
Core documents 2011

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Tunisia

Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and European Commissioner for Enlargement Štefan Füle on the situation in Tunisia

Brussels, 10 January 2011, A 010/11

We are concerned about the events that have been taking place in Tunisia in recent days. In particular, we deplore the violence and the death of civilians. We express our sympathy to the families of the victims.

We call for restraint in the use of force and for the respect of fundamental freedoms. In particular, we call for the immediate release from detention of bloggers, journalists, lawyers and other detained people who peacefully demonstrated in Tunisia. We also call on Tunisian authorities to investigate the recent events and provide further information about them, and on all parties to engage in dialogue with a view to finding solutions to the problems raised by demonstrators.

The EU has a strong dialogue and broad cooperation with Tunisia and is engaged in a process of strengthening bilateral relations on a wide range of issues. This process of strengthening relations will require increased commitments from both partners on all issues, in particular in the areas of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We hope that our Tunisian partner will meet the ambitions and expectations placed in our relationship.

PRESS RELEASE, 3065th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 31 January 2011, 5888/1/11 REV 1 (en)

The Council discussed the situation in Tunisia and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. The Council pays tribute to the courage and determination of the Tunisian people and their peaceful struggle to assert their rights and democratic aspirations. It regrets the violence, repression and loss of life during the recent disturbances. It reaffirms its total solidarity and its support for Tunisia and Tunisians in their efforts

to put in place a stable democracy, the rule of law and democratic pluralism with full regard for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. Today, thanks to the process of democratic transition, the partnership between Tunisia and the European Union is set to be strengthened to lend support to the affirmation of democracy and to economic and social reform.

3. The Council welcomes the commitments given by the transitional government and urges it to proceed with implementation of measures for the release of political prisoners, the legalisation of democratic political parties and associations and the widening of the role of civil society and the media, which are the first necessary steps towards democratisation and stabilisation of the country.

4. The Council welcomes the decision to hold democratic, free and transparent presidential and legislative elections as soon as possible. The European Union is ready, at Tunisia's request, to lend its political support and its legal, technical and material assistance in preparing and organising the electoral process, *inter alia* by sending a preparatory mission and by observing the elections.

5. In the context of greater regard for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Council also welcomes the creation of the High Commission for Political Reform and the national commissions set up to investigate the violence which took place during the demonstrations, as well as corruption. It stresses the importance of the integrity and independence of these commissions and is ready to offer them its assistance if required.

6. In consultation with the Tunisian authorities, the Council has adopted restrictive measures against individuals responsible for misappropriation of State funds.

7. The European Union is also ready to mobilise every instrument at its disposal to help ease the passage of political, economic and social reform in Tunisia, to strengthen its democratic institutions and to give greater support to civil society in the country. At the same time, the European Union intends, under the European neighbourhood policy, to update its strategy and assistance for Tunisia to reflect the new context and the aspirations of the Tunisian people, *inter alia* by bringing the talks on advanced status to a conclusion with the government that emerges from the forthcoming democratic elections, since such status constitutes a fundamental instrument for fully enhancing political, socio-economic and sectoral cooperation between the EU and Tunisia.'

The Council adopted a Decision on restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities in view of the situation in Tunisia, with the aim of preventing the diversion of public funds.

Joint statement by Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Commissioner Štefan Füle, on the Constituent Assembly Elections in the Republic of Tunisia

Brussels, 28 October 2011, A 434/11


We have taken good note of the preliminary results of the elections announced by Mr. K. Jendoubi, Chairman of the Independent High Commission for the Elections.

We commend the candidates and parties that took part in the democratic process. We also congratulate the Ennahda party which obtained the highest percentage of votes. The EU looks forward to working closely with the new Constituent Assembly and the Tunisian authorities and institutions in responding to the Tunisian people's demands for democracy, freedom, social justice and dignity.

We thank the Election Observation Mission (EOM) led by Michael Gahler for its work and contribution to this process. We underline the words of Chief Observer Michael Gahler who said that the elections in Tunisia were an 'encouraging first step to democracy', and that they were generally well-conducted, underpinned by a strong political consensus, accompanied by extensive freedom of expression and organized in a transparent manner.

For the first time Tunisian citizens have had the opportunity to choose in a free and democratic manner their representatives and determine their own future. The newly elected Constituent Assembly will now have the key task of writing the new Constitution of the country. It will need to work in a spirit of consensus in order to build a new democratic State.

It is also important to recall the work of the transition authorities which have led Tunisia through a crucial and difficult period of its history, in particular the interim government led by Prime Minister Essebsi and the members of the High Authority



for the Realisation of the Objectives of the Revolution and Political Reforms and of the Independent High Commission for the Elections (ISIE).

The EU remains fully committed to continue its political and financial support for the Tunisian society. In this regard the meeting of the Tunisia-EU Task Force last September showed Europe's strong support for Tunisia.

Finally, we regret the violent clashes that occurred after the announcement of the preliminary results of the elections and urge calm and restraint.

Egypt

PRESS RELEASE, 3065th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 31 January 2011, 5888/1/11 REV 1 (en)

The Council discussed the situation in Egypt and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. The Council recognizes the legitimate democratic aspirations and grievances of the Egyptian population. These should be listened to carefully and addressed through urgent, concrete and decisive measures.

2. The Council deeply regrets the considerable loss of life during demonstrations in Egypt over the last few days. It also notes with deep concern the high number of people injured and arrested as well as the use of violence. The Council calls on all parties to show restraint and avoid further violence. It urges the Egyptian authorities to immediately release all peaceful demonstrators who have been detained. The Council also calls upon the Egyptian authorities to restore all communication networks without delay and to guarantee unhindered access to all media, including the Internet.

3. The Council urges the Egyptian authorities to respect and protect human rights including freedom of assembly and freedom of expression. It urges them to take appropriate measures to assure the security of all citizens and their property and to protect the cultural heritage. It calls for an immediate end to looting.

4. The Council urges the authorities to seek a peaceful and constructive way forward based on a serious and open dialogue with all political forces ready to abide by democratic norms and with civil society.

5. The Council urges the Egyptian authorities to embark on an orderly transition through a broad-based government leading to a genuine process of substantial democratic reform with full respect for the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, paving the way for free and fair elections.

6. The Council reiterates its support for a democratic, pluralist and stable Egypt as a key partner of the EU, mindful of its important regional role, and sharing the goal

of building stability, peace and prosperity in the Mediterranean and Middle East region. The EU is committed to accompanying, through a partnership, the Egyptian transformation process by mobilising, reviewing and adapting existing instruments to support political, economic and social reforms. The EU stands ready to assist the Egyptian people in this transformation process, taking into account future developments.’

Joint statement by Herman Van Rompuy, Manuel Barroso and Catherine Ashton on recent developments in Egypt

14 February 2011

We welcome the decision made by President Mubarak today. By standing down, he has listened to the voices of the Egyptian people and has opened the way to faster and deeper reforms, and an orderly transition to democracy.

The EU salutes the courage of the Egyptian people who have pursued their campaign for democratic change peacefully and with dignity.

It is important now that the dialogue is accelerated leading to a broad-based civilian government which will respect the aspirations of, and deliver stability for, the Egyptian people.

An orderly and irreversible transition towards democracy and free and fair elections is the shared objective of both the EU and the Egyptian people.

Violence can never be accepted. Respect of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms is key.

The preservation of regional peace and stability should remain our shared priority.

The future of Egypt rightly remains in the hands of the Egyptian people. We call on Army to continue to act responsibly and to ensure that the democratic change takes place in a peaceful manner.

The EU stands ready to help with all its instruments.

Statement by EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on the situation in Egypt

Brussels, 26 November 2011, A 473/11

I am deeply concerned about the clashes that took place in recent days between demonstrators and security forces in Egypt. Violence must stop and the rule of law has to be maintained. An independent investigation into these disturbing events should be carried out. Those responsible have to be held accountable.

I deplore the heavy loss of life and the many injuries and I extend my profound condolences to the families of the victims. I also ask the authorities to release those detained for peacefully expressing their views and urge the authorities to honour their promise to end military trials for civilians. All political parties should reaffirm their commitment to the democratic process that Egypt has embarked upon. The swift shift of power to civilian rule is a key element of the transition and should happen as soon as possible on the basis of an inclusive dialogue. I take good note of the important commitments made by the SCAF in this regard.

I remain confident that the Egyptian people and the authorities will find a way to move peacefully forward on their path towards democracy. The upcoming elections are a very important step and I hope they can go ahead as planned.

Sudan & South Sudan

PRESS RELEASE, 3065th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 31 January 2011, 5888/1/11 REV 1 (en)

The Council had a short discussion on Sudan and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. The Council welcomes the timely, peaceful and credible conduct of the Southern Sudan Referendum as a crucial step in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). It congratulates the people of Southern Sudan on their determination in turning out to vote in such large numbers which significantly surpassed the 60% threshold. The Council commends the parties to the CPA as well as the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission and the South Sudan Referendum Bureau for their leadership in this process and recalls how instrumental the support and assistance provided by the United Nations has been, including the leadership shown by UNMIS.

2. The Council commends the ongoing work of the EU election observation mission to monitor the referendum process. It notes the preliminary statement issued by the EU EOM on 17 January 2011 welcoming the peaceful and credible process and overwhelming turnout.

3. The Council welcomes the announcement of the preliminary results of the Referendum on South Sudan. These show an overwhelming vote in favour of secession. Pending the announcement of the final results, the Council reiterates the EU’s commitment to respect the wishes of the people of Southern Sudan and welcomes the commitment of the Government of Sudan to do so, as reaffirmed at the High Level Meeting on Sudan in Addis Ababa today. It urges both parties to the CPA to continue to ensure the safety and security of all peoples in Sudan.

4. The Council stresses the EU’s continued engagement with both North and South, regardless of the outcome of the Referendum.

5. The Council urges all parties to quickly resolve all outstanding CPA and post-Referendum issues, including Abyei, citizenship arrangements and the holding of Pop-

ular Consultations in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. It welcomes the launching of Popular Consultations in Blue Nile.

6. The Council remains particularly concerned about the delay in resolving the issue of Abyei. It welcomes the recent accord between local tribal leaders and the subsequent agreement on migration and security arrangements as an encouraging step. It urges the parties to the CPA to resolve the future status of Abyei through peaceful dialogue ensuring an equitable and sustainable solution.

7. The EU continues to support the efforts of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan to facilitate negotiations between the parties to the CPA and stands ready to provide any further assistance that is required.

8. The Council remains deeply concerned about the increasing violence in Darfur which has resulted in 43 000 newly displaced persons. It deplores the kidnappings of aid workers, which have impacted severely on the provision of any kind of assistance to vulnerable populations. The Council urges all parties to cease hostilities and ensure full and unhindered access for UNAMID and humanitarian workers.

9. The Council stresses the need for genuine engagement by all parties, including the armed movements, in the Doha peace process leading to a comprehensive and inclusive peace settlement on Darfur. It hopes that the Doha peace process will lead to a positive outcome in the near future.

10. The Council recalls the obligation of the Government of Sudan to cooperate with the International Criminal Court pursuant to UNSC Resolution 1593.

11. The Council will continue to follow the situation in Sudan closely.'

Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the South Sudan's Independence Day celebration, 9 July 2011

Brussels, 9 July 2011, A 273/11

It is a great honour to be here in Juba to celebrate the birth of the Republic of South Sudan. This is my first visit to Juba. I'm sure it will not be the last.

The European Union and its Member States warmly congratulate the people of South Sudan on their independence. I would also like to congratulate His Excellency President Salva Kiir on having been sworn in as the President of the Republic of South Sudan.

The EU was a witness to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The peaceful Referendum was a true reflection of the democratically expressed wishes of the people of South Sudan. On this historic day, the European Union and its 27 Member States welcome the Republic of South Sudan as a new independent state.

Creating a new state is never easy. The European Union itself includes a number of nations, some created by the separation of a single state into two, which only came into existence, less than twenty years ago. We know this can be achieved peacefully, but we know it is a challenge.

So we understand that the world's newest state will require international support to become a secure, peaceful and prosperous country, able to meet the needs and expectations of its people. We will be your partner in achieving this, not just now, but for the long term. This partnership will be focussed on helping the people of South Sudan, through working together with their government. This is why it is important for South Sudan's leaders to embrace pluralism and diversity and lay the foundation for a democratic, fair and inclusive society, based on the rule of law and respect for human rights.

I would like to acknowledge the constructive role of the people of Sudan and their Government in accepting the outcome of the Referendum on southern independence. What is important now is to build on this in developing good neighbourly relations and to go the extra mile in resolving outstanding issues. Fighting must be brought to an end. It is clear that both Sudan and South Sudan will succeed and develop only if the other one is able to do so too. The EU and its Member States are keen to support you both in this.

We also commend the United Nations, the African Union, IGAD and other international partners for their support to the peace process in Sudan, particularly the outstanding roles played by President Mbeki, Prime Minister Meles and Haile Menkerios. The Assessment and Evaluation Commission too has played an important part.

It is therefore with great pleasure that I reiterate our congratulations to the Republic of South Sudan and our determination to support a peaceful and prosperous future for the peoples of the two Sudans, north and south.

It seems to me entirely appropriate that you have chosen the far-sighted Fish Eagle as your national crest and justice, liberty and prosperity as your national motto. Liberty you have already achieved. Justice you must hold on to. Prosperity will come.

Thank you.

