



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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PRESS RELEASE

3009th Council meeting

Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 26 April 2010

President **Ms Catherine ASHTON**
High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and
Security Policy

P R E S S

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Main results of the Council

The Foreign Affairs Council included a substantial security and defence component with the participation of defence ministers.

*The Council adopted conclusions on the **Common Security and Defence Policy**, covering current CSDP issues and developments, and conclusions on **maritime security** tasking the High Representative, with the Commission and Member States, to prepare options for a security strategy for the global maritime domain.*

*The Council, in a joint session of foreign and defence ministers, discussed the way forward on the implementation of the EU Action Plan for Enhanced Engagement in **Afghanistan** and **Pakistan** and took note of the first six-monthly implementation report.*

*The Council adopted conclusions on **Sudan, Burma/Myanmar** and **Kyrgyzstan**. It stressed the need to prepare for the period following the referendum in **Sudan** next year and the crucial importance of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. It called for a peaceful transition to a democratic, civilian and inclusive system of government in **Burma/Myanmar** and extended the EU's restrictive measures against Burma/Myanmar for a further year. The Council stressed the importance of an early return to public order in **Kyrgyzstan**, with constitutional reform and preparations for democratic elections, and stated this readiness to support implementation of these objectives.*

*The Council also adopted a set of restrictive measures against certain persons and entities **Somalia**, in line with the United Nations process.*

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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.

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PARTICIPANTS

The governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Steven VANACKERE
Mr Olivier CHASTEL

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs with responsibility for preparing for the EU Presidency, attached to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Bulgaria:

Mr Nickolay MLADENOV

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Czech Republic:

Mr Jan KOHOUT

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Denmark:

Ms Lene ESPERSEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Guido WESTERWELLE

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Estonia:

Mr Urmas PAET

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ireland:

Mr Dick ROCHE

Minister for European Affairs

Greece:

Mr Dimitris DROUTSAS

Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr Miguel Ángel MORATINOS CUYAUBÉ
Mr Diego LÓPEZ GARRIDO

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
State Secretary for the European Union

France:

Mr Bernard KOUCHNER

Minister for Foreign and European Affairs

Italy:

Mr Franco FRATTINI

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Cyprus:

Mr Andreas MAVROYIANNIS

Permanent Representative

Latvia:

Mr Māris RIEKSTIŅŠ

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Lithuania:

Mr Audronius AŽUBALIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Mr Christian BRAUN

Permanent Representative

Hungary:

Mr Péter BALÁZS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Malta:

Mr Tonio BORG

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr Maxime VERHAGEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Austria:

Mr Michael SPINDELEGGER

Federal Minister for European and International Affairs

Poland:

Mr Radoslaw SIKORSKI

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Luís AMADO

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Romania:

Mr Teodor BACONSCI

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Slovenia:

Mr Samuel ŽBOGAR

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Slovakia:

Mr Miroslav LAJČÁK

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Mr Alexander STUBB

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Sweden:

Mr Carl BILDT

Minister for Foreign Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr Chris BRYANT

Deputy Leader of the House of Commons and
Parliamentary Secretary

.....

High Representative

Ms Catherine ASHTON

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and
Security Policy

Commission:

Ms Kristalina GEORGIEVA

Member

Mr Štefan FÜLE

Member

ITEMS DEBATED

SECURITY AND DEFENCE

The Council included a substantial Common Security and Defence Policy (CDSP) component, with the participation of defence ministers.

The High Representative, Catherine Ashton, chaired a working dinner for defence ministers on Sunday evening. She updated them on the preparations for setting up the External Action Service and led an informal exchange of views on the subject. Ministers also continued the discussions initiated at their informal meeting in Palma de Mallorca on the organisation of their work within the Foreign Affairs Council. Ministers also exchanged views on the state of play and the way ahead for Common Security and Defence Policy operations, notably Operation EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EU NAVFOR Atalanta and the EU Training Mission for Somalia.

The Council took note of the report by the Head of the European Defence Agency to the Council on the EDA's activities and adopted conclusions on the Common Security and Defence Policy and on maritime security.

