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Foreign Affairs

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President **Federica Mogherini**
High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security
Policy

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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

EU global strategy

The Council discussed the follow-up to the EU global strategy on foreign and security policy "Shared vision, common action: a stronger Europe" and adopted conclusions.

The work on implementation of the EU global strategy is expected to focus on five priority areas for 2016-2017:

- Resilience building and an integrated approach to conflicts and crises;
- Security and defence;
- Strengthening the nexus between internal and external policies;
- Updating existing or preparing new regional and thematic strategies;
- Stepping up public diplomacy efforts.

In addition, human rights, as well as women, peace and security and gender equality and women's empowerment, will continue to be mainstreamed in all external EU policies.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. Recalling the European Council conclusions of June 2016 on the Global Strategy on the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS), the Council underlines that this strategy will guide the EU's external action for the years to come. The Member States are fully committed to its effective and prompt implementation jointly with the High Representative and the Commission. The Council underlines Member States' ownership and involvement throughout the process.
2. The EUGS represents the EU's shared vision and the framework for united and responsible external engagement in partnership with others, to advance its values and interests in security, democracy, prosperity and a rules based global order, including human rights and the rule of law.

3. The political vision set out in the EUGS will be swiftly translated into concrete policy initiatives and action, focused on the five priorities for the EU's external action identified in the strategy: strengthening security and defence; investing in the resilience of states and societies to our East and South; developing an integrated approach to conflicts and crises; promoting and supporting cooperative regional orders; and reinforcing a global governance based on international law, including the principles of the UN Charter, and the Helsinki Final Act.
4. The Council endorses the priority areas for the implementation of the EUGS presented by the HR/VP as set out below. The Council invites the HR and the Commission to take work forward on this basis, including in the relevant preparatory bodies of the Council, drawing on all available instruments and policies in a comprehensive manner.
5. The HR and the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, will now take work forward on: building state, economic and societal resilience in particular in the EU's neighbours and in wider surrounding regions, including through the European Neighbourhood Policy and other EU instruments; an integrated approach to conflicts and crises, thus contributing to enhancing the EU's own resilience and that of its citizens; optimising synergies and ensuring coherence between policy responses to challenges straddling the internal and external policies of the Union. The Council highlights in this regard the urgent need to focus on migration as well as counter-terrorism and hybrid threats and the need to support Member States in this regard. The sustainable development goals will be a cross-cutting dimension of all this work. Human rights as well as women, peace and security and gender equality and women's empowerment will continue to be mainstreamed into all policy areas.

The Council will consider possible revision and update of certain existing strategies, as well as implementation of joined-up actions in such fields as climate diplomacy, energy diplomacy, economic diplomacy and cultural diplomacy as an additional, valuable tool to achieve the goals set out in the EUGS. It stresses the need of joining up efforts in the field of public diplomacy including strategic communication, inside and outside the EU, to speak with one voice and ultimately promote its core values.

6. Follow-up work on security and defence should also be taken forward, in close collaboration with and ensuring full ownership of Member States. An ambitious and realistic implementation plan will be prepared for consideration and decision at the Foreign Affairs Council (including in its Defence composition) in November 2016 and the European Council in December 2016. The Council should indicate an agreed level of civil and military ambition and the concrete action, which could include capability development priorities and deepening cooperation that will enhance EU's credibility in security and defence and ensure a more responsive civilian and military CSDP. The Council welcomes the Commission's ongoing work to develop a European Defence Action Plan that will propose instruments in support of priorities to be agreed. This should contribute to ensuring that the European defence technological and industrial base is able to meet Europe's current and future security needs and, in that respect, could enhance its strategic autonomy, strengthening its ability to act with partners. The Council recalls that these efforts should be inclusive with equal opportunities for defence industry in the EU, balanced and in full compliance with EU law. Work should also be taken forward swiftly and in a complementary way on the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed in Warsaw by the leaders of the institutions of EU and NATO, in full respect of decision-making autonomy of both organisations and based on the principle of inclusiveness.
7. The Council welcomes the HR/VP's decision to submit a first yearly implementation report of the EUGS in June 2017."