Libya

Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the European Union on Libya

Brussels, 23 February 2011, 6966/1/11 REV 1

The European Union expresses its grave concern by the situation unfolding in Libya. We strongly condemn the violence and use of force against civilians and deplore the repression against peaceful demonstrators which has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians. These brutal mass violations of human rights are unacceptable.

The EU reiterates its call for an immediate end to the use of force and for steps to address the legitimate demands of the population, including through national dialogue. All restrictions of freedom of expression, including the internet, and of peaceful assembly must be lifted immediately. The will of the people in Libya must be respected and the EU stands by them.

We welcome the UN Security Council statement of 22 February 2011, which calls on the Government of Libya to meet its responsibility to protect its population and which calls on the Libyan authorities to respect human rights and international humanitarian law. We also welcome the Arab League statement of 22 February.

Immediate access should be provided for international human rights monitors and humanitarian agencies. The EU is ready to supply humanitarian aid where needed.

The EU also urges the Libyan authorities to ensure the safety of all foreign nationals, and to facilitate the departure of those wishing to leave the country.

The EU also welcomes the UN Security Council's call for a transparent, credible and independent investigation into events in Libya and the holding of a special session of the UN Human Rights Council on 25 February.

In this context, the EU stresses that those responsible for the brutal aggression and violence against civilians will be held to account. The EU has decided to suspend negotiations with Libya on the EU-Libya Framework Agreement and is ready to take further measures.

The Candidate Countries Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Iceland+, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, Speech before the Human Rights Council

Geneva, 28 February 2011, SPEECH/11/127

Mr President, Dear Ministers, Dear colleagues,

We meet at a time of historic change. Across the Middle East and beyond, people are standing up for that core human aspiration: to be able to shape their own lives, politically and economically.

They want their fundamental rights respected. They want dignity, accountability, justice and jobs. We must heed these calls. For they are just – and will not go away.

This Council therefore has a grave responsibility: to ensure that our oft-stated intentions are translated into real action, real progress

What matters in the end is not the number of resolutions passed, but results in the real world.

Right now, our attention is focused on Libya – and rightly so. The fact that so many colleagues from across the world have gathered here today tells us something big.

That what is going on – the massive violence against peaceful demonstrators – shocks our conscience. It should spring us into action.

I am pleased that last Friday (25 February), this Council held a special session on Libya, showing an ability to react to events in real time. It was striking and welcome that this came about because so many groups had mobilised for it – from Asia, Latin America, as well as Eastern and Western Europe. This is the United Nations at its best.

The outcome last Friday was a strong one. I am pleased that the Council concluded on Friday to form an independent international inquiry – and also backed work underway in New York to suspend the membership of Libya of this Council. These are important steps. But clearly more is needed.

This morning too, the message is clear: we condemn the grave human rights violations committed in Libya. The violence and repression must stop. Those responsible must be held to account. This is not just the EU's position. It is the view of the international community and its highest authority: the UN Security Council.

On Saturday, the Security Council unanimously adopted a strong Resolution, with important mandatory measures such as an arms embargo, a travel ban and asset freezes for those responsible. EU members of the Security Council worked hard to achieve an outcome that reflects the extreme urgency and severity of the situation.

Accountability and justice are essential - that is why I am pleased that agreement was found in the Resolution to refer the investigation of the on-going crimes to the International Criminal Court.

As EU we will of course ensure swift implementation of these Security Council's measures. We are already working on EU restrictive measures that should come into effect very soon.

Of course, it is not just in Libya that we need to ensure respect for basic human rights. I recently made several visits to countries across the Mediterranean where people are claiming their rights and insisting that the old ways of doing things simply won't do.

I met with government officials, members of opposition parties, civil society organisations, women's groups and youth representatives.

I went to Tunis where I met groups that had never been allowed to be in the same room before; and to Cairo where I met the young people who had been in Tahrir square. My aim was to listen and this is what I heard:

‘This is our country and our revolution. We want real change – and for the system to recognise the significance of the change.’ Also: ‘This is the beginning. We need to take time to get the transition right.’ And then: ‘We want help. To ensure we get the first real election of a ruler in 7000 years. But more than that, to get genuine democracy, not just on the day we cast our ballots, but the weeks and months after that too.’ ‘We want jobs, economic opportunities and social justice, only then can we be really free’.

We can and must salute the courage of people in the region for the peaceful and dignified way in which they have advanced their core demands.

But we can and must do more: to offer our full support. Only to do what people from the region ask us to. From a position of humility knowing that our own histories are full of dark pages, and that our own path to deep democracy wasn’t linear or easy.

But with the conviction that in the on-going transitions, full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms is key. Because it is the only way to get sustainable security, justice and prosperity.

Mr President,

Human rights, we often say, are universal. That is why all violations, wherever they take place, are our concern and must be addressed by this Council.

We know that in several countries, people’s rights are at risk: in Iran where we have seen a steep rise in executions; in Belarus where we are deeply concerned at the number of political prisoners, in the Democratic Republic of Congo where there are distressing reports of sexual violence - and many other places besides.

The EU is also deeply concerned at the situation in the Middle East, including the occupied Palestinian Territories. We are working hard reach our long-standing aim: a negotiated solution leading to two states.

Sometimes this Council has seemed resolved only to be irresolute.

Some of the achievements of the Council perhaps do not receive the attention they deserve. Take the recent work on freedom of association; or the mechanism to promote the elimination of laws and practices that discriminate against women.

Still, this Council has some way to go in living up to the mandate it was given by the UN General Assembly. That is why we want a real, substantive outcome of the Review process now underway concerning the work of this Council.

The test of success is simple: it is not per se whether we pass resolutions or create new procedures – vital though they are.

These are the inputs. What truly matter are the outputs. The real test is whether we make a difference on the ground: whether all the people of Libya, Iran, Cote d'Ivoire and Belarus, Burma/Myanmar and DPRK are able to enjoy free speech, fair elections, the rule of law, equal rights and impartial administration.

Mr President,

The European Union is sometimes accused of trying to “export” so-called European values to other countries. I reject that accusation. The rights to free speech, freedom of assembly, justice and equality are not European rights: they are universal rights. We must never fall into the trap of believing that people in Africa, Asia or Latin America are less passionate about their rights.

Allow me to quote Kofi Annan’s 2005 report, “In larger freedom”. “Human rights are as fundamental to the poor as to the rich, and their protection is as important to the security and prosperity of the developed world as it is to that of the developing world”.

We are meeting today precisely because those rights inspire people in every part of the globe. What is true is that many countries lack the institutions that are able to defend and promote those rights. That is why one of the great challenges facing us is to help countries build those institutions that will anchor and ensure full respect for fundamental rights and the rule of law.

Mr President,

We are living through historic times, and it is easy to be dazzled by the promise of change. Just as important is where we go from here, so I should like to look ahead to a possible direction of travel.

To live up to our promises, we need to narrow the gap:

- between the magnitude of the challenges facing us and the minutiae of our political debates;
- between the expectations of those who put us here and our ability to deliver;
- between vaulting statements of universal principles and individual lives;
- between the serenity of Geneva and events just two hours flight from here.

I repeat: what matters is not per se the number of resolutions passed but the results we achieve together on the ground.

Thank you very much.

Remarks by Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in the margins of the Human Rights Council

Geneva, 28 February 2011, A 080/11

Today, we have adopted additional accompanying restrictive measures on Libya such as an embargo on equipment which might be used for internal repression and we're looking at individuals under the travel restrictions and the assets freeze. We had already started work as you know on these restrictive measures – assets freeze, travel bans and arms embargo – prior to the Security Council resolution.

The crisis in Libya, the events that have unfolded in North Africa and the Middle East require a comprehensive and a coordinated response. We can't act in isolation and I've always said that the international community is much more effective if it operates together.

So it's in that context that I've come to Geneva to hold discussions with a number of our key international partners. In particular, I met with US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton this morning, with Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd, and

later today I will see Russian Minister Sergei Lavrov and Turkish Minister Ahmet Davotoglu.

But I am also here to address the UN Human Rights Council because human rights is what I call the silver thread that runs through everything that we do in the External Action Service and it's at the core of our response to the developing situations in Libya and beyond.

So we're working closely, hand-in-hand with the United Nations and I remain in touch with Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. It is especially important that we continue to try and assess the humanitarian needs and get ready to deploy emergency assistance especially in Libya and of course to ensure that we keep our concerns about getting our citizens out of the country.

We are trying to respond in real time to the crisis and of course to avoid the civil war that we fear and making contingency plans to respond to the potential flow of refugees to neighbouring and to European countries.

Finally just to add that I also met today for the first time Dr Salehi, the new Foreign Minister of Iran and I'll be meeting with ministers from Côte d'Ivoire this afternoon as part of my ongoing work. Thank you.

Baroness Ashton, the moves that you will take today, that the EU will take today, is that enough to help the people of Libya right now, or is this going to be something retroactively looking back and calling for accountability?

You know we have to do whatever we can right now to try and support people, the calls that we make the desire to see the violence stop to stop the repression are real. And as much as action as we can take now we are going to try and do and we recognise that that is going to be so important. It is also going to be important to get ready for the humanitarian aid and that we are also getting ready to move on. But our thoughts are with the people of Libya right now.

There has been much talk about a no fly zone over Libya. Have you talked with Madam Clinton about this issue and with your other colleagues?

This is an issue that is currently being discussed. There is no decision yet being made on it. As you can imagine it's quite a complex issue, so it is part of the ongoing discussions and of course we'll let you know when any decisions are taken on that. Thank you.

PRESS RELEASE, 3078th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 21 March 2011, 7781/11

The Council held an in-depth discussion on the situation in Libya and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. The Council expresses its concern at the present situation in Libya and condemns the gross and systematic violation of human rights, violence and brutal repression perpetrated by the regime against the Libyan people. It recalls the UNSC decision to refer these issues to the ICC. It confirms that the EU’s main aim is the protection of the civilian population and support for the possibility for the Libyan people to realise their aspirations for a democratic society. To this end Colonel Gaddafi has to relinquish power immediately.

2. The Council expresses its satisfaction after the adoption of UNSCR 1973 and underlines its determination to contribute to its implementation. It also welcomes the Paris Summit as a decisive contribution to its implementation. While contributing in a differentiated way, the EU and its Member States are determined to act collectively and resolutely, with all international partners, particularly the Arab League and other regional stakeholders, to give full effect to these decisions.

3. The Council has adopted today additional further restrictive measures against the Libyan leadership in the form of additional autonomous designations of person and entities with a view to preventing further funding of the regime. On the basis of the UNSC Resolution, the Council is working on the further strengthening of the measures with a view to their adoption ahead of the European Council on 24/25 March 2011.

4. The Council and the EU Member States will support actions provided for by UNSCR 1973 necessary to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack. It notes that the EU will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to all those affected. The EU recalls its readiness to help Libya build a constitutional state and develop the rule of law.

5. The EU is ready to provide CSDP support to humanitarian assistance in response to a request from OCHA and under the coordinating role of the UN. Such actions will fully respect the UN guidelines on the use of military and civil defence assets (MCDA).

6. The Council asks the High Representative to develop further planning in accordance with UNSC Resolution 1973 and the European Council Declaration of 11 March 2011, on support for humanitarian assistance/civil protection operations including by maritime means for this purpose. This should be in close co-ordination and complementarity with the UN, NATO and others. As part of this process, the Council invites the High Representative to continue contacts with the UN Secretary-General and countries of the region, including Egypt and Tunisia. This process should be undertaken as a matter of urgency in order to allow further consideration by the Council by the end of the week. It took note of the offer by Italy to provide OHQ.

7. The EU and the Member States underline once more their solidarity as regards those Member States most directly concerned by migratory movements and reiterate their readiness to provide the necessary support as the situation evolves, in line with the European Council declaration.’

The Council also added a further 11 individuals to the EU travel ban and asset freeze list and a further nine entities to the asset freeze list. (see p. 19).

Council decides on EU military operation in support of humanitarian assistance operations in Libya

Brussels, 1 April 2011, 8589/11

The Council adopted today 1 a decision on a European Union military operation in support of humanitarian assistance operations in response to the crisis situation in Libya (“EUFOR Libya” operation).

The decision provides that the EU will, if requested by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), conduct a military operation in the framework of the Common security and defence policy (CSDP) in order to support humanitarian assistance in the region. More specifically, EUFOR Libya, if requested by the UN, will:

- contribute to the safe movement and evacuation of displaced persons,
- support, with specific capabilities, the humanitarian agencies in their activities.

The operation aims to underpin the mandates of UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973 regarding the availability of humanitarian assistance and the protection of civilian populations.

Rear Admiral Claudio GAUDIOSI (Italy) has been appointed EU Operation Commander of EUFOR Libya. The Operational Headquarters (OHQ) of EUFOR Libya will be located in Rome, Italy.

The decision adopted today sets out the legal framework for the future operation. The decision to launch EUFOR Libya will be adopted by the Council following approval of the Operation Plan and the Rules of Engagement.

EUFOR Libya will, unless the Council decides otherwise, terminate no later than four months after reaching initial operating capability. The financial reference amount for the common costs of EUFOR Libya will be EUR 7,9 million.

PRESS RELEASE, 3101st Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 20 June 2011, 11824/11

The Council discussed the situation in Libya and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. The EU is unwavering in its commitment to protecting Libyan civilians, including through the intensification of pressure on the Libyan regime. In this context, the EU notes the lifting of the Misrata siege by the TNC, the extension of the operation to enforce UNSC Resolutions (UNSCR) 1973 and the continuing defections from the Kadhafi regime. Time is not on Kadhafi’s side. He has lost all legitimacy to remain in power. The EU endorses the call of the Contact Group that the time has come for a new chapter where Libyans can choose their own future. The EU strongly supports the work of the UN Special Envoy al-Khatib to initiate this new chapter.