Conclusions on CSDP: doc. [8671/10](#)

Conclusions on maritime security: doc. [8871/10](#)

During the meeting, the Council was briefed by the High Representative on ongoing work, together with the Commission, on reinforcing the EU's rapid response to natural and man made disasters, in the light of the experience with relief efforts following the earthquake in Haiti.

On Monday morning, Catherine Ashton chaired a meeting of the European Defence Agency (EDA) steering board meeting on the sidelines of the Council.

AFGHANISTAN

The Council, in a joint session of foreign and defence ministers, discussed the way forward on the implementation of the EU Action Plan for Enhanced Engagement in Afghanistan and Pakistan and took note of the first six-monthly implementation report. They were joined by the Secretary-General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, for an informal discussion on military and civilian cooperation on and prospects for further EU - NATO cooperation in Afghanistan.

SUDAN

The Council discussed the way ahead and the EU's role with regard to Sudan, stressing in particular the importance of continuing to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. It adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council welcomes the largely peaceful conduct of the recent elections as an important step in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and commends the people of the Sudan for having participated actively. The EU deployed one of its largest observer missions in recognition of this important event in the democratic transformation process in Sudan.
2. While noting the complexity of the elections, the Council expresses concern about the deficiencies in relation to international standards and also in the counting and aggregation of results as identified by the EU Electoral Observation Mission. The Council calls upon the Sudanese authorities to address these shortfalls in time to prepare for future voting processes in light of the EOM's recommendations in its final report.
3. The Council calls upon all authorities, parties and other stakeholders to respect the Sudanese Electoral Law and the legal procedures for electoral complaints and to honor the Code of Conduct and the Declaration on Common Commitments.
4. The Council calls upon all parties to fully respect the CPA, to spare no efforts to establish a broad political basis in view of the final implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, to urgently address the remaining issues and to abstain from any unilateral initiatives which might destabilize this process.
5. The Council reaffirms the EU's continuous commitment to supporting the full implementation of the CPA, including the holding of the referendum in Abyei, the popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile and the referendum on self-determination of South Sudan in January 2011.

6. The Council encourages all Sudanese stakeholders to advance preparations for popular consultations and the referenda as well as for the necessary arrangements for the time thereafter. It underlines the importance of the International Community pursuing a coherent approach in this crucial transition phase. In this respect, the EU will closely cooperate with key international and regional partners, including the UN, AU and IGAD and supports the AU High Level Implementation Panel led by former President Thabo Mbeki.
7. The Council recalls its continued political and financial engagement in Sudan, including through development assistance, for the benefit of the Sudanese population. The EU is committed to maintaining a high level of humanitarian aid in response to the needs on the ground and urges all parties to allow unimpeded access.
8. Regarding the situation in Darfur, the Council recognizes the progress achieved in the Doha peace process under the leadership of AU/UN Chief Mediator, Djibril Bassolé. It encourages all parties, including civil society, to make decisive progress post elections towards an inclusive and comprehensive peace agreement which addresses the root causes of conflict.
9. The Council recalls that impunity for the most serious crimes under international law can never be accepted. The Council reiterates its support for the International Criminal Court (ICC) and calls upon the GoS to cooperate fully with the ICC in accordance with its obligations under international law."

