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OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3616th Council meeting

General Affairs

Art.50

Brussels, 14 May 2018

President **Ekaterina Zaharieva**
Deputy prime minister of Bulgaria

P R E S S

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OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

none

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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

Brexit negotiations: state of play

The Council (Article 50), in EU27 format, was briefed by the Commission's Brexit chief negotiator Michel Barnier about the ongoing Brexit negotiations and on the latest developments regarding internal UK discussions. Chief negotiator Michel Barnier insisted on the need to continue working on all withdrawal issues and, in light of the lack of significant progress in the latest rounds of talks, recalled the need to intensify the work on preparedness, so that the EU is ready for any possible scenario. The chief negotiator also presented to the EU27 ministers a possible structure for the future partnership discussions with the UK.

Ministers recognised the progress already made and expressed their support to the negotiator as well as their solidarity with Ireland. On the issue of the border in the island of Ireland, they highlighted the need to make progress by the June European Council (Article 50) on the basis of the commitments already made by the UK to agree on an operational legal text for the "backstop option" in the Withdrawal Agreement. Ministers also recalled the importance of maintaining a constructive approach and the unity of the EU27 throughout the negotiations.

Preparations for European Council (Article 50) of June 2018

The Council (Article 50) began preparations for the next meeting of the European Council (Article 50) to take place in June 2018. Ministers took note of the annotated draft agenda for the summit and will revert to the preparations at their next meeting on 26 June 2018.

Annotated draft agenda ([XT 21041/18](#))

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

none