2. The EU is firmly committed to the full implementation of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973. More than three months after their adoption, the Kadhafi regime remains in constant breach of its obligation to protect Libyan citizens. The EU is working closely with the UN Special Envoy for Libya as the focal point for the political transition process. It welcomes the Joint Chairs’ Conclusions of the meeting of the International Contact Group held in Abu Dhabi on 9 June which demonstrated the continuing resolve of the international community to protect civilians from the

Kadhafi regime. The Cairo meeting on 18 June underlined the resolve of the international organisations to work together under the leadership of the UN and reaffirmed their readiness to assist the Libyan people during the transitional period. Both the Abu Dhabi meeting and the Cairo meetings of the UN, LAS, OIC, AU and the EU demonstrate the unity of purpose and the strong commitment of the international community to achieve a cease-fire linked to, and followed by a genuine and inclusive political process based on a clear commitment to national reconciliation and unity of post-Kadhafi Libya. Kadhafi must relinquish power immediately and the cease-fire must be genuine, verifiable and include an unconditional cessation of the use of force against civilians, as well as the withdrawal and return to their barracks of military forces from besieged and occupied cities.

3. The EU condemns the violations of human rights and the breaches of international humanitarian law perpetrated by the regime on a daily basis. Evidence has already been collected by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court of Kadhafi's crimes. Additional evidence is being gathered by the International Commission of Inquiry on the human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law in Libya mandated by the UN Human Rights Council, which published its report on the 1st of June. There can be no impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The EU calls on the remaining followers of the Kadhafi regime to disassociate themselves from such crimes as well as from the regime.

4. The EU remains concerned about the humanitarian situation, particularly in Misrata and the Western mountains. Humanitarian organisations must be granted unhindered access throughout Libya without delay. The EU as a whole has already committed 136 million euro in humanitarian assistance and reiterates its commitment to deliver it to all Libyans and people in need in an impartial and non-discriminatory manner. If requested by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the EU will conduct a CSDP operation "EUFOR Libya" to support humanitarian assistance in the region.

5. The EU condemns the Kadhafi forces' violations of the international border of, and its attacks into, Tunisia. The EU acknowledges the disruptive impact of the Libyan crisis on all its neighbours. The EU will continue its co-operation with these neighbouring countries to help alleviate the humanitarian, social, economic and security challenges created by the Libyan crisis.

6. The EU has decided to step up its sanctions against the Kadhafi regime by adding six port authorities under the regime's control to the EU asset freeze list. In this

way, the EU is taking further action against the military arsenal used by the regime against its own citizens. Humanitarian shipments will be exempt from this measure. The list of targeted persons and entities remains under constant review.

7. The EU welcomes the “Road to Democratic Libya” presented to the Contact Group by the Transitional National Council (TNC), which reinforces its commitment to the principles of inclusion and representation, as well as its importance as a key political interlocutor representing the aspirations of the Libyan people. The EU supports the TNC’s vision for a new Libya, and recognises the important steps taken to improve its organization and accountability. It must also continue its commitment to address alleged violations of international law, including of human rights, committed in the areas under its control. The EU is ready to assist the TNC in developing its capacity to assume its responsibilities and uphold the rule of law throughout the areas under its control.

8. The EU acknowledges the urgent financial needs of the TNC in order to serve the Libyan people. It welcomes the announcement, at the Abu Dhabi meeting, that the Temporary Financial Mechanism (TFM) is now operational. The EU welcomes the specific contributions of France and Italy. The mobilisation of international resources, including, where possible, through the use of Libyan frozen funds in compliance with the provisions of the relevant UNSCRs, is key to support an inclusive transition process aiming at fostering national reconciliation and fulfilling the democratic aspirations of the Libyan people. Measures in this regard will respect the rule of law.

9. Working in coordination with the UN, the World Bank and other actors, notably regional organizations, the EU has started to mobilize its resources to support the political transition and will also do so on post-conflict reconstruction. The EU is committed to supporting the building of a democratic Libyan state, respectful of the international human rights standards, the rule of law and good governance principles. On the basis of Libya’s needs and demands, the EU will explore ways, to combine all its actions to support the stability of the country, and the security and prosperity of its citizens as they strive to build a new sovereign and democratic state. The Council encourages the High Representative and the Commission to continue their work in this regard so as to be ready to act as the situation allows.’

Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the fall of Sirte and reports of the death of Colonel Gaddafi

Brussels, 20 October 2011, A 420/11

The fall of Sirte marks the end of the Gaddafi era. Libya is now under the full control of National Transitional Council forces. After ten months of extraordinary sacrifices, the Libyan people can say with pride and confidence that they have shaken off a regime that terrorised and oppressed for more than 40 years. They can now look to the future.

Reports of Colonel Gaddafi's death have not yet been confirmed. If confirmed, his death brings closure to a tragic period in the lives of so many Libyans.

Libya is entering a process of transition. It is important that its leadership unites to build a democratic future for the country in full respect for human rights. While the crimes of the past must be addressed, the leadership must also seek a path of national reconciliation. The EU has stood by the Libyan people during these struggles. We have been present in Tripoli and Benghazi. We have provided substantial humanitarian assistance. We have already supported civil society and we are now working with international partners to respond to Libya's post-conflict needs. The EU will remain a strong and committed partner in the future.

For more information see attachment.

EU support to Libya

From the start of the Libyan crisis, the EU has stood by the people of Libya in their quest for freedom. Together with the international community, it will continue to help Libya's process of democratic transition and economic reconstruction.

The broad, comprehensive and swift response of the EU covers a wide range of short- to long-term actions.

Humanitarian assistance

The EU has provided more than €156.5 million in humanitarian support – with €80.5 million coming from the EU budget. It has mobilised EU civil protection teams and assets to alleviate the plight of civilians both in Libya and at its borders. Since the beginning of the crisis, the European Commission's humanitarian teams have been working on the ground with humanitarian part-

ners to ensure that priority needs are met and aid is adequately coordinated both in Libya and in neighbouring countries.

Support to the democratic transition and economic development

Following the setting up of a Liaison Office in Benghazi (21 May) designed to coordinate Member State activities and give immediate support to the National Transitional Council and civil society, a new EU office has been opened in Tripoli, which is soon to become an EU Delegation.

Beyond tackling the most pressing humanitarian needs, the EU is already preparing both immediate measures to support the stabilisation priorities of the National Transitional Council (NTC), as well as longer-term support programmes. It was agreed at the international conference in Paris on 2 September 2011 that the EU will conduct the needs assessment for the following sectors: border management; strengthening civil society and women's rights, and media/communications, while the UN and the World Bank, with which the EU is working very closely, will lead assessments in other areas. An ongoing EU mission in Libya that began on 10 September started preparation of the needs assessments and on planning the provision of immediate support, in close collaboration with the NTC. The EU has already deployed experts in communications, civil society, border management and security, and procurement.

In addition to its humanitarian assistance, the European Commission can make up to €25 million available for immediate stabilisation needs, including through the re-activation of programmes in the field of migration that were suspended when conflict began. Building on activities already underway with the NTC and civil society groups (initially launched in the Benghazi area), this includes:

- *Short-term technical assistance to the NTC to build up state institutions;*
- *Strengthening respect for human rights and democratisation;*
- *Strengthening civil society and re-building of livelihoods through civil society;*
- *Health: support for urgent needs resulting from the conflict;*
- *Migration: support to issues related to displaced people and border controls;*
- *Security sector.*

The European Commission is ready to refocus medium term funding foreseen for Libya of €60 million on the needs of the new Libyan authorities in areas such as democratisation and civil society, public administration capacity building and social and economic development. This longer-term support programme will be prepared together with the new Libyan authorities.

Libya is a resource-rich country. In parallel with assistance, steps have been taken to lift restrictions on a range of economic entities which, previously under the control of the regime, were subject to sanctions.

Towards a long lasting partnership

The EU also stands ready to resume negotiations on a Framework Agreement which can serve as a basis for political, economic, social and cultural dialogue and cooperation with the new Libya, whenever the new authorities decide that is the right moment to do so. The same principle applies to the possibility of having Libya joining regional initiatives where the EU is involved.

The developments in Libya are giving fresh momentum to the Arab Spring. The European Union stands by the people in the region and supports their democratic aspirations and choices. This is reflected in the Communication of the Commission and the High Representative ‘A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity’ (8 March 2011), which lays the foundation on which that support will be built in coming years, as well as in their Communication ‘A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood’ which gives orientations of the new European Neighbourhood Policy (25 May 2011).

PRESS RELEASE, 3124th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 14 November 2011, 16756/11

The Council discussed the situation in Libya and adopted the following conclusions:

1. ‘The EU welcomes the Declaration of Liberation of Libya made on October 23, which marks the beginning of a new era for the country and its people. It also welcomes the appointment of Abdurrahim al-Keib as Libya’s new Prime Minister and looks forward to the rapid appointment of a Transitional Government. It recognises the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people expressed during the revolution, and encourages the continuation of reconciliation efforts. It also reiterates its call for this transition to be inclusive and to pave the way for the establishment of a state based on the rule of law and democratic principles to which Libyan people aspired during the revolution, such as fundamental freedoms, respect for human rights, gender equality, including participation of women in the political process, and non discrimination.
2. The EU encourages the National Transitional Council to pursue its calls for justice and respect for human rights in line with its Constitutional Charter. It notes

with concern reports of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law including revenge attacks and summary executions. It welcomes the commitment of the Libyan authorities to take action to bring an end to such acts, to carry out thorough and impartial investigations into any such incidents and ensure that those responsible for violations of human rights are held accountable. The EU welcomes the promise of cooperation between the Libyan authorities and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commission of Inquiry of the UN Human Rights Council, as well as the International Criminal Court.

3. The EU notes the end of Operation Unified Protector in Libya and expresses appreciation for the critical role it has played in the protection of civilians. It also recalls that it has taken swift action to implement the provisions on UNSCR 2016 (2011) on the termination of the No-Fly Zone.

4. The EU underlines its concerns regarding the proliferation of all arms and related materiel of all types in line with UNSCR 2017 (2011), in particular Man-portable air defence system (MANPADS) and chemical weapons stockpiles in Libya and the danger of their dissemination across the region. It stresses the need for a response based on close coordination with international partners and countries of the region, and it recalls the relevance of the EU Sahel Strategy in this regard.

5. In full respect of the principle of Libyan ownership and in cooperation with the UN, the EU is ready to combine all its instruments, including CSDP if appropriate, in order to provide further assistance to the new Libya across a range of sectors, as already set out in the FAC Conclusions of 10 October. Together with the Libyan authorities and the international community, the EU will continue to work to lift restrictions on Libyan assets frozen abroad in conformity with the wishes and needs of the Libyan people and the relevant UNSCRs. A quick re-launch of the Libyan economy is needed to support the transition process. The EU will continue to respond to requests for humanitarian assistance.

6. The Council reaffirms its readiness to support Libya during the transition and welcomes the inauguration of an EU Delegation to Libya by High Representative Ashton.

7. The EU is committed to deepening and strengthening its relationship with the Libyan people and looks forward to the participation of Libya within the European Neighbourhood Policy and regional initiatives such as the Union for the Mediterranean.'

Yemen

PRESS RELEASE, 3078th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 21 March 2011, 7781/11

The Council expresses its utmost concern at the situation in Yemen and the increasing level of violence. It strongly condemns the use of force against protestors and deeply deplors the injuries and loss of life caused. It urges the security forces to refrain from the use of violence immediately. Should the safety of demonstrators not be ensured, the Council and Member States will review their policies towards Yemen. The Council calls on all parties concerned to ensure respect for humanitarian aid principles and provide unimpeded access to people in need.

It is the responsibility of the Yemeni authorities to ensure respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Those responsible for loss of life and injuries caused should be held accountable for their actions and brought to justice.

To achieve an orderly political transition, the Council urges the government of Yemen and all parties to engage in constructive, comprehensive and inclusive dialogue, without delay.

The EU reiterates its view that political and economic reforms are essential for the future of Yemen and remains ready to support the Yemeni people in this respect.

PRESS RELEASE, 3101st Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 20 June 2011, 11824/11

The Council discussed the situation in Yemen adopted the following conclusions:

‘The European Union continues to view events in Yemen with extreme concern, following weeks of violence and turmoil that have inflicted substantial suffering on the Yemeni people.

The European Union condemns recent attacks, including that of 3 June on the Presidential compound and urges all parties to cease all hostilities, respect international human rights standards and abide by a permanent ceasefire, throughout the coun-

try. The EU is closely monitoring developments. Violence cannot resolve the issues that confront Yemen. Those who stand in the way of peace must be held accountable and those responsible for violence against peaceful protesters must be brought to justice.

The EU supports Vice President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's commitment to respect the ceasefire process, to demilitarize Yemen's cities and to ensure proper protection for any further peaceful protests and demonstrations. The EU also emphasizes the importance of proceeding with an orderly and inclusive political transition in Yemen in line with the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, to respond to the legitimate interests of all Yemen's people. The EU calls on the Yemeni leadership to follow through on their commitment to this transition.

In this context the EU underlines its serious concern at the impact of the current political impasse on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, including the internal displacement of many thousands as a result of fighting.

