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Subject: Council conclusions on the Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy

Delegations will find attached in the appendix the Council conclusions on the Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy as adopted by the Council on 20 April 2015.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE REVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY**

(FAC, Luxembourg, 20 April 2015)

1. The Council welcomes the Joint Consultation Paper 'Towards a New Neighbourhood Policy' of 4 March 2015 issued jointly by the High Representative and the Commission.
2. The ENP is key for both the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and other areas of the EU's external action. The neighbourhood is a strategic priority and a fundamental interest for the EU. The Council underlines the importance of a special relationship with the EU's neighbours which needs to be as effective as possible in order to develop an area of shared stability, security and prosperity. The Council emphasises the need to work on a revision of the ENP in order to ensure it provides the adequate framework for long term relations with all ENP partners, while making it as well more political and responsive to the diverse challenges in the neighbourhood.
3. The ENP aims to develop a democratic, stable and prosperous neighbourhood, based on a commitment to fundamental values, including the rule of law, protection of human rights and gender equality.
4. The Council stresses the need to ensure EU Member States' full involvement at all stages of the review process. The Council welcomes the consultations by the External Action Service and the Commission services with partner countries, the European Parliament, and with other stakeholders such as civil society, the business community, relevant international organisations, and the public at large.

5. The Council acknowledges that the broader geographical context of our partners and their relations with their neighbours are important considerations, impacting upon the ENP. It is the sole right of the EU and its partners to decide in a sovereign way on how they want to proceed in their relations.
6. The Council affirms the four priority areas that the current ENP review seeks to address: 'Differentiation'; 'Focus' (including inter alia security, economic development and trade, good governance, migration, energy and human rights); 'Flexibility'; and 'Ownership and Visibility'. These areas reflect the key principles that should help define a more streamlined ENP, in line with the EU's political priorities and interests.
7. The Council stresses that a revised ENP should take into account interests and needs of the EU and its neighbours, neighbours' commitment to reforms, the level of ambition of the partnership as well as different challenges and the geopolitical environment. The policy should be capable of responding flexibly to the changing situations in the region, challenges and crises while preserving its continuity and predictability. A demand and interest driven approach should increase partner countries' ownership.
8. Stability and prosperity based on principles of political inclusion, rule of law, the respect of human rights and inclusive economic development in its neighbourhood is a fundamental interest of the EU. The Council invites the High Representative and the Commission to develop a set of proposals on ensuring coherence of the Policy with the security and foreign policy dimensions of the EU's actions abroad. The policy should contribute to promoting stability in the neighbourhood in line with the comprehensive approach and the external dimension of other relevant EU policies such as the area of Freedom, Security and Justice. The ENP instruments should be used more widely to strengthen partners' capacity to address security threats, notably through security sector reforms. Equally, the on-going ENP review should aim at closer coordination between ENP and wider CFSP/CSDP activities in a comprehensive manner.

9. The Council encourages the High Representative and the Commission to streamline procedures to make EU support under the ENP instruments more flexible and responsive to changing situations on the ground and continues to encourage effective donor coordination, including with non-EU donors.
10. The EU needs to present more effectively the impact the ENP is making on people's lives. The Council stresses the importance of a clear narrative and the need for strategic communication efforts on the EU's engagement in the region, including its values and objectives. Further efforts should be taken to strengthen EU visibility as a whole, and communicate European foreign policy and the wide range of sector cooperation activities towards the countries of the region. In this context, the Council underlines the need to broaden the EU's engagement with civil society and the business community.
11. The Council reiterates the importance to further develop integration and dialogue under the specific regional dimensions of the ENP, and underlines the central role of the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean. In this context, it recalls the importance of other regional initiatives with the EU and Member States involvement. Further strengthened regional cooperation would contribute to an atmosphere of equal partnership, improve the EU's neighbours sense of co-ownership, and reinforce the policy as a whole.
12. The Council invites the High Representative and the Commission to present reform proposals for Council's consideration by autumn 2015 and remains seized of the matter. It welcomes the recent consultations with Southern partners held in Barcelona and looks forward to consultations with Eastern partners in Riga. The Council stresses the need to ensure ENP partners' ownership and involvement in the review process in order to improve the effectiveness of the policy and its individualised approach.