



**Brussels, 16 December 2016
(OR. en)**

15618/16

**FREMP 205
COHOM 165
JAI 1095
DROIPEN 218**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 1 and 2 December 2016
To: Delegations
Subject: Summary of discussions of the FREMP meeting

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in doc. **CM 4880/16**.

2. Accession of the European Union to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

A Commission representative presented the core elements of the technical contribution from the Commission services concerning the EU accession to the ECHR and the principle of mutual trust. Delegations discussed possible avenues to address the risk that the principle of mutual trust between Member States under EU law might be undermined. The discussion was not conclusive on the specific way on how to address this concern and would need to be continued. However, there was an agreement that a preference should be given to a solution that interferes the least with the current system of the ECHR.

3. Combatting Violence against Women and Girls - Istanbul Convention: the internal and external dimensions

This part of the FREMP meeting took place in the presence of the Working Party on Human rights (COHOM). Delegations were informed about the actions by the Commission and the European External Action Service against violence against women and progress made in FREMP towards the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention. This presentation was followed by a discussion of the internal and external dimensions of combating violence against women. There was broad consensus that the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention would send a strong positive political signal to third countries to sign and ratify this legal instrument. COHOM delegates and the Commission shared with FREMP their practical experience of the EU accession to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

4. Proposal for a Council decision on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)

FREMP continued the discussions on the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention and examined compromise proposals (docs 14756/16 and 14757/16) in this respect. Several delegations supported the changes introduced after the last meeting. However, a number of them requested additional explanations of the rationale behind some adaptations. Additionally, many delegations suggested that the scope of the accession could be reflected in the text of the draft Council Decision in a more general way. All delegations, except for one, reaffirmed that the EU should become a party to the Istanbul Convention.

5. AOB

The Presidency informed delegations about the outcome of the conference 'Ensuring cross-border justice for all in the EU: sharing practices and experiences from the ground' co-organised by the Slovak Presidency and FRA in Bratislava from 8 to 10 November 2016.