The EU recalls its view that the authorities in Yemen must meet the challenge of restoring order in a manner which complies fully with international human rights standards. The EU welcomes the announced mission of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and encourages the Government of Yemen to ensure the free and unhindered access to the country that they have promised to grant the mission. The EU welcomes the cross regional statement on Yemen by the Human Rights Council and looks forward to a dialogue during its 18th session.

The EU remains ready, alongside other international partners, to provide assistance and necessary political support for the implementation of Yemen's transition.'

Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the signature of the agreement for political transition in Yemen

Brussels, 23 November 2011, A 469/11

I welcome the signature in Riyadh today of the agreement for political transition in Yemen, signed by President Saleh himself and key representatives of Yemen's ruling and opposition parties. I commend the tireless efforts of all those who have worked for this outcome, in particular the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The agreement is only the beginning, but it is a very important beginning. It allows the Yemeni people the much needed hope that their country can turn a page in its history and embrace a new future.

In line with UN Security Council Resolution 2014, I call on all political groups to help implement the agreement in good faith. It should become the foundation for a reconciliation process which reaches out to all Yemenis and enables a peaceful democratic transition to take place. It is time for all sections of Yemeni society to set aside their differences and make every effort to meet the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people. I have the utmost admiration for the courage of all those Yemenis who have pursued their campaign for democratic change peacefully and with dignity. Nobody should now stand in the way of this unique opportunity to move forward.

The EU, together with its international partners, will continue to help and support the Yemeni people in their efforts to build a more democratic and prosperous future.

Bahrain

PRESS RELEASE, 3078th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 21 March 2011, 7781/11

The Council is extremely concerned at the serious and deteriorating situation in Bahrain, and deplores the loss of life and the escalation of violence. The European Union urges all security forces in the country not to use violence against the demonstrators. It calls on demonstrators to refrain from deliberately intimidating actions.

The Council is equally concerned by reports that opposition figures have been arrested. The Government and the security forces must respect and protect the human rights of peaceful protestors, including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. The authorities must also ensure full access for all to emergency medical treatment in accordance with international standards.

The Council also calls on all parties to enter into meaningful and constructive dialogue without delay or preconditions, with a view to bringing about reforms.

Syria

Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the situation in Syria

Brussels, 26 March 2011, A 126/11

I am appalled and extremely concerned by the situation in Syria. Despite the latest announcement of improved political freedoms and restraint, violent repression of demonstrators has continued in several cities. I strongly condemn the brutal repression, including the totally unacceptable use of violence and live ammunition, which must cease now.

I urge the authorities to exercise the utmost restraint across the country and to meet the legitimate demands and aspirations of the people with dialogue and urgent political and socio-economic reforms. The state of emergency must be lifted and political prisoners and human rights defenders must be released without delay. Human rights and fundamental freedoms must be respected and protected by the authorities and security forces.

PRESS RELEASE, 3082nd Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 12 April 2011, 8741/1/11 REV 1

1. The Council is extremely concerned at the situation in Syria. It deplores the many deaths resulting from ongoing violence, strongly condemns the use of force by the security forces against peaceful demonstrators and urges the authorities to exercise restraint. The Council calls for the immediate release of those arrested in connection with the peaceful demonstrations. The Council calls on the Syrian authorities to investigate the deaths of protestors and to bring those responsible to account through a fair and transparent process.

2. The Council calls on the Syrian authorities to respond urgently to the legitimate demands of the Syrian people including through the lifting of the state of emergency. It underlines the importance of a clear and credible programme of political reform and that the announced intention for political reforms must be more ambitious and backed by a concrete timetable for their implementation. It takes note of

the appointment of a new Prime Minister and looks forward to the formation of a new government that should urgently launch the necessary reforms.

3. The Council notes the announced formation of a number of committees to review legislation and expects them to produce substantive proposals towards an inclusive, open and representative government. The Syrian authorities must abide by their international commitments with regard to ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms including freedom of assembly, expression and media. The Council calls on the Syrian authorities to release without further delay all political prisoners and human rights defenders.

4. The Council will monitor events closely and stands ready to review its policies towards Syria as appropriate, including by supporting, once launched, a genuine process of reform.

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on restrictive measures against Syria

Brussels, 9 May 2011, 9912/1/11 REV 1

The EU has decided to impose restrictive measures against Syria and persons responsible for the violent repression against the civilian population in Syria.

These measures include an embargo on arms and equipment that may be used for internal repression, as well as an asset freeze and a travel ban targeting a list of thirteen individuals.

The EU measures respond to the escalation of the Syrian authorities' violent crackdown, including by military means, that has led to the killing, injury or arrest of Syrian citizens for their participation in peaceful protests. This is clearly inconsistent with the universal principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The aim of these measures is to achieve a change of policy by the Syrian leadership without further delay. The EU urges Syria to put an immediate end to violence and swiftly introduce genuine and comprehensive political reform, the only way to provide peace and stability for Syria in the long term. Failing that, the EU will consider extending the restrictive measures in light of the developments, including at the highest level of leadership.

The EU calls again President Bashar Al-Assad to choose the path of reform and national inclusive dialogue and avoid further bloodshed whilst the door remains open.

The EU Foreign Ministers will revert to the situation in Syria at their meeting later this month.

PRESS RELEASE, 3101st Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 20 June 2011, 11824/11

The Council had an in-depth discussion on recent developments in Syria and repercussions in neighbouring countries. It adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. The EU condemns in the strongest terms the worsening violence in Syria. The EU deplors that the Syrian authorities have not responded to the calls to immediately stop the violence and engage in meaningful reforms. The EU considers that the ongoing violent repression in Syria constitutes a threat to internal and regional stability.

2. The EU regrets the loss of life, mostly of peaceful protestors, as stated in the Preliminary report of the High Commissioner on the situation of human rights in Syria. The Report contains allegations of human rights abuses, including torture. The EU expresses its condolences to the families of the victims and salutes the unwavering courage of the Syrian people. The EU calls on the Syrian authorities to immediately end violence. The EU calls on demonstrators to uphold the peaceful nature of protests. The EU also calls for an independent, effective and transparent investigation as requested by the UNSG to hold those responsible for the violence to account.

3. The EU notes with grave concern reports of army activities, notably in northern Syria and the city of Jisr al-Shughour, and of the thousands of people displaced due

to the violence. It urges the Syrian authorities to allow immediate and unconditional access by humanitarian agencies to all affected areas. It also urges the Syrian authorities to cooperate fully with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including by granting its mission access to Syria, as requested by the UN Human Rights Council on 29 April.

4. Stressing that the current crisis can only be settled through a political process, the EU reiterates its calls on the Syrian authorities to launch a credible, genuine and inclusive national dialogue and meaningful political reforms without delay. The EU emphasizes that for such a process to take place, the Syrian authorities must stop the violence, put an immediate end to arbitrary arrests and intimidations, release all those arrested in connection with protests, as well as other political prisoners who remain in detention despite the recent amnesty announced by President Al-Assad. Such a process is also the only way to provide stability for Syria in the long term, by initiating a peaceful transition to democracy, based on national unity and respectful of the rights of all citizens.

5. The EU is concerned that the lifting of the state of emergency on 21 April is not implemented on the ground and deplores the fact that the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression continue to be constantly violated. President Al-Assad's credibility and leadership depend on the implementation of the reforms he himself announced publicly without taking any step since then to fulfil his commitments.

6. The EU emphasises that the Syrian authorities must ensure that access by the Syrian people to basic goods and services is not interrupted.

7. The EU also urges the Syrian authorities to allow immediate and unhindered access to international human rights monitors, and to independent and international media. The Syrian people should not be deprived of access to free media, including the Internet.

8. The situation has affected neighbouring countries. The EU stands ready to assist in addressing the humanitarian situation. The EU acknowledges the efforts by Turkey and other regional partners on the different aspects of the crisis, in particular the humanitarian aspects, and will work with them to address the situation in Syria.

9. The EU continues its diplomatic efforts with partners from the international community to ensure that the UN Security Council assumes its responsibility in relation to the situation in Syria and its regional implications, condemns the ongoing violence and urges the Syrian authorities to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people.

10. Until there is an end to unacceptable violence against the civilian population, and decisive progress towards fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people, the EU will maintain its current policy.

11. In this respect, the EU is actively preparing to expand its restrictive measures by additional designations with a view to achieving a fundamental change of policy by the Syrian leadership without delay. The Council recalls that restrictive measures target individuals and entities responsible for, or associated with, the violent repression against the civilian population.'

Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union on EU action following the escalation of violent repression in Syria

Brussels, 18 August 2011, 13488/1/11 REV 1

The EU condemns in the strongest terms the brutal campaign Bashar al-Assad and his regime are waging against their own people. In recent weeks the Syrian leadership has stepped up its violent crackdown against peaceful protesters and resorted to large-scale use of military force in the cities of Hama, Deir al-Zour and Lattakia. This has led to the killing or injury of many Syrian citizens. Further casualties and new refugees were reported after the Palestinian camp of al-Ramal was attacked. These developments are unacceptable and intolerable.

The EU has repeatedly emphasised that the brutal repression must be stopped, detained protesters released, free access by international humanitarian and human rights organizations and media allowed, and a genuine and inclusive national dialogue launched. The Syrian leadership, however, has remained defiant to calls from the EU as well as the broad international community including Syria's own neighbours. This shows that the Syrian regime is unwilling to change. The President's promises of reform have lost all credibility as reforms cannot succeed under perma-

ment repression. The EU notes the complete loss of Bashar al-Assad's legitimacy in the eyes of the Syrian people and the necessity for him to step aside.

At the same time, the EU is proceeding to further action. We have been reaching out to our partners in the region and calling for a Special Session of the UN Human Rights Council on Syria. The addition of further names to the list of those targeted by the EU restrictive measures is under preparation. Moreover, the EU is moving ahead with discussing further restrictive measures that will broaden its sanctions against the Syrian regime. By these efforts we continue to aim at assisting the Syrian people to achieve their legitimate aspirations.

The Candidate Countries Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Iceland+, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area

PRESS RELEASE, 3124th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 14 November 2011, 16756/11

The Council discussed the situation in Syria.

In view of the gravity of the situation, the Council suspended further disbursements of project loans to the Syrian government from the European Investment Bank as well as the bank's technical assistance contracts for sovereign projects in Syria. It also added 18 persons responsible for human rights violations to the list of those targeted by an asset freeze and travel ban pursuant to decision 2011/273/CFSP and regulation 442/2011. For more information, see press release 16724/11.

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

'The European Union continues to be deeply concerned by the deteriorating situation in Syria where according to the United Nations more than 3,500 people have been killed since March. The EU again condemns in the strongest terms the ongoing brutal repression and widespread human rights violation.

The Council discussed today the situation in Syria as well as the outcome of the Arab League meeting that took place last Saturday in response to the failure of the Syrian government to implement the Arab League plan to which Syria committed on 2 November. The EU deplors that once again the Syrian government has not lived up to its own commitments, pursuing instead the repression against its own people.

The European Union welcomes the efforts of the Arab League to end violence and bring about the democratic transition that the Syrian people have bravely demanded in the last eight months. The European Union salutes and fully supports the decisions taken by the Arab League meeting on 12 November, which show the increasing isolation of the Syrian regime.

The European Union will continue to press for strong UN action to increase international pressure and urges all members of the Security Council to assume their responsibilities in relation to the situation in Syria.

In the light of the continued repression in Syria, the EU has decided today to place new restrictive measures against the regime, by suspending the disbursement of European Investment Bank loans and by targeting additional individuals responsible or associated with the repression and supporting or benefiting from the regime. In line with the European Council Conclusions of 23 October, the EU will continue to impose additional and more comprehensive measures against the regime as long as the repression of the civilian population continues.

The EU stresses its strong support to the Syrian people and welcomes the ongoing efforts by the Syrian opposition to establish a united platform and to work for a shared vision for the future of Syria and the transition to a democratic system. The EU stands ready to engage with representative members of the opposition which adhere to non-violence and democratic values such as the Syrian National Council. The European Union shares the vision of those who strive peacefully for a life in freedom and dignity, committed to rule of law and human rights.

The EU demands that the Syrian authorities immediately grant access to humanitarian agencies and workers and to fact-finding missions, in particular from the independent international commission of inquiry appointed by the Human Rights Council in August, and to allow independent and international media to operate in Syria without restrictions.

The EU strongly condemns attacks on diplomatic premises. The Syrian authorities are under an international obligation to ensure the protection of diplomatic missions and personnel in Syria in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.’

Côte d'Ivoire

PRESS RELEASE, 3082nd Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 12 April 2011, 8741/1/11 REV 1

The Council discussed the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. Following the arrest of Laurent Gbagbo, the EU welcomes the declaration of President Ouattara that he intends to pursue a policy of reconciliation and reconstruction in Côte d'Ivoire. It appeals to all parties to refrain immediately from any further acts of violence or intimidation. The EU stresses the need for full cooperation with the legitimate authorities in the swift re-establishment of law and order throughout the country. It is imperative to create as soon as possible conditions in which all citizens can, without fear or harassment, return to their homes and work, and resume a normal life in peace and security. The EU pledges its support for the creation of those conditions and for the restoration of social and political harmony. This is an historic opportunity.

