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OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3649th Council meeting

General Affairs

(Art. 50)

Brussels, 12 November 2018

President **Gernot Blümel**
Federal Minister for the EU, Arts, Culture and Media of
Austria

P R E S S

CONTENTS¹

ITEMS DEBATED

Brexit negotiations	3
---------------------------	---

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

BREXIT

– Future EU delegation to the UK	4
--	---

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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

The Commission's chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, informed the EU27 ministers of the situation following negotiations with the UK over the last few weeks. Michel Barnier explained that intense negotiating efforts continue, but an agreement has not been reached yet. Some key issues remain under discussion, in particular a solution to avoid a hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

During the meeting, ministers showed again their determination to keep the unity of the EU 27. Ministers also reconfirmed their trust in the negotiator and expressed their support to his efforts to continue working towards a deal. However, ministers recalled the need to continue the work at all levels on preparations for every possible scenario, including the lack of a deal.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

BREXIT

Future EU delegation to the UK

The Council, in EU27 format (Article 50), confirmed its agreement in principle to the future opening of a European Union Delegation to the United Kingdom. This comes in the context of preparations for the UK's withdrawal from the EU which will take place on 29 March 2019.

Today's agreement by the Council is in response to a letter of 23 October 2018 sent by the Secretary General of the European External Action Service, on behalf of the High Representative. The actual decision to open a delegation has to be taken by the High Representative, in agreement with the Council and the Commission.

The agreement in principle on the opening of a European Union Delegation to the United Kingdom does not prejudice the decisions on the budget (under Article 314 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) or the approval of the specific building project (under the Financial Regulation). These issues will be dealt with under the relevant budgetary rules and procedures.
