arms exports and brokering should be assessed. The need for strong parameters is particularly relevant to ensure that arms would not be transferred if there is a substantial risk that they might be used to violate human rights or international humanitarian law.
6. The Council stresses that the implementation of transfer controls in accordance with an Arms Trade Treaty should be a national responsibility. States Parties shall establish a legal and administrative system that would ensure they could exercise control, as required by the Treaty, over transfers of items covered by the scope of an ATT. States Parties should also ensure that infractions of their national control systems are effectively prohibited and associated with sanctions as appropriate.
7. The Council maintains that in order to make global trade in arms more responsible, the Treaty should contain credible and effective transparency provisions. States Parties should report on transfers authorized to an appropriate level of detail, as required by the Treaty.
8. The Council fully recognizes that assistance should be provided to facilitate the full implementation of the Treaty. The Council recalls its Decisions 2010/336/CFSP and 2009/42/CFSP, implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, to support the negotiation and future implementation of an Arms Trade Treaty. The Council confirms its readiness to continue to contribute, as appropriate, to UN Member States' efforts to ensure full implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, once it has been adopted."

At the same time, the Council adopted negotiating directives for the negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty.

External financial instruments

The Council adopted a partial general approach on a package of eight EU financial instruments for external relations under the multiannual financial framework (2014-2020).

These are:

- Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA II);
- European neighbourhood instrument;
- Partnership instrument for cooperation with third countries;
- Instrument for stability;
- Financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide;
- Instrument for nuclear safety cooperation;
- Financing instrument for development cooperation;
- Council Decision on relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other.

At the same time, the Council adopted a partial general approach to the revised common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for external action.

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Framework participation agreement with the Republic of Moldova

The Council authorised the opening of negotiations with the Republic of Moldova for an agreement establishing a framework for the participation of the Republic of Moldova in EU crisis management operations.

EU Border Assistance Mission for Rafah

The Council extended until 30 June 2013 the European Border Assistance Mission for the Rafah Crossing Point, EU BAM Rafah¹. The Council also agreed on the financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure of EU BAM Rafah for that period.

The aim of EU BAM Rafah is to provide a third party presence at the Rafah crossing point in order to contribute, in cooperation with the Union's institution-building efforts, to the opening of the Rafah crossing point and to build up confidence between the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories

The Council extended until 30 June 2013 the EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS)². The Council also agreed on the financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure of EUPOL COPPS for the period until 30 June 2013.

The aim of the mission is to contribute to establishing sustainable and effective policing arrangements under Palestinian ownership, in accordance with best international standards, in cooperation with the EU institution-building programmes, as well as other international efforts in the wider context of the security sector, including criminal justice reform.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Review of the EU terrorist list

The Council adopted

- a decision updating the list of persons, groups and entities subject to articles 2, 3 and 4 of common position 2001/931/CFSP³ on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism;

¹ Joint Action 2005/889/CFSP, OJ L 327, 14.12.2005.

² Decision 2010/784/CFSP, OJ L 300, 17.11.2005.

³ OJ L 344, 28.12.2001.

- a regulation implementing article 2(3) of regulation 2580/2001¹ on specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism;

Furthermore, the Council confirmed the adoption of the statement of reasons explaining why the individuals, groups and entities concerned have been kept on the lists and endorsed the letters of notification that will be addressed to them. The notice will be published in the Official Journal.

According to Common Position 2001/931/CFSP and regulation 2580/2001, the Council is required to review the names of persons, groups and entities listed in both legislative acts at regular intervals and at least twice a year to ensure that there are grounds for keeping them on the lists.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

Amendment to annex XIII (transport) 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 XIII (transport) to the EEA agreement ([9393/2/12](#)).

Amendment to annex II (technical regulations, standards, testing and certification) 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 II (technical regulations, standards, testing and certification transport) to the EEA agreement.

This decision aims to incorporate new EU *acquis* concerning certain national technical rules to products lawfully marketed in another member state and the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products into the EEA agreement.

DECISIONS BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

Syria - restrictive measures

The Council adopted by written procedure on 20 June a decision clarifying the scope of the EU arms embargo on Syria.

¹ OJ L 344, 28.12.2001.