2. The EU welcomes President Ouattara's commitment to achieving national reconciliation. It stands ready to support the work of the proposed Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and encourages President Ouattara to form an inclusive, broad-based government representative of all the regions and all strands of political opinion in the country. The reconciliation process will lay the foundations of the country's recovery. To this end, the EU acknowledges the importance of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and the reform of the security sector. It urges the International Commission of Inquiry into human rights violations established by the UN Human Rights Council on 25 March 2011 to investigate the allegations of such violations as swiftly and thoroughly as possible. As the EU has said repeatedly on previous occasions, all those found responsible for such crimes must be held accountable for their acts. In this context, it welcomes President Ouattara's commitment to fight impunity and to support the work of the International Commission. Impunity cannot be allowed to undermine the re-establishment of public confidence in the government and the security forces.

3. The EU considers that the united stance of the International Community has been crucial in the resolution of this crisis. It recognises the unity of purpose demonstrated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the African Union (AU). The United Nations (UN) has also played a particularly crucial part. The EU welcomes the essential and continuing role of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), assisted by the French force "Licorne", in protecting the civilian population in Côte d'Ivoire in line with its mandate and UN Security Council resolution 1975.

4. The EU affirms its willingness to support the rapid economic reconstruction of the country. In order to assist the re-launch of the economy of Côte d'Ivoire and in response to the public request of President Ouattara, the Council has decided to lift restrictive measures on the ports of Abidjan and San Pedro, the Ivorian Refining Company and the Coffee and Cocoa Trade Management Committee with immediate effect. In consultation with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, it will consider lifting further measures to reflect the changing circumstances. The EU is preparing a comprehensive recovery package, in consultation with President Ouattara's Government, using the full range of its instruments. It will resume its development assistance programmes in full as soon as possible and will examine the possibility of delivering some quick-disbursing assistance to meet immediate needs.

5. The EU remains seriously concerned at the humanitarian situation in the country and its impact on neighbouring countries, in particular Liberia. The EU will work closely with the UN and other international agencies to alleviate the suffering of those displaced by the conflict or in need of essential supplies where they live. In addition to the EUR 30 million already provided by the Commission and bilateral contributions of Member States, the EU is committed to providing further humanitarian assistance as required. It is essential to ensure a secure humanitarian space for the urgent and efficient delivery of humanitarian aid.

6. The EU deeply regrets the unnecessary loss of life and destruction of economic prosperity that has accompanied the current crisis. It is important not merely for Côte d'Ivoire but for the whole region that, with the restoration of accountable government, the country can re-establish its stability, peace and prosperity, so that shat-

tered lives can be re-built, families be re-united and normal life be resumed. The EU will continue to work with all countries of the region to reduce poverty, stimulate growth and support accountable government and the respect of human rights.’

On 8 April, the Council lifted the EU assets freeze on the ports of Abidjan and San Pedro, the Ivorian Refining Company and the Coffee and Cocoa Trade Management Committee. The decision and regulation are published in the Official Journal of the EU today.

Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 348/2011 of 8 April 2011 implementing Regulation (EC) No 560/2005 imposing certain specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities in view of the situation in Côte d’Ivoire.

Council Implementing Decision 2011/230/CFSP of 8 April 2011 implementing Decision 2010/656/CFSP renewing the restrictive measures against Côte d’Ivoire.

Horn of Africa

EUTM Somalia extended

Brussels, 28 July 2011, 13303/11

The Council adopted today a decision extending for a year EUTM Somalia, the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) military mission that contributes to the training of Somali Security Forces.

Under the decision, Colonel Michael Beary is appointed EU Mission Commander with effect from 9 August 2011 and the mission will provide two six-month training periods.

The mission, first launched in February 2010 under the command of Colonel Ricardo Gonzales Elul, will continue to contribute to the development of the Somali security sector through the provision of military training to the National Security Forces (NSF).

The Somali Transitional Federal Government has expressed its appreciation for the EU's support and reiterated Somalia's full commitment to building a command and control structure for the NSF, to protect the civilian population and to integrate different militias and clan forces into the NSF.

Other members of the international community, particularly the United Nations, the African Union, the United States of America and Uganda have also stated their satisfaction with the support provided by EUTM Somalia in the build-up to a professional and unified Somali NSF.

Training will now focus in particular on developing the command and control structures, specialised capabilities and self-training capacities of the Somali NSF, with a view to transferring EU training expertise to local actors. It will continue to take place mainly in Uganda. Elements of EUTM Somalia will also be based in Nairobi and Brussels.

The Decision enters into force on the day of its adoption, which is by written procedure.

The EU's contribution in the area of training of Somali security forces is part of a comprehensive EU approach to the situation in Somalia, that links political, security and development engagement. To that end, the EU is currently exploring further actions in support of the maritime capacity development in Somalia and the region. The EU will also continue to help stabilize Somalia by providing support to vital and priority areas such as development, assistance to the population and capacity-building support, in addition to ongoing EU counter piracy operation EUNAVFOR-Atalanta and humanitarian assistance. The EU gives priority to activities that promote peace and recovery for the Somali people.

PRESS RELEASE, 3124th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Brussels, 14 November 2011, 16756/11

The Council debated the situation in the Horn of Africa and in Somalia.

The Council adopted a strategic framework for the Horn of Africa, which is to guide EU action for greater peace, stability, security, prosperity and accountable government in the region. The strategic framework sets out five areas for EU action: building robust and accountable political structures; contributing to conflict resolution and prevention; mitigating security threats emanating from the region; promoting economic growth, and supporting regional economic cooperation.

Horn of Africa

The Council adopted the following conclusions on the Horn of Africa:

1. 'Underlining the importance attached by the EU to its relations with the Horn of Africa, the Council has adopted today a Strategic Framework to guide the EU's engagement in the region. It welcomes the High Representative's proposal to appoint an EU Special Representative (EUSR) for the Horn of Africa, focusing in the first instance on Somalia, the regional dimension of the conflict and piracy, and looks forward to the development of action plans to support implementation of the Strategic Framework.
2. The EU's long-term commitment to the Horn of Africa is rooted in the region's geo-strategic importance, the EU's desire to support the welfare of the people of the Horn and to help lift them from poverty into self-sustaining economic growth. Instability in the region poses a growing challenge not only to the security of its

peoples but also to the rest of the world. Continued EU engagement will be in support of both regional efforts, including through the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU), and national efforts to achieve lasting peace, security and justice, good governance based on the democratic principles of inclusion, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The Strategic Framework also recognises the need to protect European citizens from the threats that emanate from some parts of the region, including terrorism, piracy and the proliferation of the arms. It also identifies a number of common challenges such as climate change and migration.

3. The EU remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian crisis affecting several countries in the Horn of Africa. Building on existing support provided to date (over €760 million), the EU will continue to provide neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations and calls for increased assistance from and coordination of all donors. The Council calls on all parties to ensure safe and unhindered access by humanitarian actors in accordance with international humanitarian principles.

4. The Council highlights the need to address the underlying causes of the current humanitarian crisis, in particular structural food insecurity, recurrent drought and conflict. The EU will continue to support the countries of the region in strengthening their national capacities through disaster risk reduction strategies and long-term development cooperation programmes in the areas of drought-preparedness, agriculture, rural development and food security. The effectiveness of such support is, however, dependent upon local ownership and the political commitment of the countries of the region to put structural policies in place to support sustainable agricultural and livestock production, including cross-border movements, natural resource management, in particular water resources, as well as trade and regional integration.

5. Piracy off the coast of Somalia continues to negatively impact on international maritime security and regional and international economic activities. The Council remains committed to the commendable work of the EU naval counter-piracy operation, EUNAVFOR Atalanta, which provides protection to World Food Programme and AMISOM shipping, and contributes to deterring piracy and protecting vulnerable shipping. The EU will advance work to enhance the capacity of Somalia and the wider Horn of Africa region to fight piracy, including through further strengthening of maritime capacities as well as prosecution and detention capacities. The EU will continue to work towards the tracking of financial flows from piracy. The EUSR

for the Horn of Africa will contribute to developing and implementing a coherent, effective and balanced EU approach to piracy, encompassing all strands of EU action.

6. The Strategic Framework, in Annex, sets out the way in which the EU will pursue its strategic approach, working in partnership with the region itself and key international partners.’

[...]

Somalia

The Council adopted the following conclusions on Somalia:

1. ‘The EU remains concerned about the situation in Somalia and its regional implications and is actively engaged in alleviating the consequences of the worsening humanitarian situation, restoring security and contributing to peace, development and internal reconciliation in the country. The famine has expanded to six regions of southern Somalia, including Mogadishu, and threatens to further expand across the south affecting nearly half of the population. The EU appeals to all concerned that international humanitarian actors should be given free and safe access to all in need of assistance. The EU will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable population and encourages others to do so.

2. The EU condemns the continued attacks on Somali civilians by Al Shabaab, including the bomb attacks of 4 and 18 October in Mogadishu. It is particularly concerned about the extension of such attacks to neighbouring countries, including Kenya, and the kidnap of European citizens and calls for their immediate release. Such attacks threaten not just neighbouring countries but the international community as a whole. The EU supports efforts to counter the threat of such attacks, consistent with international law; in this respect the EU reminds all parties of their obligations to protect civilians and safeguard humanitarian access in full accordance with international humanitarian principles. Recalling that military action alone will not create lasting security in Somalia, the EU underlines the need for coordination of all military and security actions in Somalia with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the Inter-Governmental Agency for Development (IGAD), the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) to ensure that military action against Al Shabaab is consolidated in the context of a sound civil and political strategy able to ensure a sustainable peace.

3. The EU reaffirms its commitment to continue political and financial support for AMISOM and encourages AU efforts to secure additional donors. It praises the commitment and bravery of the AMISOM peacekeeping troops who, together with the security forces of the TFG, have paid a high price to help build security in Mogadishu. The EU encourages AMISOM and the TFG forces to continue their efforts to prevent civilian casualties and to further develop their capacities to protect civilians and their human rights. The EU underlines that its support must be matched by complementary political efforts by the TFG, including initiatives to demonstrate peace dividends to people in safe, freed areas of the Somali capital.

4. Consistent with its commitment to assist the development of the Somali security sector, the EU has recently decided to extend the EU training mission (EUTM Somalia) for the provision of military training to the National Security Forces (NSF) of Somalia, with a special emphasis on the strengthening of the chain of command and self-training capacities of the NSF. The mandate will be carried out in cooperation with the TFG, Uganda, AMISOM, the US and others. The EU commends the efforts and commitment of the first intake of trained Somali soldiers in the recent security developments in Mogadishu.

5. The EU welcomes the outcome of the consultative meeting held in Mogadishu from 4 to 6 September, where key Somali leaders including representatives of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), of the regions of Puntland and Galmudug, as well as of the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a group signed together a "Roadmap for Ending the Transition".

6. The EU will continue to participate actively in the Technical Committee established to monitor progress on the Roadmap and reiterates that the pace and degree of such progress will determine the extent of continued or additional EU support to the TFIs.

7. Recalling the recommendations of the International Contact Group meeting on Somalia in Copenhagen, 29-30 September, the EU appeals to all signatories of the Roadmap to implement the agreed tasks emphasising: a viable constitutional process, a sustained attempt at reconciliation; effective parliamentary reform, the development and implementation of a National Security and Stabilisation Plan as well as an effective maritime security and counter piracy policy. The EU recognizes that these tasks are interdependent and it is committed to provide targeted support for their full implementation, provided the TFIs demonstrate the political will to deliver effectively, improve financial transparency and accountability, and take effective action to tackle corruption. The EU is concerned about the pace at which the

Roadmap is being implemented and urges the TFIs to immediately implement the priority transitional tasks.

8. The EU stresses, in particular, the importance of a credible and inclusive constitutional consultation process leading to a constitutional framework being in place by the end of the transition period, i.e. August 2012. The successful conclusion of the political transition process will require full, transparent and broad-based Somali ownership. The EU notes the potential challenges in involving an increasing number of internally displaced persons in the consultation process. In this context, the EU encourages the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to pursue a process of outreach and reconciliation with local and regional actors, civil society including women, religious and community leaders as well as other groups who are willing to engage constructively in the process to return the rule of law and constitutional government to Somalia.

9. In addition the EU calls on the TFG to do all it can to combat terrorism and commits to support the TFG in these efforts.

10. Already the largest donor to Somalia, the EU is increasing its development assistance to central, regional and local actors to consolidate a civilian strategy to build stable and accountable governance, improved livelihood opportunities and the provision of basic services. Regions of Somalia such as Puntland, Somaliland, as well as other local actors, including Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, will be further supported by the EU as long as they continue to make progress in providing services, enhancing the Somali reconciliation process, combating Al Shabaab and developing their cooperation with the TFIs and other regional actors. The EU will ensure that its efforts in these regions are coordinated with other international actors.

11. The EU also underlines the need for a comprehensive approach to address piracy, including through capacity building in the maritime, judicial and penitentiary sectors, with a special emphasis on Somalia. To this end, it encourages the strengthening of cooperation between the TFG and the regions of Puntland, Galmudug and Somaliland.

12. The EU calls for further efforts to streamline and strengthen the coordination of all actors and international donors to Somalia. The establishment of the proposed Joint TFG-Donor Financial Management Board needs urgent attention.

13. The Council considers a sustained presence in Mogadishu will facilitate support to the Somali peace process, and invites the HR and the European Commission to examine how this may be assured in ways compatible with the security situation.'

Fight against piracy: Council launches EU action to strengthen maritime capacities in the Horn of Africa

Brussels, 12 December 2011, 18321/3/11 REV 3

The Council today approved the concept for a new Common Security and Defence Policy mission to support regional maritime capacity building in the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean states. This decision kicks off operational planning for the mission.

