



European Council

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COVER NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Special meeting of the European Council (30 August 2014)
– Conclusions

Delegations will find attached the conclusions adopted by the European Council at the above meeting.

I. THE NEXT INSTITUTIONAL CYCLE

1. In light of the consultations conducted by the President of the European Council, the European Council, in accordance with the Treaties, adopted the following decisions today:
2. The European Council elected Donald Tusk as President of the European Council for the period from 1 December 2014 to 31 May 2017¹. It requested the Secretary-General of the Council to assist the elected President of the European Council in the transition period.
3. The European Council appointed, with the agreement of the President-elect of the Commission, Federica Mogherini as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for the period from the end of the current term of office of the Commission until 31 October 2019².
4. The European Council invited the Council to adopt without delay, by common accord with the President-elect of the Commission, the list of other persons whom it will propose for appointment as members of the Commission.
5. The new Commission will be appointed by the European Council following a vote of consent by the European Parliament on the President, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the other members of the Commission as a body.
6. The European Council welcomed the decision of the Heads of State or Government of the Contracting Parties to the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union whose currency is the euro to appoint Donald Tusk as President of the Euro Summit for the period from 1 December 2014 to 31 May 2017³.

¹ European Council Decision electing the President of the European Council (EUCO 144/14)

² European Council Decision appointing the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (EUCO 146/14)

³ Decision of the Heads of State or Government of the Contracting Parties to the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union whose currency is the euro appointing the President of the Euro Summit (doc. 11949/14)

II. ECONOMIC ISSUES

7. Despite significant improvements in financial market conditions and the structural efforts made by Member States, the economic and employment situation in Europe raises significant concerns. In recent weeks economic data have confirmed that the recovery, particularly in the euro area, is weak, inflation exceptionally low and unemployment unacceptably high. In this context, the European Council recalls its conclusions of 27 June 2014 on the European Semester as well as its agreement on a Strategic Agenda with a strong focus on jobs, growth and competitiveness. The European Council calls for rapid progress on implementing these orientations. To this end, it asks the Council to assess the socio-economic situation and to start working on these issues without delay. The European Council also welcomes the intention of the Italian government to hold a conference in October at the level of Heads of State or Government on employment, especially youth employment, following those held in Berlin and Paris. In the autumn, the European Council will also address the economic situation and a dedicated Euro Summit will be convened.

III. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

UKRAINE

8. Recalling the statements of the Heads of State or Government on Ukraine of 6 March and 27 May and its conclusions of 21 March, 27 June and 16 July, the European Council remains extremely concerned by the ongoing and increasingly intense fighting in Eastern Ukraine and continues to strongly condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea. It condemns the increasing inflows of fighters and weapons from the territory of the Russian Federation into Eastern Ukraine as well as the aggression by Russian armed forces on Ukrainian soil. It calls upon the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw all its military assets and forces from Ukraine. The European Union reiterates the urgent need for a sustainable political solution based on respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence.

9. The European Council underlines the importance of implementing President Poroshenko's peace plan without delay. The first step should consist of a mutually agreed and viable cease-fire, the re-establishment of Ukrainian control over its border, and an immediate halt to the flow of arms, material and military personnel from the Russian Federation into Ukraine, as well as the urgent release of all hostages held by the illegally armed groups as well as of the prisoners detained in the Russian Federation. Moreover, the European Council reiterates its call for immediate, safe and unrestricted access to the MH17 crash site as part of a cease-fire. The European Council expresses once more its support for the valuable efforts of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.
10. The European Council welcomes the trilateral talks initiated between the European Union, Ukraine and the Russian Federation on practical issues with regard to the implementation of the Association Agreement/DCFTA and the talks on energy. The European Council calls on all parties to keep up the momentum in order to reach tangible results within the agreed timeframe. The European Council also calls on all parties to support and facilitate a stable and secure transport of energy sources, in particular gas.
11. The European Council calls on all parties to support and facilitate without delay the work of international humanitarian organisations, in accordance with international humanitarian law and principles. The humanitarian impact of the conflict on the civilian population should not be exploited for political or military ends. The European Council calls on all contributors, including the Russian Federation, to support the international relief effort led by the United Nations, in full recognition of the Ukrainian Government's role as a first responder.
12. The European Council remains engaged in the monitoring and assessment of the restrictive measures adopted by the European Union and stands ready to take significant further steps, in light of the evolution of the situation on the ground. It requests the Commission to urgently undertake preparatory work, jointly with the EEAS, and present proposals for consideration within a week. It requests the Commission to include in its proposal a provision on the basis of which every person and institution dealing with the separatist groups in the Donbass will be listed.

13. The European Council welcomes the exceptional measures taken by the Commission to stabilise the EU agricultural and food markets in order to alleviate the effects of the Russian import restrictions on certain EU agricultural products. It invites the Commission to monitor the situation and to consider adopting any further measures, as appropriate.

