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European Union

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7551/16

FREMP 55
COHOM 31
JAI 247

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 8 March 2016
To: Delegations
Subject: Summary of discussions

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda as set out in CM 1610/16 was adopted.

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

PRES and COM provided information about further steps.

Discussions on mutual trust will be resumed after the ECtHR hands down the judgement in the *Avotins* case, presumably by summer 2016. As regards CFSP, COM will not present anything until CJEU hands down decisions in two pending CFSP related cases.

FREMP will examine the consolidated paper on other issues (except mutual trust and CFSP) on 26 April 2016.

3. Commission proposals for Council decisions on the conclusions and signing, by the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence

COM presented its recently adopted proposals for signing and concluding the above-mentioned Convention ("Istanbul Convention"), based on TFEU Articles 82(2) and 84.

Several delegations intervened, stating that while they support the objectives of the Convention, they would need a more detailed analysis about the extent of EU competencies and also about post-accession arrangements.

Discussions will continue on 26 April 2016. PRES intends to consult delegations bilaterally in the run-up to the next meeting.

4. Expert seminar on the National Policy Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, 19 February 2016, Amsterdam

PRES presented the outcome of the seminar on the Charter on 18-19 February 2016. A report is being prepared and the outcome will feed into the preparation of the Council conclusions on the application of the Charter in 2015.

5. Commission proposal for a Council Decision on a Union position in the EU-the Republic of Serbia Stabilisation and Association Council on the participation of the Republic of Serbia as an observer in the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' work and the respective modalities, within the framework of Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007

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Commission proposal for a Council Decision on a Union position in the EU-the Republic of Albania Stabilisation and Association Council on the participation of the Republic of Albania as an observer in the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' work and the respective modalities, within the framework of Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007

COM presented two proposals, adopted on 7 March 2016, to grant observer status in FRA respectively to Albania and to Serbia. PRES would inform delegations of follow-up, in close coordination with COWEB and COELA working parties.

6. Exchange of views with the Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights

FREMP welcomed the new Director of FRA, Mr. Michael O’Flaherty, and held an exchange of views with him. Mr. O’Flaherty emphasised continuity, relevance and impact as guiding principles for FRA work under his leadership. Migration crisis, child protection, cooperation with FRONTEX and EASO Member States were mentioned as areas of priority in the short-term. Member States asked the Director to elaborate on several elements of FRA work (methodology, FRA mandate, cooperation with the Council of Europe, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, hate crime and cooperation with the FREMP working party etc.).

FREMP took note that FRA would organise a new biannual event, termed Fundamental Rights Forum, in June 2016, gathering all stakeholders in Vienna for discussions.

8 March 2016 (afternoon session, as from 3 pm, joint session with COHOM)

7. Coherence and consistency between internal and external EU human rights policy

FREMP held a joint session with COHOM and discussed in detail coherence between internal and external dimensions of the fundamental rights policy in the presence of FRAME researchers and a FRA representative. The Presidency paper on coherence and consistency between internal and external EU human rights policy as set out in 6256/16 was discussed. The conclusions of the meeting are set out in the Commission document SEC204/16.

8. Other business