Tunisia

The Council discussed Tunisia and adopted conclusions on the joint communication by the High Representative and the European Commission "Strengthening EU support for Tunisia".

Ministers discussed how to enhance the EU's support for Tunisia's efforts to address its critical challenges and to promote long-term stability, resilience, good governance, socio-economic development and security. The Council recognised the considerable progress achieved so far but also the challenges the country is facing.

The Council reiterated its strong commitment to the Tunisian people and government to support the transition started in 2011 towards freedom, democracy, dignity and social justice. The Council supported in particular a reinforcement of EU financial assistance at a level of up to €300 million for 2017, and maintaining a high level of financing 2020, on the basis of the progress of the reforms announced in the Tunisian government's strategic development plan.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council renews its firm commitment to the Tunisian people to support the transition towards liberty, democracy, dignity and social justice, which they embarked upon in 2011. Considerable progress has been made during the transition, and this is a source of hope for the region and the rest of the world. At the same time, Tunisia is facing significant challenges: a difficult socio-economic situation, serious security threats, and the need to put the advances enshrined in the new Constitution into practice. These major challenges put the country in an exceptional situation, to which the European Union intends to provide an appropriate response. In line with its Global Strategy, it is in the EU's strategic interest to contribute towards building the resilience of Tunisian society and support the emergence of a democratic, strong and stable Tunisia in its neighbourhood.
2. The Council welcomes the Joint Communication 'Strengthening EU support for Tunisia' from the High Representative and the European Commission, and reaffirms its commitment to fully supporting the consolidation of democracy in Tunisia, based on the principles of the rule of law, respect for human rights, good governance, and inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development. The EU's support for the reforms agreed upon by the Tunisian government and its people remains constant and resolute. This support must also be reflected in a high-level political dialogue between Tunisia and the EU on all issues of mutual interest, which must be wider-ranging and more ambitious than ever before. The Tunisian President's forthcoming visit to the European Institutions is a sign of a shared desire to engage in such a dialogue.

3. Tunisia's political progress can only be sustained if it is accompanied by economic progress on a similar scale. Tunisia's five-year development plan, which should be adopted and implemented as a matter of priority, is essential to the reform process. This plan will also act as a pillar to enable Tunisia's partners to target their support and financial assistance. The international conference on promoting investment in Tunisia, to be held on 29 and 30 November 2016 in Tunis, will be an opportunity for the EU to reiterate its support at the highest level. The Council is in favour of conducting high-level European missions with the aim of strengthening economic ties with Tunisia.
4. The Council welcomes the approach recommended by the High Representative and the Commission for responding to the exceptional nature of the situation in Tunisia, which aims to mobilise all the instruments available to the EU, including a balanced combination of financial and non-financial measures commensurate with the scale of the issues at stake. The Council particularly supports increasing the EU's financial aid up to EUR 300 million in 2017 and maintaining a high level of funding until 2020, on the basis of the progress made in the reforms announced in the government's strategic development plan, while addressing the country's most urgent needs. The Council also supports the continuation of EU macro-financial assistance and welcomes the recent adoption of a second programme for an amount of EUR 500 million. For their part, the Member States undertake to examine the possibility of providing additional financial and non-financial assistance. The Council welcomes the adoption, by the Assembly of the Representatives of the People, of the new law on investment and calls on the government to implement it quickly in order to improve the business environment and pave the way for a decisive relaunch of investment in Tunisia.
5. The Council believes that the Joint Communication from the High Representative and the Commission should act as a catalyst for the EU and the Member States to strengthen their commitment to supporting the transition in Tunisia and working in close collaboration with the Tunisian authorities. It is crucial that the Tunisian authorities play an active role in this process to ensure that the financial support from the EU and other international partners is put to better and more effective use.
6. The EU calls on Tunisia to continue to the full and effective implementation of the Constitution, the strengthening of democratic institutions and the promotion of human rights, and remains fully committed to supporting this historic process. The EU encourages the holding of transparent and inclusive local elections, and is willing to assist in organising and observing them.