BURMA/MYANMAR

The Council had a short discussion on the EU's longer term EU approach to Burma/Myanmar and adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council reaffirms the EU's unwavering commitment to the people of Burma/Myanmar. The EU remains a major donor to the country and stands ready to increase its assistance to the people of Burma/Myanmar, in order to improve their social and economic conditions.
2. The Council calls upon the authorities of Burma/Myanmar to take steps to bring about a peaceful transition to a democratic, civilian and inclusive system of government. The Council underlines that the political and socio-economic challenges facing the country can only be addressed through genuine dialogue between all stakeholders, including the ethnic groups and the opposition.
3. The Council expresses its serious concerns that election laws as published in early March do not provide for free and fair elections and notes that the authorities of Burma/Myanmar still have to take the steps necessary to make the planned elections later this year a credible, transparent and inclusive process. The Council reiterates its call for the release of the political prisoners and detainees, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.
4. The Council deems it necessary to extend the restrictive measures provided for in the current EU Decision by another year. The Council underlines its readiness to revise, amend or reinforce the measures it has already adopted in light of developments on the ground. The EU stands ready to respond positively to genuine progress in Burma/Myanmar.
5. To help achieve the progress needed, the EU is ready to continue its dialogue with the authorities of Burma/Myanmar and all other relevant stakeholders. It intends to send an exploratory mission to the country, in order to hold high level talks, in the hope of building trust and helping the political process to move towards the intended goals.

6. The Council expresses its strong support for the continued work of EU Special Envoy Piero Fassino and invites the Burma/Myanmar authorities to cooperate fully with him.
7. The Council urges the government of Burma/Myanmar to engage more with the international community, to work towards a peaceful transition to democracy. It reaffirms the EU's support for the Good Offices Mission of the UN Secretary General and welcomes his continued personal commitment to further the political process, and calls upon the authorities of Burma/Myanmar to engage with the UN in a meaningful manner. The EU will continue to actively support the group of friends of the UNSG and raise the situation in the country, and its possible implications for regional stability, with key actors, including ASEAN and its Member States, the United States, Australia, China, India, Japan and Russia.
8. The Council welcomes the ASEAN Chairman's statement of 9 April 2010 from the 16th Summit, which underscored the importance of national reconciliation in Myanmar and the holding of the general election in a free, fair and inclusive manner. The Council also welcomes statements from individual ASEAN members, as well as Japan, on the need for release of all political prisoners and detainees, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The EU looks forward to a continued close dialogue with our ASEAN partners on the issue - next time at the upcoming EU/ASEAN ministerial in May in Madrid.
9. The Council welcomes the adoption of Resolution 13/25 of the UN Human Rights Council, and endorses the Progress report by the UN Special Rapporteur, Mr Quintana. It calls upon the authorities of Burma/Myanmar to cooperate with him in a constructive manner and comply in full with the UN's recommendations, by taking urgent measures to put an end to violations of international human rights and humanitarian law."

KYRGYZSTAN

The High Representative updated the Council on the steps taken following the recent events in Kyrgyzstan and led a discussion on possible further EU action. The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council has closely followed the recent events in Kyrgyzstan. The Council regrets the loss of life and remains concerned by the fragile situation in the country. The Council appreciates the close and successful coordination between the EU, OSCE, and the UN in Kyrgyzstan in the immediate aftermath of the unrest.
2. The Council underlines the importance of an early return to public order in Kyrgyzstan under a democratic government that fully respects the rule of law and human rights. The Council calls on the provisional government to abide by all Kyrgyzstan's international obligations and commitments in that regard.
3. The Council welcomes the provisional government's announcement to work on constitutional reform and rapidly lay the proper groundwork for democratic elections. The Council calls on the provisional government to take into account the relevant expert opinions of ODIHR and the Venice Commission in organising the constitutional referendum and the parliamentary elections announced for 27 June and 10 October 2010 respectively.
4. The Council looks forward to concrete action by the provisional government in the areas mentioned above and stands ready to support implementation of these objectives with assistance measures, including in the framework of the EU Strategy for Central Asia.
5. The EU will continue to follow the situation in Kyrgyzstan closely and will coordinate its actions with relevant international organisations and other international actors."

STRATEGIC DEBATE ON EU RESOURCE ALLOCATION/RELATIONS WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Over lunch, following the Council's discussion at its informal Gymnich meeting in Cordoba, the High Representative led a strategic discussion on EU resource allocation abroad, with a view to launching a reflection on the EU's global role and its relations with strategic partners.

