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3467th Council meeting

General Affairs

Brussels, 24 May 2016

President

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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>).
- 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.

ITEMS DEBATED

Preparation for the June European Council

The Council examined an [annotated draft agenda](#), drawn up by the President of the European Council in cooperation with the presidency and the Commission, for the European Council meeting to be held on 28 and 29 June 2016.

The European Council will focus on:

- migration: the European Council will review the situation in all its aspects
- economic items: the European Council will endorse the country-specific recommendations, assess the first results of the European fund for strategic investments, endorse an agenda for the single market, address the completion of the Economic and Monetary Union and take stock of on-going action to fight tax fraud and tax evasion
- external relations: the European Council will discuss EU-NATO cooperation and may, in the light of events, address other foreign policy issues
- UK referendum: the European Council will address the referendum's outcome

The annotated draft agenda will serve as the basis for draft conclusions, to be prepared in the run-up to the meeting.

Rule of law dialogue

The Council held its second annual rule of law dialogue focusing on how the current migratory flows create challenges for the EU as it seeks to safeguard its fundamental values in handling the migration crisis. The dialogue was framed by a [presidency note](#)

The discussion started with a contribution from the Director of the EU agency for fundamental rights, Michael O'Flaherty.

This second rule of law dialogue built on a seminar on EU fundamental values, immigration and integration organised by the presidency on 2 February 2016 in Strasbourg.

The rule of law dialogue was established in December 2014 to promote and safeguard the rule of law in the framework of the Treaties. The first dialogue took place in November 2015. The Council will, by the end of 2016, evaluate the experience acquired on the basis of the rule of law dialogue.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FISHERIES

Partnership agreement between EU and Mauritania - New protocol

The Council adopted a decision on a new protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the fisheries partnership agreement (FPA) between the EU and Mauritania ([12773/15](#)).

The FPA between the EU and Mauritania entered into force in 2006. Its main objectives are to develop of a sustainable fisheries policy and sound exploitation of fishery resources in the fishing zone of Mauritania, as well as to define the fishing opportunities offered to EU vessels. After its expiry on 16 December 2014, a new protocol was negotiated, signed on 16 November 2015 and then provisionally applied from that date.

Partnership agreement between EU and Liberia - New agreement and protocol

The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of a sustainable fisheries partnership agreement (FPA) between the EU and Liberia and the implementation protocol thereto ([13015/15](#)).

The EU and Liberia negotiated an FPA and a related implementation protocol with the objective of granting European vessels fishing opportunities in the Liberian waters. The agreement was signed on 9 December 2015 and has applied provisionally since that date.

TRANSPORT

Civil aviation: safe operation of aircraft

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a regulation amending and correcting regulation 965/2012, which establishes conditions for the safe operation of aircraft ([7602/16](#) + [7602/16 ADD 1](#)). The amendments relate to operational approval of performance-based navigation, certification and oversight of data services providers and helicopter offshore operations.

The Commission regulation is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt the regulation, unless the European Parliament objects.

APPOINTMENTS

General Court

On 24 May 2016, the EU member states' governments appointed the four following persons as judges to the General Court:

- Ms Inga Reine (Latvia)
- Mr Peter George Xuereb (Malta)
- Mr Fredrik Schalin (Sweden)
- Mr Lauri Madise (Estonia)

The first three appointments are related to the reform of the General Court. The term of office of these three new judges ends on 31 August 2019. Seven judges were already appointed on 23 March 2016. This means that two judges (from Czech Republic and Slovakia) still have to be appointed to complete the first phase of the reform.

The fourth appointment is linked to the General Court's partial renewal, which takes place every three years. Mr Lauri Madise is already a judge and is reappointed for a new mandate of 6 years. 10 judges were already appointed in September 2015 and in March 2016. Three further judges (from Romania, Hungary and Portugal) still have to be appointed by 31 August 2016 to complete the 2016 partial renewal. In addition, five further posts will be subject to renewal in 2016 following the implementation of the first stage of the reform of the General Court.