The mission is part of the EU's comprehensive approach to fight piracy and instability in the region. Its objective is to strengthen the capacity of states in the region to effectively govern their territorial waters and to reinforce their capacity to fight piracy.

The new mission has two main tasks: strengthening the sea-going maritime capacities in the countries in the region (with the exception of Somalia) and, in Somalia, the training of a coastal police force as well as the training and protection of judges. Specific activities to execute those tasks are to give expert advice on legal, policy and operational matters concerning maritime security; coast guard training to develop the ability to enforce laws on the sea; and procurement of the necessary equipment.

Support will be offered to Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania, the Seychelles as well as to Somalia, in particular to the regions of Puntland, Somaliland and Galmudug. Training is to take place both in the Djibouti regional training centre as well as in the countries concerned.

The mission is embedded in the recently adopted EU strategic framework for the Horn of Africa, setting out priority actions for the EU in that region. It is also complementary with two other CDSP missions in the region: EUNAVFOR Atalanta, contributing to the repression of piracy and to the protection of food aid shipments, and EUTM Somalia, training Somali security forces.

The actual start of operations is subject to a separate Council decision.

Middle East

Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the Israeli decision to expedite settlement activity

Brussels, 2 November 2011, A 442/11

I am deeply concerned by the latest Israeli decisions to expedite settlement activities in response to Palestinian accession to UNESCO.

Israeli settlement activity is illegal under international law including in East Jerusalem and an obstacle to peace. We have stated this many times before.

We call on Israel to reverse this decision and call on both sides to continue their engagement with the Quartet on advancing peace efforts.

Council reinforces restrictive measures concerning Iran

Brussels, 1 December 2011, 17877/11

Given the EU's increasing concerns over the Iranian nuclear programme and the lack of progress in diplomatic efforts, the Council has today strengthened the EU restrictive measures against that country.

The Council added 143 entities and 37 persons to the list of those subject to a freeze of their assets and economic resources in the EU and to a ban from entering the Union.

The measures target entities and individuals directly involved in Iran's nuclear activities, which are in violation of UN Security Council resolutions; entities and individuals owned, controlled or acting on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Line; and members of as well as entities controlled by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.

Today's measures come in addition to already existing EU restrictive measures, adopted in response to concerns about Iran's proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities.

Asia & Pacific

EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 24/25 MARCH 2011, CONCLUSIONS

Brussels, 20 April 2011, EUCO 10/1/11

We express our deepest condolences for the large-scale loss of life in Japan and our solidarity with the Japanese people and government. The thoughts of EU citizens are with the many thousands of bereaved families and the hundreds of thousands of people who now have to rebuild their lives and communities. We commend the swift and decisive action taken by the Japanese authorities. Recalling the enduring friendship and close political and economic relations that link the EU to Japan, we are determined to stand by Japan as it strives to overcome the challenges it faces.

[...]

27. The European Union will support Japan as it strives to overcome the challenges it faces after the earthquake and the tsunami that struck it with such tragic consequences.

28. Following an initial request from the Japanese government, it is mobilising relief supplies for the affected population. It stands ready to provide further support if requested. More generally, the EU is interested in developing its cooperation with Japan on disaster relief.

29. The European Union commends the swift and decisive action taken by the Japanese authorities in response to disorder on financial markets. It welcomes the action taken by the G7 on the yen. It stands ready to cooperate fully with Japan to address the economic and financial consequences of these events, including in the framework of the G8 and the G20.

30. Looking to the future, the European Council reiterates the strategic importance of the EU/Japan relationship. The forthcoming summit must be used to strengthen this relationship and bring forward our common agenda, including through the potential launch of negotiations for a free trade agreement on the basis that Japan is willing to tackle inter alia the issue of non-tariff barriers and restrictions on public procurement.

31. In this connection, the European Council stresses the need to fully draw the lessons from these events, and to provide all necessary information to the public. Recalling that the energy mix is the competence of Member States, it calls for work to be taken forward as a matter of priority on the following aspects:

- the safety of all EU nuclear plants should be reviewed, on the basis of a comprehensive and transparent risk and safety assessment (“stress tests”); the European Nuclear Safety Regulatory Group (ENSREG) and the Commission are invited to develop as soon as possible the scope and modalities of these tests in a coordinated framework in the light of lessons learned from the accident in Japan and with the full involvement of Member States, making full use of available expertise (notably from the Western European Nuclear Regulators Association); the assessments will be conducted by independent national authorities and through peer review; their outcome and any necessary subsequent measures that will be taken should be shared with the Commission and within the ENSREG and should be made public; the European Council will assess initial findings by the end of 2011, on the basis of a report from the Commission;
- the priority of ensuring the safety of nuclear plants obviously cannot stop at our borders; the EU will request that similar “stress tests” be carried out in the neighbouring countries and worldwide, regarding both existing and planned plants; in this regard full use should be made of relevant international organisations;
- the highest standards for nuclear safety should be implemented and continuously improved in the EU and promoted internationally;
- the Commission will review the existing legal and regulatory framework for the safety of nuclear installations and will propose by the end of 2011 any improvements that may be necessary. Member States should ensure the full implementation of the Directive on the safety of nuclear installations. The proposed Directive on the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste should be adopted as soon as possible. The Commission is invited to reflect on how to promote nuclear safety in neighbouring countries;
- consequences for the world and for the EU need to be closely monitored, paying particular attention to the volatility of energy and commodity prices, in particular in the context of the G20.

Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton following the death of Democratic People's Republic of Korea leader Kim Jong Il

Brussels, 20 December 2011, A 525/11

In its dealings with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the well-being of the people of that country has always been of paramount importance for the EU.

It is my hope that the new leadership will work to improve the situation of the country, in particular by taking early steps to reduce tensions, pursue dialogue, fulfil previous commitments and improve the economic situation.

The EU is ready to continue working with its international partners and with the DPRK in pursuit of these goals.

The EU Neighbourhood

Joint Communication to the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean.

Brussels, 8 March 2011, COM(2011) 200 final

INTRODUCTION

The events unfolding in our southern neighbourhood are of historic proportions. They reflect a profound transformation process and will have lasting consequences not only for the people and countries of the region but also for the rest of the world and the EU in particular. The changes now underway carry the hope of a better life for the people of the region and for greater respect of human rights, pluralism, rule of law and social justice – universal values that we all share. Movement towards full democracy is never an easy path – there are risks and uncertainties associated with these transitions. While acknowledging the difficulties the EU has to take the clear and strategic option of supporting the quest for the principles and values that it cherishes. For these reasons the EU must not be a passive spectator. It needs to support wholeheartedly the wish of the people in our neighbourhood to enjoy the same freedoms that we take as our right. European countries have their own experience of democratic transition. The European Union has a proud tradition of supporting countries in transition from autocratic regimes to democracy, first in the South and more recently in Central and Eastern Europe. While respecting what are primarily internal transformation processes, the EU can offer expertise - that of governments, the European Institutions (European Commission and European Parliament), local and regional authorities, political parties, foundations, trade unions and civil society organizations. There is a shared interest in a democratic, stable, prosperous and peaceful Southern Mediterranean.

We believe that now is the time for a qualitative step forward in the relations between the EU and its Southern neighbours. This new approach should be rooted

unambiguously in a joint commitment to common values. The demand for political participation, dignity, freedom and employment opportunities expressed in recent weeks can only be addressed through faster and more ambitious political and economic reforms. The EU is ready to support all its Southern neighbours who are able and willing to embark on such reforms through a **‘Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity’**. The commitment to democracy, human rights, social justice, good governance and the rule of law must be shared. The Partnership must be based on concrete progress in these areas. It must be a **differentiated approach**. Despite some commonalities, no country in the region is the same so we must react to the specificities of each of them.

A **‘Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity’** should be built on the following three elements:

- democratic transformation and institution-building, with a particular focus on fundamental freedoms, constitutional reforms, reform of the judiciary and the fight against corruption
- a stronger partnership with the people, with specific emphasis on support to civil society and on enhanced opportunities for exchanges and people-to-people contacts with a particular focus on the young
- sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development especially support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), vocational and educational training, improving health and education systems and development of the poorer regions.

This Communication explains what the EU has done to address the short-term consequences of recent events in North Africa. It then spells out our approach to the longer term process of turning into reality the tremendous hopes that have been voiced in the region. It will be developed by listening, not only to requests for support from partner governments, but also to demands expressed by civil society.

A radically changing political landscape in the Southern Mediterranean requires a change in the EU's approach to the region – the underlying themes of differentiation, conditionality and of a partnership between our societies are part of the ongoing review of the European Neighbourhood Policy on which we will present a joint Communication in April.

1. OUR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

- Humanitarian aid (EUR 30 million)
- Facilitating consular cooperation and evacuation
- Frontex joint operations
- Drawing on the EUR 25 million EU External Borders Fund and European Refugee Fund
- High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP) visits to Tunisia and Egypt; international co-ordination meeting in Brussels
- Support for Democratic transition

Our first concern has been to respond rapidly and effectively to the immediate challenges of the evolving situation in our Southern Neighbourhood and to address and pre-empt the risks of further bloodshed and hardship.

EUR 30 million has been made available in **humanitarian aid** by the Commission to tackle the most immediate humanitarian needs in Libya and of displaced persons at the Tunisian and Egyptian borders. With this aid, we are providing medical and food aid, shelter and other necessities. Commission experts are on the ground and contingency planning is taking place to ensure a rapid response in case the situation deteriorates further. Vigilance is necessary as the humanitarian crisis threatens to escalate to neighbouring countries both in the Maghreb and sub Saharan Africa as people flee from Libya. The Commission will increase financial support if needs on the ground so require it and we encourage EU Member States to continue to respond in a similar fashion.

Close consular cooperation has been maintained between all Member States and the EU and appropriate EU mechanisms, including the Situation Centre in the EEAS, have been activated to allow rapid exchange of information and most effective use of resources. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism (MIC) was activated on 23 February to facilitate the evacuation of EU citizens by way of an air and sea bridge. The EU Military Staff has been supporting this overall effort. The Commission is cooperating

with international organisations (UNHCR, International Organisation for Migration, IOM) to help people who want to leave Libya get back to their home countries. Use of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) instruments for strengthening the short-term action could be considered.

The Commission has mobilised its instruments to support Italy, and other Member States if needed, in case a massive influx of migrants from North Africa were to materialise. This response includes operational measures and financial assistance. The **Frontex** joint operation HERMES 2011 was launched on 20 February, with assets and experts from a number of Member States. If required, Frontex operations could be strengthened to help deal with possible new inflows. The Commission is ready to mobilise i.a. financial assistance from funds such as the External Borders Fund and European Refugee Fund which amount to EUR 25 million in total.

In **Tunisia**, EUR 17 million was allocated for immediate and short-term support for democratic transition and assistance to impoverished inland areas. This includes support to establish an appropriate legal framework for the holding of **elections** and for an EU Election Observation Mission in support of the work of the National Commission for Constitutional Reform and Elections. It also covers additional support for civil society. Further support for democratic reform will be provided through the Instrument for Stability. Following her visits to Tunisia and Egypt, the HR/VP convened an international meeting on 23 February providing the opportunity to compare notes with main partners and major International Financial Institutions (IFIs) on developments in the region. The meeting reconfirmed that the efforts of the international community must be closely coordinated and aligned with and guided by the priorities expressed by the Tunisians and the Egyptians themselves.

For **Egypt**, it would be premature to announce a support package until the authorities are ready to make a request for assistance and define priority needs. The EU is ready to mobilise support in line with those priorities when they are ready.

In **Libya**, the EU has been firm in its condemnation of the acts perpetrated by the Gaddafi regime. It immediately suspended negotiations of the EU-Libya framework agreement and all technical cooperation.. In addition to the UN sanctions, on 28 February the EU adopted further restrictive measures such as an embargo on equipment which might be used for internal repression and autonomous designations under the travel restrictions and assets freeze. Additional measures have been proposed.

2. ADAPTING OUR APPROACH

- Reviewing and adjusting EU Neighbourhood Policy
- Moving towards advanced status in Association Agreements
- Enhancing political dialogue

The EU response to the changes taking place in the region needs to be more focused, innovative and ambitious, addressing the needs of the people and the realities on the ground. Political and economic reforms must go hand-in-hand and help deliver political rights and freedoms, accountability and participation. The EU should be ready to offer greater support to those countries ready to work on such a common agenda, but also reconsider support when countries depart from this track.

This new approach, a **‘Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity’** represents a fundamental step change in the EU’s relationship with those partners that commit themselves to specific, measurable reforms. It is an **incentive-based approach** based on more differentiation (“more for more”): those that go further and faster with reforms will be able to count on greater support from the EU. Support will be reallocated or refocused for those who stall or retrench on agreed reform plans.

More concretely, closer political co-operation means advancing towards higher standards of human rights and governance based on a set of minimum benchmarks against which performance will be assessed. **A commitment to adequately monitored, free and fair elections should be the entry qualification for the Partnership.** It also means closer cooperation in the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and more joint work in international fora on issues of common interest. The EU will continue to offer its commitment and support to the peaceful resolution of disputes within and between States in the region. The Partnership should be underpinned by enhanced political dialogue. The EU will step up bilateral political dialogue at all levels, as soon as local conditions allow, with a strong focus on human rights and political accountability.