OTHER BUSINESS

Somalia

The Council had a short exchange of views, pending a detailed discussion at the next Foreign Affairs Council; on the situation in Somalia and the importance of agreements with countries in the region for the transfer for prosecution of suspected pirates detained by EU NAVFOR Atalanta

Kosovo

Ministers were also given a short presentation by the Slovakian Foreign Minister, Miroslav Lajčák, on his recent visit to Kosovo and an update by the High Representative on her work on Kosovo.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Burma/Myanmar - Restrictive measures

The Council adopted a decision renewing restrictive measures against Burma/Myanmar for a further twelve months until 30 April 2011, in view of the lack of improvement in the human rights situation and the absence of substantive progress towards an inclusive democratisation process in the country, notwithstanding the promulgation of a new electoral law and the announcement by the government of Burma/Myanmar of multi-party elections to be held in 2010.

The decision also amends the lists of persons and enterprises subject to these measures in order to take account of changes in the government and other official bodies of Burma/Myanmar, as well as in the personal situations of the individuals concerned, and in order to update the list of companies that are controlled by the military regime.

The restrictive measures include a ban on the sale of arms to Burma/Myanmar, an assets freeze and the prohibition of the entry into and the transit through an EU member state by persons whose activities seriously undermine democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law in Burma/Myanmar.

Somalia - Restrictive measures

The Council adopted a decision concerning restrictive measures against certain persons and entities in Somalia (*doc. 7907/10*).

The decision contains the list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures that was drawn up on 12 April 2010 by the sanctions committee established under United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 751 (1992) concerning Somalia. The restrictive measures were introduced against those who seek to prevent or block a peaceful political process, or those who threaten the transitional federal institutions of Somalia or the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM) by force, or take action that undermines stability in Somalia or in the region.

The decision also implements UNSCR 1916 (2010) of 19 March 2010 with a view to easing certain restrictions and obligations under the sanctions regime to enable the delivery of supplies and technical assistance by international and regional organisations and to ensure the timely delivery of urgently needed humanitarian aid by the UN.

Moreover, the Council adopted a regulation with a view to ensuring that the measures, which consist of a freeze of assets to individuals and entities included in the lists, are applied uniformly by economic operators across the EU (*doc. 7903/10*).

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY

EU crisis management operations - Participation of third countries

The Council authorised the High Representative to open negotiations with a view to concluding agreements with Albania, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, China, Croatia, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, India, Japan, Montenegro, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, South Africa and the United States, in order to establish a framework for their participation in EU crisis management operations.

Five framework participation agreements are currently in force, between the EU and Canada, Iceland, Norway, Turkey and Ukraine respectively.

Development of EU military capabilities

The Council took note of a progress report on the development of EU military capabilities, and approved its transmission to NATO for information (*doc. 8443/10*).

Report by the head of the European Defence Agency

The Council took note of a report by the head of the European Defence Agency (doc. 8585/10).

TRADE POLICY

Anti-dumping (steel ropes/cables - tube/pipe fittings - polyester filament fabrics)

The Council adopted regulations:

- extending the definitive anti-dumping duty imposed by regulation 1858/2005 on imports of steel ropes and cables originating, inter alia, in China to imports of steel ropes and cables consigned from the Republic of Korea, whether declared as originating in the Republic of Korea, or not, and terminating the investigation in respect of imports consigned from Malaysia (*doc. [8460/10](#)*);
- amending regulation 1001/2008 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain tube and pipe fittings of iron or steel originating, inter alia, in Malaysia (*doc. [8080/10](#)*); and
- amending regulation 1487/2005 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty and definitively collecting the provisional duty imposed on imports of certain finished polyester filament fabrics originating in China (*doc. [8278/10](#)*).

DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Accession of South Africa to the revised ACP-EU partnership agreement

The Council adopted a decision approving the accession of South Africa to the revised ACP-EU partnership agreement (doc. [7932/10](#)).

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

EEA Council

The Council approved the provisional agenda for the 33rd meeting of the European Economic Area (EEA) Council, to be held in Brussels on 10 May 2010, as well as draft conclusions for the meeting.

Discussion will focus on the implications of the EU's "Europe 2020" strategy for the EEA and an assessment of the overall functioning of the EEA agreement.
