



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
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Subject: Council conclusions on Venezuela
- Council conclusions (15 May 2017)

Delegations will find in the Annex the Council conclusions on Venezuela, adapted by the Council at its 3535th meeting held on 15 May 2017.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON VENEZUELA

Foreign Affairs Council, 15 May 2017

1. The European Union recalls its Council Conclusions of 18 July 2016 fully supporting the efforts in Venezuela to facilitate an urgent, constructive and effective dialogue between the Government and the parliamentary majority, creating the conditions for peaceful solutions to the multidimensional challenges the country faces.
2. In the 10 months that have elapsed, mediation efforts have not yielded the desired results and the process is stagnant. Since then political polarisation has increased, the economic and social situation has further deteriorated and violence has escalated causing multiple deaths and injuries. All incidents of violence must be investigated.
3. Violence and the use of force will not resolve the crisis in the country. The fundamental rights of the Venezuelan people must be respected, including the right to peacefully demonstrate. It is crucial that all parties refrain from violent acts. In this light, the announcement to expand and further strengthen armed civilian groups is worrying as it can fuel further violence and does not contribute to a solution. The EU also recalls that the use of military courts to try civilians goes against international law.
4. The European Union expects all Venezuelan political actors and institutions to work in a constructive manner towards a solution to the crisis in the country, in full respect of the rule of law and human rights, the democratic institutions and the separation of powers, allowing the establishment of an electoral calendar so that the people of Venezuela can express their will in a democratic way. The release of jailed political opponents and the respect of the constitutional rights of all political actors to vote and to participate in elections are also crucial steps to building trust and helping the country to regain political stability.

5. The European Union strongly encourages the facilitation of external cooperation to address the most urgent needs of the population. The European Union is fully committed to helping Venezuela find peaceful and democratic solutions and is ready to use all its possible instruments to support regional and international efforts to that end.

6. Venezuela is a country with more than 600,000 European citizens adversely affected by the present situation and whose security and well-being is a matter of concern for the EU. In this respect, the EU reiterates its readiness to cooperate with the Venezuelan authorities to ensure assistance, protection and security of all European citizens in Venezuela.