IRAQ/SYRIA

14. The European Council is extremely dismayed by the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Iraq and in Syria as a result of the occupation of parts of their territory by the "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)". The European Council is appalled by and firmly condemns the indiscriminate killings and human rights violations perpetrated by this and other terrorist organisations, in particular against Christian and other religious and ethnic minorities who should be part of a new, democratic Iraq and the most vulnerable groups. Those responsible for such crimes shall be held to account. The European Council underlines the importance of coordinated action by countries from the region to counter these threats. It urges all Iraqi leaders to form a truly inclusive government as a first political response to the present crisis, and stands ready to support the Government of Iraq in the pursuit of the necessary reforms.
15. Instability in Syria, caused by the Assad regime's brutal war against its own people, has allowed ISIL to flourish. A lasting solution urgently requires a political transition in Syria.
16. The European Council calls on all sides to the conflict in Syria to respect the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and ensure the safety and freedom of movement of UN troops, including those from EU Member States, and condemns recent attacks on the Force and the detention of some of its members.

17. The European Council believes that the creation of an Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria and the Islamist-extremist export of terrorism on which it is based, is a direct threat to the security of the European countries. The European Union is determined to contribute to countering the threat posed by ISIL and other terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria, as called for by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2170. In this context, the European Council welcomes the efforts made by the US and other partners and the initiative of holding an international conference on security in Iraq. It supports the decision by individual Member States to provide military material to Iraq, including the Kurdish regional authorities. It requests the Council to consider a more effective use of the existing restrictive measures, in particular to deny ISIL the benefits of illicit oil sales or sales of other resources on international markets. It also remains committed to provide humanitarian assistance to the affected populations.

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18. The European Council strongly believes that determined action is required to stem the flow of foreign fighters. It calls for the accelerated implementation of the package of EU measures in support of Member States efforts, as agreed by the Council since June 2013, in particular to prevent radicalisation and extremism, share information more effectively - including with relevant third countries, dissuade, detect and disrupt suspicious travel and investigate and prosecute foreign fighters. In this context, the European Council calls on the Council and the European Parliament to finalise work on the EU Passenger Name Record proposal before the end of the year.

The European Council also underlines the need for close cooperation with third countries to develop a coherent approach, including to strengthen border and aviation security and counter-terrorism capacity in the region.

The European Council requests the Council to review the effectiveness of the measures and to propose additional action, as required. The European Council will review this matter at its meeting in December.

GAZA

19. The European Council welcomes the cease-fire agreement reached under the auspices of the Egyptian authorities. It urges both parties to fully respect it and to continue negotiations leading to a fundamental improvement of the living conditions for the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip through the lifting of the Gaza closure regime, and to ending the threat to Israel posed by Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza. This should be supported by international monitoring and verification to ensure full implementation of a comprehensive agreement. All terrorist groups in Gaza must disarm.

It is therefore urgent that the Palestinian consensus government exercise its full responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip including in the field of security and civil administration.

The European Council remains deeply concerned about the disastrous humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. It calls for immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access in accordance with international law.

20. The European Council reiterates the readiness of the European Union to contribute to a comprehensive and sustainable solution enhancing the security, welfare and prosperity of Palestinians and Israelis alike.
21. Only a final agreement based on the two State solution will bring durable peace and stability. The European Council therefore encourages both parties to re-engage in negotiations to this end. The Gaza strip shall be part of a future State of Palestine.

LIBYA

22. The European Council strongly condemns the escalation of fighting in Libya, especially attacks against residential areas, public institutions, facilities and critical infrastructure.
23. It calls upon all parties in Libya to accept an immediate cease-fire, to put an end to the suffering of the population, and to engage constructively in an inclusive political dialogue. In this regard, it fully supports the efforts of the UN mission in Libya.

24. The European Council also encourages neighbouring countries and countries of the region to support an immediate cessation of hostilities and to refrain from actions which might exacerbate current divisions and undermine Libya's democratic transition.
25. The European Council calls on Libya's interim government and the House of Representatives to establish urgently a truly inclusive government capable of addressing the needs of the Libyan people. It encourages the Constitutional Drafting Assembly to pursue as a matter of urgency its work on a constitutional text that will enshrine and protect the rights of all Libyans.

EBOLA

26. The European Council expresses concern about the crisis caused by the Ebola virus in Africa, and stresses the importance of the international community as a whole providing substantial coordinated support to the countries of the region, to NGOs and to the World Health Organisation (WHO) to help them tackle the disease as swiftly and efficiently as possible. In this regard the European Council welcomes the additional funds provided by the European Union and its Member States and their efforts to provide further financial and human resources to meet in particular the increased demand for experts on the ground. The European Council pays tribute to the efforts of humanitarian and health workers in the front line. It urges all countries to follow the WHO guidelines and allow continued, if controlled, air links to and from the countries concerned so as to enable support efforts to be effective and to allow their economies to continue functioning. The European Council calls for increased coordination at EU level of the assistance provided by EU Member States and invites the Council to adopt a comprehensive EU response framework to address this crisis.