The EU also calls on Tunisia to continue its efforts to strengthen good governance, public administration and justice sector reform, and the fight against corruption, which are essential for Tunisia's successful political and economic recovery. The EU and its Member States are ready to support reforms in these areas, including by sharing lessons learned from transitions that have taken place in Europe.

7. The EU welcomes the fact that the new Tunisian government has announced structural reforms and encourages it to implement them. The EU stands ready to support these reforms in line with the decentralised approach, the goal of social and territorial cohesion and the principle of sustainable and fair development laid down in the Constitution. Reducing social and regional disparities, particularly in the southern and central regions, moving towards greater equality of opportunity for all and strengthening the role of women are key to building Tunisia's socio-economic resilience. Reforms in Tunisia to address the social and economic challenges faced by young people, particularly by improving their education and employment opportunities, are also fundamental and the EU will support them too.
8. The EU welcomes the progress made in the negotiations on the conclusion of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA). The EU confirms its commitment to working with Tunisia towards the rapid conclusion of an ambitious agreement based on an asymmetric approach in favour of Tunisia, with the aim of making this a significant component of support for the country's economic diversification and its socio-economic development. To this end, the EU reiterates its commitment to supporting the negotiations and the implementation of the future agreement through a set of accompanying measures. In this regard, the Council calls on the EU to explore all avenues for the implementation of the initiatives envisaged in the joint communication on supporting growth in Tunisia and the business environment.
9. Supporting and strengthening civil society in the process of democratic transition in Tunisia remains one of the EU's main priorities. It will continue to encourage civil society to take part in the dialogue with the authorities in all policy areas and, in particular, through the tripartite dialogue between the EU, the Tunisian government and civil society. Civil society must also assume responsibility for driving forward the reform process that is needed.
10. The EU again stresses the great importance of enhanced dialogue and cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region and its sub-regions, both on peace and security and on economic integration, including in the energy sector. It fully supports the structural projects carried out in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean and welcomes Tunisia's involvement and the first projects launched, particularly in Bizerte.
11. The EU and Tunisia face common security challenges that require both parties to take coordinated action, in line with the shared values of democracy and human rights. Following the EU-Tunisia enhanced high-level political dialogue on security and counter-terrorism held in 2015, the EU has stepped up its cooperation with Tunisia in these areas. The EU shares the concerns of the Tunisian government about the impact of the Libyan crisis on Tunisia. The EU intends to strengthen the implementation of its extensive cooperation with Tunisia in the security sector, in the fight against terrorism and in preventing violent radicalisation and extremism, on the basis of the proposals made in the joint Communication and the enhanced dialogue.

12. The EU wishes to strengthen its cooperation with Tunisia on migration and mobility, which are a shared priority. The EU will target its support through the promotion of socio-economic development in order to address irregular migration and tackle its root causes. The EU encourages Tunisia to participate actively in the mobility partnership, the Valetta action plan and the Rabat and Khartoum processes, and to make full use of the opportunities afforded by cooperation with the EU, including the Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. The EU welcomes the launch on 12 October 2016 of the negotiations on visa facilitation and readmission agreements and encourages Tunisia to be the first country in the Southern Neighbourhood to conclude such ambitious and effective agreements.

13. The Council invites the High Representative and the Commission to monitor the implementation of the joint communication in support of Tunisia regularly, in close cooperation with Member States."

Syria

EU foreign ministers discussed the situation in Syria, in light of recent developments on the ground and the escalation of violence including in Aleppo.

The Council adopted the following conclusions on Syria:

- "1. The EU is appalled by the deteriorating situation in Syria. The escalating violence in Aleppo is causing untold and unacceptable suffering for thousands of its inhabitants. Since the beginning of the offensive by the regime and its allies, notably Russia, the intensity and scale of the aerial bombardment of eastern Aleppo is clearly disproportionate and the deliberate targeting of hospitals, medical personnel, schools and essential infrastructure, as well as the use of barrel bombs, cluster bombs, and chemical weapons, constitute a catastrophic escalation of the conflict and have caused further widespread civilian casualties, including amongst women and children and may amount to war crimes.
2. The Syrian regime has the primary responsibility for the protection of the Syrian population. The EU therefore strongly condemns the excessive and disproportionate attacks by the regime and its allies, both deliberate and indiscriminate, against civilian populations, humanitarian and healthcare personnel and civilian and humanitarian infrastructures and calls on them to cease indiscriminate aerial bombardments. The EU condemns the continued systematic, widespread and gross violations and abuses of human rights and all violations of international humanitarian law by all parties, particularly the Syrian regime and its allies. The targeting of a UN humanitarian convoy on 19 September is a clear violation of international law, which requires full investigation. The EU looks forward to the findings of the internal UN board of inquiry. Those responsible for such violations and abuses must be held accountable.
3. In these deteriorating circumstances, the EU calls urgently for: an end of all military flights over Aleppo city; an immediate cessation of hostilities to be monitored by a strong and transparent mechanism; sieges to be lifted; and full unhindered sustainable country-wide humanitarian access granted by all parties. These steps are essential to save the people of Aleppo and in other parts of the country and to lay the ground for a resumption of credible intra-Syrian talks to provide security for the entire population of Syria. In this context regional actors bear special responsibility, particularly neighbouring countries.

4. The EU will continue intensive humanitarian diplomacy and seek ways to improve access and protection as well as to promote humanitarian principles and local consensus on guidelines for the delivery of aid. The EU calls upon all parties, especially the Syrian regime, to provide full and unhindered countrywide access to all those in need and to end all obstruction to the delivery of humanitarian aid. The use of starvation of civilians through the besiegement of populated areas for which the regime bears the greatest responsibility, as a tactic of war, and forced population transfers are a clear breach of international humanitarian law and must stop. Providing immediate relief to the suffering is imperative. The Council therefore welcomes the EU emergency humanitarian initiative launched on 2 October in close coordination and cooperation with UN agencies, to deliver humanitarian relief to eastern Aleppo and other besieged areas and allow the safe and monitored evacuation of urgent medical cases. It urges the Syrian regime to deliver without delay authorisations for crossline humanitarian convoys to be delivered, including to Eastern Aleppo. The EU stresses the importance of the ISSG and its humanitarian taskforce to achieve results on the ground and alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people. It calls on all partners and all parties to the conflict to protect civilians, including humanitarian and medical structures and personnel in all parts of the country and to help facilitate the work of the UN and other humanitarian organisations on the ground to deliver vital assistance to vulnerable groups, especially women and children, and evacuate wounded and sick.
5. The EU firmly believes that there can be no military solution to the conflict. The EU reiterates its commitment to the unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the Syrian state. Recalling its Conclusions of 23 May 2016, the EU actively participates in the ISSG and its taskforces and fully supports the UN Special Envoy de Mistura in the efforts to create the conditions for resumption of intra-Syrian talks, noting his proposal for Eastern Aleppo. The EU recognises the efforts made to re-establish a full cessation of hostilities and regrets that they have not yet succeeded and encourage further attempts to do so. The EU deplores the Russian veto on 8 October to the UN Security Council Resolution to restore the cessation of hostilities and allow humanitarian access in Aleppo which was co-sponsored by all EU Member States. A renewed cessation enabling efforts to find a political solution in line with the provisions of UN SCRs 2254, 2268 and the Geneva Communique of 30 June 2012 cannot wait further, in order to allow all parties to reengage in negotiations for a genuine political transition. Such a transition must include a broad, transitional governing body with full executive powers formed on the basis of mutual consent. The EU will continue to support the efforts of the Syrian opposition and in particular the High Negotiations Committee (HNC) as the opposition delegation in the UN-brokered talks in Geneva. The Council welcomes the HR commitment to further engage with the Syrian opposition and the civil society. The EU urges again the Syrian regime to finally lay out its plan of truly implementing a genuine political transition. There cannot be a lasting peace in Syria under the current regime and until the legitimate grievances and aspirations of the Syrian society are addressed. Only once an inclusive political transition is in place will the EU be able to assist with the reconstruction of the country directly and through international organisations, an EU objective that will enable the millions of Syrians who have been forced to flee their homes to return to them and live in peace and security in their own lands.

The Council welcomes the High Representative's constant coordination with the UN and support to the efforts of the UN Special Envoy de Mistura as well as her intensified outreach with key actors with a view to laying the ground for the resumption of an inclusive and Syrian led political process under UN auspices, and invites the High Representative to report back and suggest additional action that could be taken. The Council takes note of the commitment of the High Representative and the Commission to build upon existing EU efforts since the outbreak of the conflict including humanitarian aid, relief and recovery assistance as mentioned in the EU Regional Strategy.

6. The Council calls on Russia, including as co-chair of the ISSG, to demonstrate through policies and actions all efforts, in order to halt indiscriminate bombing by the Syrian regime, restore a cessation of hostilities, ensure immediate and expanded humanitarian access and create the conditions for a credible and inclusive political transition.
7. The EU condemns in the strongest terms the confirmed use of chemical weapons (as detailed in the JIM report) and widespread attacks on civilians and human rights violations and abuses by the Syrian regime and Da'esh. The findings of the JIM report require strong action by the OPCW and UNSC. All those responsible for such breaches of international law, in particular of international humanitarian law and human rights law, some of which may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity, must be brought to justice, including those committing crimes against religious, ethnic and other groups and minorities. Impunity for such crimes is unacceptable and thus the EU will continue to support efforts to gather evidence in view of future legal action. The EU recalls its conviction that the situation in Syria should be referred to the ICC and renews its call to the UN Security Council to take action in this respect. The EU and its Member States will seek to explore possibilities of concerted action inter alia through the UN General Assembly. In this context, the EU will act swiftly, according to established procedures, with the aim of imposing further restrictive measures against Syria targeting Syrian individuals and entities supporting the regime as long as the repression continues.
8. The EU condemns the atrocities committed by Da'esh and other UN-designated terrorist groups, and reaffirms its strong commitment to combat them. The EU continues to support the efforts of the Global Coalition to counter Da'esh in Syria and Iraq. Da'esh and other UN-designated terrorist organisations constitute a threat for the future of Syria as well as to the interests and values of the EU. The EU calls for the prevention of material and financial support reaching individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with these UN-designated terrorist groups and the dissuasion of any party from collaborating with them. The Council calls for the expeditious separation of all combatants not designated as terrorist entities, from those designated as such. Only a political solution will enable a decisive defeat of Da'esh and other UN-designated terrorist organisations in Syria."

Migration

Ministers took stock of recent developments related to the external aspects of migration. They discussed EU actions and priorities in this regard.

The discussion followed the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting of 13-14 October, and will feed into the preparation of the European Council of 20-21 October, which is due to take stock of the latest developments concerning the EU's comprehensive migration policy, with a particular focus on the external dimension.

The High Representative reported on the first results of the partnership framework approach and on the work on country-specific compacts with the five priority countries, namely Mali, Niger, Senegal, Nigeria and Ethiopia, with the aim of better managing migration together.

The Council adopted decisions regarding the partnership priorities and compacts with Jordan and with Lebanon (see "Other items approved").

The High Representative also briefed ministers on the work conducted with other countries, such as Afghanistan (Joint Way Forward signed on 2 October 2016), or Belarus (Mobility Partnership signed on 13 October 2016). She also touched upon the overall situation on the central Mediterranean route and on the Western Balkans route.

Ministers welcomed the progress achieved so far on the partnership framework approach. In their discussion they suggested progressively broadening the geographical scope of the ongoing work to partners in the Middle East and in Asia.

[Responding to migratory pressures](#)

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**FOREIGN AFFAIRS****Council conclusions on the Democratic Republic of Congo**

The Council adopted conclusions on the Democratic Republic of Congo:

- "1. The European Union is deeply concerned by the political situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). It strongly condemns the acts of extreme violence that took place on 19 and 20 September 2016, in particular in Kinshasa. Those acts have further exacerbated the deadlock in the DRC due to the failure to call the presidential election within the constitutional deadline. In that regard, the EU recalls its conclusions of 23 May 2016 and reaffirms the primary responsibility of the DRC authorities for the holding of the elections.
2. The political crisis in the DRC can only be resolved through the public and explicit commitment of all stakeholders to respect the current Constitution, in particular as regards the limitation of presidential terms of office, and through a substantive, inclusive, impartial and transparent political dialogue. In accordance with the spirit of UN Security Council Resolution 2277 (2016), that dialogue must lead to the holding of presidential and legislative elections as soon as possible in 2017. If the current presidential term comes to an end without prior agreement on the electoral calendar, the EU will have to consider the impact on its relations with the Government of the DRC.
3. The dialogue facilitated by the African Union in Kinshasa, and supported by the EU as member of the Support Group, must pave the way for a new phase of a more inclusive political process in the coming weeks. The manner in which the transitional period leading up to the elections will proceed must be clarified by 19 December 2016. The EU underlines the urgency of the situation and the importance of participation in this process by all the major political families and civil society, including the Catholic Bishops Conference of Congo. It calls on the majority in power and the opposition to seek the necessary compromises underpinned by a very broad popular consensus.

4. To create a climate conducive to dialogue and the holding of the elections, the Government must make a clear commitment to ensuring that human rights and the rule of law are respected and must cease all use of the justice system as a political tool. The EU calls for the release of all political prisoners and the discontinuation of politically motivated prosecutions against the opposition and civil society as well as for the rehabilitation of people who have been subject to politically motivated judgments. The banning of peaceful demonstrations and the intimidation and harassment of the opposition, of civil society and of the media are obstacles to the preparation of a peaceful and democratic transition. Against this backdrop, the EU's commitment to new programmes for reform of the police and justice cannot be guaranteed. The EU calls on MONUSCO to take dissuasive action within its mandate to protect the civilian population and within the limits of its resources and structures, and calls on the authorities to cooperate fully in implementing the Resolution adopted at the 33rd session of the Human Rights Council.
5. The large number of arrests following the events of 19 and 20 September raise serious concerns regarding compliance with legal procedures and the commitment to ensuring the independence of the judiciary. The EU urges all stakeholders, from both the authorities and the opposition, to reject the use of violence. It reiterates that the primary responsibility of the security forces is to maintain law and order while at the same time ensuring that fundamental freedoms are respected. An independent investigation should make it possible to swiftly determine the individual responsibilities of each stakeholder. MONUSCO and the UN Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) in the DRC must be allowed to carry out their documentation work unhindered. The EU has also taken note of the statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court of 23 September 2016, in which she affirmed that she is monitoring the situation on the ground with the utmost vigilance.
6. The EU reiterates its profound concern at the situation in the east of the country, particularly in Beni. In this context, the EU would draw attention to UN Security Council Resolution 2293, which establishes the UN sanctions regime for individuals and entities responsible for serious human rights violations.
7. Faced with the risk of instability in the country and the threat that this represents to the region, the EU will remain fully engaged. The Member States are already in agreement on the need to coordinate their approaches to the issuance of visas for holders of diplomatic and service passports. The EU will use all the means at its disposal, including individual restrictive measures against those responsible for serious human rights violations, those who promote violence and those who would try to obstruct a consensual and peaceful solution to the crisis, one that respects the aspiration of the people of the DRC to elect their representatives. The Council invites the High Representative to initiate work to this end.

8. The EU recalls the significant efforts it has made in recent years to assist the country and confirms its willingness to step up these efforts. To this end, it reiterates its request of 2 June 2016 that the Government initiate as quickly as possible a political dialogue at the highest level, in accordance with Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement. It stands ready to provide support, including financial support, for a transparent election process based on an inclusive political agreement and a clear timetable approved by stakeholders, provided that all the conditions set out in the Constitution and in UN Security Council Resolution 2277 are met. Under these circumstances, the EU will remain engaged as a member of the Facilitation Support Group and will work closely with its partners, particularly those in Africa. It welcomes the considerable efforts being made by the region to reconcile positions, particularly through the upcoming summit on the DRC organised in Luanda by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the United Nations and the African Union, and a planned SADC ministerial meeting."

EU-Jordan and EU-Lebanon partnership priorities and compacts

The Council adopted decisions on partnership priorities and compacts with Jordan for the period 2016-2018 and with Lebanon for the period 2016-2020.

The partnership priorities are intended to guide the EU's bilateral relations with the two countries. The compacts are the framework through which the mutual commitments made at the London Conference on "Supporting Syria and The Region " (February 2016) are translated into actions.

The partnerships priorities take into account the goal the EU shares with Jordan and Lebanon of working towards a common area of peace, prosperity and stability, as well as the key role played by both countries in the region.

The compacts focus on strengthening the economic resilience of the host countries, while enhancing economic opportunities for Syrian refugees, through increased protection and access to employment and high-quality education. This will contribute to providing an appropriate and safe environment for refugees and displaced persons from Syria during their temporary stay in these countries.

The partnership priorities and the compacts are expected to be jointly adopted respectively at the EU-Jordan Association Council and the EU-Lebanon Association Council.

Sanctions on the Republic of Guinea

The Council renewed the EU restrictive measures in view of the situation in the Republic of Guinea until 27 October 2017. The restrictive measures consist of a travel ban and an asset freeze against 5 individuals linked to the violent crackdown by security forces on political demonstrators in Conakry on 28 September 2009. These restrictive measures have been in place since 25 October 2010.

EU-CELAC ministerial meeting

The Council approved the state of preparations of the first inter-summit meeting of the ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and of the European Union, which will take place on 25 and 26 October 2016 in Santo Domingo.

For details, read the [press release](#).

EU-Iraq Cooperation Council

The Council adopted the provisional agenda of the second **EU-Iraq Cooperation Council**, which will take place on 18 October 2016 in Brussels.

The Cooperation Council will discuss EU-Iraq bilateral relations and in particular the progress in the implementation of the partnership and cooperation agreement. It will also discuss the EU's current and longer-term assistance to Iraq. Participants will also have an exchange of views on domestic and regional political and security issues.

The meeting will be co-chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Policy and Security, Federica Mogherini, and Foreign Minister Ibramim al-Jaafari. The Head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Kurdistan Region, Falah Mustafa, will also participate in the Cooperation Council meeting at the invitation of the Iraqi Foreign Minister.

Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) report

The Council adopted the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) report "Our priorities in 2016". The report establishes the priorities for 2016, focusing on acute crises in the EU's neighbourhood, whilst protecting and defending human rights, and on building and strengthening peace and stability globally, including through CSDP missions and operations.

[Read the full report](#).

Acquisition and cross-servicing agreement between EU and USA

The Council authorised the signature of an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement (ACSA) between the EU and the United States of America

This agreement allows the EU and the USA to provide each other with logistical support, supplies and services in return for either cash payment or the reciprocal provision of the facilitated help, in the field of military Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations and exercises, or when the help is needed due to unforeseen circumstances.

The main objective is to enhance the interoperability, readiness, and effectiveness of the respective military forces through increased logistical cooperation.

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Operation ALTHEA six-monthly review

The Council approved the High Representative's Report on the twenty-fourth Operation Althea six-monthly review.