Partner countries carrying out the necessary reforms can expect to **resume negotiations** on Association Agreements with the aim of achieving “advanced status” which allows for significantly strengthened political dialogue and increased links between the partner country and EU institutions. This will encompass deeper engagement on mobility and improved market access to the EU.

3. DEMOCRACY AND INSTITUTION BUILDING

- Expanding support to civil society
- Establishing a Civil Society Neighbourhood Facility
- Support Social Dialogue Forum

The EU is ready to support the democratic and constitutional reform processes. Judicial reform, enhanced transparency and the fight against corruption are of particular importance in this process, both to encourage foreign and domestic economic investment and to demonstrate to people a visible change in their daily lives. We are ready to make expertise available, through instruments such as twinning and TAIEX, to support capacity building with a particular focus on strengthening government institutions that can ensure the consolidation of change, including at regional and local level. Our expertise in electoral assistance will also be fully mobilised to accompany the electoral processes in Tunisia and, if requested by the authorities in Egypt.

A thriving **civil society** can help uphold human rights and contribute to democracy building and good governance, playing an important role in checking government excesses. A range of non-government (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) can provide much-needed support for the reforms and involvement in areas close to citizens' concerns such as human rights, the environment, social and economic development. This is an area where we should seek to maximize the assistance that Member States can offer at short notice to develop a platform for civil society, political parties, trade unions and associations. This could be set up with EU funding and with the support of EU political parties, trade unions, foundations and relevant NGOs. Women have played an important role in the changes in the region and gender aspects will play an important role in future EU support.

The April review of the European Neighbourhood Policy will make proposals for the reinforcement of the EU's support to civil society organisations in our neighbourhood. This will include dedicated support for civil society (a **Civil Society Neighbourhood Facility**) aimed at developing the advocacy capacity of CSOs and increasing their ability to monitor reform and participate effectively in policy dialogues.

Social dialogue between trade unions and employers plays an important role in sustaining reform efforts. New trade unions and employers associations are now

emerging. This provides an opportunity for more effective social dialogue. It should be supported through the Euro-Mediterranean Social Dialogue Forum which will facilitate exchange between the Mediterranean social partners on key employment and social issues and will support capacity building.

The EU is already supporting public administration reform aimed at streamlining and strengthening of basic policy processes, budget formulation and the capacity to raise domestic funding through efficient, fair and sustainable tax systems and administrations. With a view to supporting better the fight against corruption and illicit financial flows and to improving sound financial management, these programmes should also target transparency and accountability in public administration.

4. TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF MOBILITY

- Conclude Mobility Partnerships
- Reinforce local Schengen cooperation
- Make full use of improvements in EU Visa Code

People-to-people contacts are important to promote mutual understanding as well as business, which will benefit the cultural and economical development of the entire Mediterranean region and the integration of migrants in the EU.

A key element in this is the strengthening of **capacity building** in the Mediterranean countries on borders/migration/asylum and more effective law enforcement cooperation to improve security throughout the Mediterranean.

Mobility Partnerships should be launched with partner countries. They aim to provide a comprehensive framework to ensure that the movement of persons between the EU and a third country is well-managed. They cover initiatives such as visa and legal migration arrangements; legal frameworks for (economic) migration; capacity building to manage remittances and for efficient matching of labour demands and needs, return and reintegration programmes, upgrading of the asylum systems to EU standards etc. In return for increased mobility, partners must be ready to undertake increasing capacity building and provide appropriate financial support for border management, preventing and fighting against irregular migration and trafficking in human beings, including through enhanced maritime surveillance; the return of irregular migrants (return arrangements and readmission agreements)

and for enhancing the capacity and abilities of law enforcement authorities to effectively fight trans-border organised crime and corruption.

In the short-term, the Commission will work with Member States on **legal migration legislation and visa policy to support the goal of enhanced mobility, in particular for students, researchers and business persons**. Cooperation under Local Schengen Cooperation should be reinforced and full use should be made of practical improvements and flexibilities for visa applicants within the EU Visa Code, including the issuing of multiple entry visas to bona fide travellers and specific groups (such as researchers, students and business persons). The negotiation of short stay visa facilitation agreements with Southern Mediterranean Countries should be envisaged following a differentiated, evidence-based approach. Financial support will be provided, if needed. **The Commission calls on the colegislators to adopt rapidly the Directives on third country seasonal workers and intracorporate transferees, which will also contribute to enhancing mobility to the EU.**

In the long-term, provided that visa facilitation and readmission agreements are effectively implemented, gradual steps towards visa liberalisation for individual partner countries could be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the overall relationship with the partner country concerned and provided that conditions for well-managed and secure mobility are in place.

5. PROMOTING INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Promote Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) and Job Creation
- Seek agreement of Member States to increase EIB lending by EUR 1 billion
- Work with other shareholders to extend the EBRD mandate to countries of the region
- Promote job creation and training

The unrest in several Southern Mediterranean countries is clearly linked to economic weaknesses. Many of the economies are characterised by an unequal distribution of wealth, insufficient social and economic reform, limited job creation, weak education and training systems which do not produce the skills needed on the labour market. as well as low level of regional trade integration.

There is a need for the countries of the region to re-invigorate their economies to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth, development of poorer regions and job creation. Small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) have a critical role to play in job creation. To thrive, they need a sound regulatory framework, conducive to business and entrepreneurship. The EU is ready to support this through policy dialogue and cooperation under the Euro Med industrial work programme. This should be accompanied by integrated employment and social policies, including matching of training initiatives and labour market needs, social dialogue, provision of social safety-nets and transformation of the informal sector.

The International Financing Institutions (IFIs) can contribute to this effort. Funding could come from the European Investment Bank (EIB) and, if other non-EU shareholders agree, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The EIB has been active in the region for over 30 years, its operations being implemented under the umbrella of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP). FEMIP is active in nine countries in the Southern Mediterranean, focussing on investments in infrastructure and support for the private sector. In addition to accelerating the implementation and approval of projects currently in the pipeline, the EIB could provide around EUR 6 billion to the Mediterranean region in the coming three years **if the Council approves the additional lending envelope** of EUR 1 billion which was recently proposed by the European Parliament. **The Commission supports this increase in the lending mandate and calls on the Council to reach an agreement rapidly on the increase.**

The Council is also invited to adopt the Commission proposal of May 2008 on EIB reflows. This would allow the EIB and other financial intermediaries to re-invest funds under FEMIP reflowing from previous financing operations in favour of the private sector. In the immediate future this arrangement would generate approximately EUR 120 million now and up to EUR 200 million by 2013.

The EBRD, not currently active in the Southern Mediterranean, could extend operations if the Bank's statutes were amended. If agreed by all shareholders this could allow an annual EBRD business activity of an initial EUR 1 billion to be reached with the Bank's existing resources. **The Commission supports the extension of EBRD operations and calls on EU Member States and other shareholder governments to support it urgently.**

These initiatives will not come at the expense of lending to other countries of operation in the Eastern neighbourhood for example.

6. ENSURING MAXIMUM IMPACT OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT

- Adopt Pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin
- Approve rapidly agreements on agricultural and fisheries products
- Speed up negotiations on trade in services
- Negotiate Deep Free Trade Areas

Trade and investment are engines for growth and help to reduce poverty. They bring people together, securing ties between nations and contributing to political stability. However, for trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to deliver their potential, they must be embedded in a sound business climate, which, in turn, requires a strengthening of the rule of law and the judiciary, tackling corruption and overhauling administrative procedures.

The countries in the region are at different stages in their trade and investment relations with the EU. Some (Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan) are relatively well advanced; others (Syria, Algeria, Libya) much less. The EU has free trade agreements with the whole of the region except for Syria and Libya. These agreements provide free market access for industrial products. The EU has recently upgraded preferential market access for agricultural and fisheries products, with Egypt and Jordan in particular, and several other agreements in this field are being negotiated or at the approval stage, for example, with Morocco. With Morocco, there has also been an exchange of offers to liberalise services, but the issue of labour mobility is a major stumbling block.

The EU's measures in support of trade and investment should best be calibrated to the situation in each country, including the pace and breadth of reforms more generally, also given the current level of volatility in the region. In the short to medium term, the EU could set itself the following goals to.

- accelerate the conclusion and EU approval of trade liberalisation agreements, notably on agricultural and fisheries products with Tunisia and Morocco;
- launch negotiations on agreements on conformity assessment and acceptance of industrial products;
- accelerate on-going bilateral negotiations on the liberalisation of trade in services (including visa facilitation for persons from specific professional categories);

- conclude the single regional **Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin** in 2011. This should be accompanied by a rapid revision of the rules of origin themselves. A point of reference for these reforms is the recently adopted regime for GSP beneficiaries. **The Commission calls on the Council to adopt urgently its pending proposals on the single regional Convention, after consultation with the European Parliament.**

In the medium to long term, the common objective which has been agreed in both regional and bilateral discussions with Southern Mediterranean partners is the establishment of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas, building on the current Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements and on the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans. They should form part of a broader comprehensive package in support of democratic and economic reforms. Negotiations should be started with countries that are clearly engaged in such a process of political and economic transformation. Beyond the mere elimination of import duties, these agreements should foster, in a progressive manner, closer integration between the economies of our Southern Mediterranean partners and the EU single market and would include actions such as regulatory convergence. Particular priority should be given to measures in areas such as competition policy, public procurement, investment protection, sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

7. ENHANCING SECTORAL CO-OPERATION

- Establish an EU-South Mediterranean Energy Community
- Launch an Agricultural/rural development support programme
- Increase participation in education programmes
- Develop the Internet and other communication technologies

The Southern Mediterranean is strategically important for the EU in terms of **security of gas and oil supplies** from some of the countries but also more broadly in terms of transit from the region and beyond. There is clear potential for building an EU-Mediterranean partnership in the production and management of renewables, in particular solar and wind energy, and in having a joined-up approach to ensuring energy security. Joint renewable energy investments in the Southern Mediterranean in line with the EU's 2050 decarbonisation scenario could offer the possibility of a new partnership provided that the right market perspective is created for electricity imports.

It is desirable to open a credible perspective for the integration of the Southern Mediterranean in the EU internal energy market based on a differentiated and gradual approach. In the mid to long term, this would mean establishing a form of ‘EU-Southern Mediterranean Energy Community’ starting with the Maghreb countries and possibly expanding progressively to the Mashreq. Extending the Energy Community Treaty with the Union’s Eastern and South-Eastern neighbours, or building on its experience, this community should cover relevant parts of the EU’s energy legislation with a view to promoting a real and reliable convergence of South Mediterranean partners’ energy policies with EU policy.

Education should be a key focus of EU activities in the region. Tackling high levels of illiteracy is key to promoting democracy and ensuring a qualified workforce to help modernise the Southern Mediterranean economies. Exchanges at university level are valuable, and fuller use should be made of Erasmus Mundus, Euromed Youth and Tempus to increase substantially the number of persons from Southern Mediterranean partner countries participating in these programmes. Vocational Education and Training (VET) also has an important role to play in addressing disparities. This should include the identification of the key strategic components on an integrated VET policy by organising national debates with key stakeholders. Exchanges of best practices on programmes enhancing the skills of unemployed people should also be encouraged.

Tourism is a key component of GDP in many of the countries in the South Mediterranean. The EU should seek to extend its existing initiatives “European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN)”, promoting sustainable tourism models and Calypso, promoting off-season tourism to these countries. The protection and promotion of cultural diversity is important and the EU is committed to further develop cultural initiatives with the South Mediterranean region.

Recent events in the Southern Mediterranean combined with rising food prices have demonstrated the urgency for the EU to help its partner countries to improve the efficiency and productivity of its **agricultural sector** and assuring the security of food supply. The Commission could support rural development through a new initiative – a **European Neighbourhood Facility for Agriculture and Rural Development**. The programme would build on EU best practice in developing rural areas. It would integrate investment support and building up of administrative capacities so as to facilitate the modernisation of the agricultural production aligned to EU quality and food safety standards. It could be developed in close cooperation with the FAO, World Bank and possibly EIB.

In the area of **transport**, cooperation should focus on modernising air traffic management and on improving aviation safety and security to create a Euro-Mediterranean Aviation Area. This will include extending the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay System (EGNOS) to the Mediterranean partners. Cooperation with the Mediterranean partners in the implementation of a Mediterranean Maritime Strategy should enhance maritime safety, security and surveillance.

The use of **electronic communications technologies** - on top of satellite broadcasting - greatly facilitated the wave of upheavals in the Mediterranean countries. The widespread use of mobile phones combined with social networking via internet - showed the importance of information society tools and technologies to the circulation of information. In countries where the circulation of information is partially restricted such tools can greatly contribute to the democratisation of societies and the creation of public opinion through the promotion of freedom of expression.

While some regulatory reforms have been undertaken, in many of the southern Mediterranean countries the regulatory environment is still insufficiently developed to exploit the full growth and productivity potentialities of the Information and Communications Technology sector. The main critical factors which remain to be addressed are the creation of truly open markets (which often remain quasi monopolies), the establishment of independent regulators, the creation of a level playing field and of competitive conditions for market players, efficient management of spectrum and safeguards of users' privacy and security.

Moreover, ensuring the security, stability and resilience of the Internet and of other electronic communication technologies is a fundamental building block in democracy. It is necessary to avoid arbitrarily depriving or disrupting citizen's access to them. Given the trans-border and interconnected nature of electronic communications technologies, including the Internet, any unilateral domestic intervention can have severe effects on other parts of the world. The Commission will develop tools to allow the EU, in appropriate cases, to assist civil society organisations or individual citizens to circumvent such arbitrary disruptions.

8. REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The dramatic events unfolding in the region may not be necessarily spread evenly across the region and effects of change may vary significantly. The regional dimension has taken on increased importance and regional cooperation will be important in mitigating negative spillovers.

Now, more than ever, changing dynamics in the region mean that urgent progress on the **Middle East peace process** is vital. The EU should also work in close co-operation with its partners in assisting political and social change in the region. Turkey in particular has a crucial role to play both as an important regional player and as a compelling case of multiparty democracy in a country with a predominantly Muslim population.

A fresh view of the regional situation demands that the positive elements of the Barcelona process together with those of the Union for the Mediterranean be integrated in a new approach. The regional co-operation which proved to be most effective was on projects that delivered concrete benefits – in environment, energy, in transport, in trade and in social dialogue.

Regional economic integration should be encouraged. The EU will support projects which promote freer trade between the countries of the region, regulatory approximation, a strengthening of economic governance as well as the infrastructures needed for increased regional trade.

The idea behind the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean was a positive one – that of a high level partnership between the two shores of the Mediterranean. However we have to recognise that its implementation did not deliver the results we expected. The UfM needs to reform to fully realise its potential. It needs to work more as a catalyst bringing States, International Financial Institutions and the private sector together around concrete projects generating the jobs, innovation and growth that are so badly needed in the region. It should help create the right conditions for progress in the Middle East Peace Process. But, one should not be conditional on the other. Partner countries' participation in these projects could follow the principle of variable geometry depending on their needs and interests. The High Representative and the Commission are ready to play a bigger role in the Union for the Mediterranean in line with the Lisbon Treaty.

9. EU FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Refocusing bilateral programmes of the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument
- Providing additional funding

Approximately EUR 4 billion is currently available for the period to the end of 2013 to support our Southern neighbours under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. The largest part of this assistance is delivered through bilateral assistance programmes. While many of the programmes underway or in the pipeline address the three priorities in the 'Partnership', the magnitude of recent changes in the region requires an extensive screening and the possible re-focussing of EU aid, in discussion with partner countries.

We have already made clear to both Tunisia and Egypt that we are ready to consider carefully full re-focussing of our bilateral programmes for 2011-13 (respectively EUR 240 and EUR 445 million) to better meet the current challenges and to ensure that our response meets peoples' legitimate aspirations. More generally, throughout the region, programmes will be screened in close cooperation and partnership with the beneficiary countries. We call on Member States to follow a similar screening exercise for their bilateral programmes to achieve maximum impact of EU aid. Within the present budgetary situation, we also consider that the present events will require unprecedented efforts to achieve maximum co-ordination and consistency between Member States' efforts, as well as with the EU. We will also continue to seek maximum interaction and co-ordination with International Financial Institutions.

The screening and re-focussing of assistance is the first step in providing support to help partner governments to consolidate reform and socio-economic development. While no meaningful needs assessment is yet possible, the reform process will require considerable support. This will come from the current EU budget¹.

Specific attention will also be paid to the encouragement of private sector investment from the EU into the southern Mediterranean. To this end, the Commission will continue to leverage loans from the EIB's FEMIP as well as from other IFIs, through the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) which provides grant sup-

1. Within Heading 4 of the 2007-2013 multiannual financial framework including, if necessary, through the Flexibility Instrument and Emergency Aid Reserve.

port for infrastructure investment and private sector development². **In view of the considerable contribution by the Commission to the Neighbourhood Investment Facility, Member States are encouraged to contribute to replenishing this instrument.**

Private foreign direct investment supported through such financial instruments should also benefit from strong investment protection provisions and the Commission will provide an information tool and develop an investment protection framework for European companies interested in investment in the southern Mediterranean.

Finally, macroeconomic assistance may be necessary for some countries which are likely to face short-term difficulties, resulting from the impact of the crisis on trade, investment and tourism flows as well as the disruption of domestic production. Should the IMF have lending programmes in place and provided that external financing needs are confirmed, the countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy would be eligible for **EU Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA)**.

10. CONCLUSIONS

These are first proposals to build a new partnership to support change in the Southern Mediterranean. Immediate and short term help should be accompanied by longer term assistance when each country is ready to indicate what it needs from its EU partners.

The European Union in its dual dimension of a community of democratic member states and a union of peoples has had to overcome historical hurdles. This success story was possible when hope triumphed over fear and freedom triumphed over repression. This is why there is deep understanding in the EU for the aspirations of the peoples in the Southern Neighbourhood. The EU wants to support them in building real democracies and peaceful and prosperous societies. Each country and people will of course choose their own path and make their own choices. It is rightly for them to decide and not for us to seek to impose solutions. This Communication underlines the determination of the EU in supporting them on their journey to a better future.

2. The potential of the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) in leveraging funds is huge. For the 2007-2010 period, NIF grants allocated to approved projects were leveraged by a factor of 17. This potential should be further exploited in the coming years.

Annex 1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Association Agreement

These refer to contractual relationships between the European Union (EU) and a non-EU country. Association Agreements may promote the establishment/strengthening of regular dialogue and close relations on political and security matters; gradual liberalisation of trade in goods, services and capital; economic cooperation with a view to encouraging economic and social development and regional economic integration; social, cultural and human dialogue. The legal base for the conclusion of the association agreements is provided by Article 217 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFUE). The Treaty on European Union (TEU) makes a specific reference to agreements with neighbouring countries in Article 8(2).

The concept of “advanced status” under the Association Agreements means a strengthening of political cooperation and new opportunities in economic and trade relations, progressive regulatory convergence as well as strengthened cooperation with certain European agencies and programmes.

Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)

A free trade agreement covering a wide array of trade-related issues (“comprehensive”) and aiming at eliminating ‘behind the border’ obstacles to trade through processes of regulatory approximation, thus partially opening/extending the EU internal market to the other party. It is currently offered only to ENP countries.

European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)

Proposed by the Commission in 2003-2004 as a framework policy through which an enlarged EU could strengthen and deepen relations with its 16 closest neighbours (Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine) with a view to counteracting risks of marginalisation for the neighbouring countries which had not participated in the historic 2004 enlargement and therefore ensuring the strengthening of a shared area of prosperity, stability and security. A review of the ENP is scheduled for adoption in April 2011.

ENP Action Plans

These documents are negotiated with and tailor-made for each country, based on the country's needs and capacities, as well as their and the EU's interests. They jointly define an agenda of political and economic reforms by means of short and medium-term (3-5 years) priorities. They cover political dialogue and reform, economic and social cooperation and development, trade-related issues and market and regulatory reform, cooperation in justice and home affairs, sectors (such as transport, energy, information society, environment, research and development) and a human dimension (people-to-people contacts, civil society, education, public health). The incentives on offer, in return for progress on relevant reforms, are greater integration into European programmes and networks, increased assistance and enhanced market access.

European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)

Since 2007 the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) is the legal base for assistance to ENP countries and Russia - supporting the agreed priorities in the ENP Action Plans, as well as the Strategic Partnership with Russia, replacing previous instruments for the Eastern Neighbours and Russia and for the Mediterranean Partners respectively.

Barcelona Process

Framework policy launched in 1995 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the then 15 EU members and 14 Mediterranean partners as the base for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which has evolved into the Union for the Mediterranean. The partnership was organised into three main dimensions: political and security dialogue; economic and financial partnership; social, cultural and human partnership. With the introduction of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004, the Barcelona Process essentially became the multilateral forum of dialogue and cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners while complementary bilateral relations are managed mainly under the ENP and through Association Agreements signed with each partner country.

Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP)

This facility brings together EIB loans guaranteed by the EU budget and other services provided by the European Investment Bank (EIB) to assist the economic development and the integration of the Mediterranean partner countries. Activities

are focused on two priority areas: support for the private sector and creating an investment-friendly environment.

European Investment Bank (EIB)

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is the European Union's financing institution. Its shareholders are the 27 Member States of the Union, which have jointly subscribed its capital. The EIB's role is to provide long-term finance in support of investment projects. Inside the European Union the EIB supports the EU's policy objectives in the following areas: small and medium-sized enterprises; cohesion and convergence; the fight against climate change; environmental protection and sustainable communities; sustainable, competitive and secure energy; the knowledge economy; trans-European networks. Outside the EU, the EIB is active in over 150 countries to implement the financial pillar of EU external cooperation and development policies (private sector development, infrastructure development, security of energy supply, and environmental sustainability).

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (ERBD)

established in 1991 in response to major changes in the political and economic climate in central and eastern Europe, the ERBD is an international financial institution that supports projects from central Europe to central Asia by investing primarily in private sector clients whose needs cannot be fully met by the market, with a view to fostering transition towards open and democratic market economies. Its area of operations has been recently extended to Turkey.

FRONTEX

Is the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union. Based in Warsaw, it is a specialised and independent body tasked to coordinate the operational cooperation between Member States in the field of border security.

Maghreb

The term generally refers to the five North African countries of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania, plus the disputed territory of Western Sahara - although it is most commonly used for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

Mashreq

This refers to the region of countries to the east of Egypt and north of the Arabian Peninsula (Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the occupied Palestinian territory), although it is commonly used to include Egypt as well.

A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood. A review of European Neighbourhood Policy

Brussels, 25 May 2011, COM(2011) 303

Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions

A new response to a changing Neighbourhood

To the East and South of the European Union (EU) lie sixteen countries³ whose hopes and futures make a direct and significant difference to us. Recent events have brought this into sharper relief, highlighting the challenges we face together. The overthrow of long-standing repressive regimes in Egypt and Tunisia; the ongoing military conflict in Libya, the recent violent crackdown in Syria, continued repression in Belarus and the lingering protracted conflicts in the region, including in the Middle East, require us to look afresh at the EU's relationship with our neighbours. The encouraging progress made by other neighbours, for example by Republic of Moldova in its reform efforts, Ukraine in the negotiations of the Association Agreement or Morocco and Jordan in their announcement of constitutional reform, need also to be supported. The Lisbon Treaty has allowed the EU to strengthen the delivery of its foreign policy: co-operation with neighbouring countries can now be broadened to cover the full range of issues in an integrated and more effective manner. This was a key driver for initiating a review, in consultation with partner countries and other stakeholders, of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in summer 2010. Recent events throughout the Southern Mediterranean have made the case for this review even more compelling. The EU needs to rise to the historical challenges in our neighbourhood.

3. The European Neighbourhood includes Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, the Republic of Moldova, Morocco, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

Since its inception in 2004, the ENP has promoted a variety of important initiatives, particularly on the trade and economic front, which have allowed the EU and its neighbours to develop stronger relationships in virtually all policy fields, from energy to education, from transport to research. These are now the subject of exchanges and co-operation between the EU and its neighbours. EU assistance has increased and is better targeted. But there is room for improvement on all sides of the relationship. Recent events and the results of the review have shown that EU support to political reforms in neighbouring countries has met with limited results. There is for example a need for greater flexibility and more tailored responses in dealing with rapidly evolving partners and reform needs – whether they are experiencing fast regime change or a prolonged process of reform and democratic consolidation. Co-ordination between the EU, its Member States and main international partners is essential and can be improved.

A new approach is needed to strengthen the partnership between the EU and the countries and societies of the neighbourhood: to build and consolidate healthy democracies, pursue sustainable economic growth and manage cross-border links.

The ENP should be a policy of the Union with the Member States aligning their own bilateral efforts in support of its overall political objectives. Equally, the European Parliament has a central role to play in helping to deliver some of its central objectives. And beyond that, the ENP should serve as a catalyst for the wider international community to support democratic change and economic and social development in the region.

This partnership with our neighbours is mutually beneficial. The EU is the main trading partner for most of its neighbours. Sustainable economic development and job creation in partner countries benefits the EU as well. Likewise, managed movement of people is positive for the entire neighbourhood, facilitating the mobility of students, workers and tourists, while discouraging irregular migration and human trafficking. Active engagement between the EU and its neighbours in areas such as education, strengthening and modernising social protection systems and advancing women's rights will do much to support our shared objectives of inclusive growth and job creation.

The new approach must be based on mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It will involve a much higher level of differentiation allowing each partner country to develop its links with the EU as far as its own aspirations, needs and capacities al-

low. For those southern and eastern neighbours able and willing to take part, this vision includes closer economic integration and stronger political co-operation on governance reforms, security, conflict-resolution matters, including joint initiatives in international fora on issues of common interest. In the context of the southern Mediterranean, the Commission and the High Representative have already laid out their proposal for a Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity⁴ with such partners.

The new approach, as described above, aims to:

- (1) provide greater support to partners engaged in building deep democracy – the kind that lasts because the right to vote is accompanied by rights to exercise free speech, form competing political parties, receive impartial justice from independent judges, security from accountable police and army forces, access to a competent and non-corrupt civil service – and other civil and human rights that many Europeans take for granted, such as the freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- (2) support inclusive economic development – so that EU neighbours can trade, invest and grow in a sustainable way, reducing social and regional inequalities, creating jobs for their workers and higher standards of living for their people;
- (3) strengthen the two regional dimensions of the European Neighbourhood Policy, covering respectively the Eastern Partnership and the Southern Mediterranean, so that we can work out consistent regional initiatives in areas such as trade, energy, transport or migration and mobility complementing and strengthening our bilateral co-operation;
- (4) provide the mechanisms and instruments fit to deliver these objectives.

The partnership will develop with each neighbour on the basis of its needs, capacities and reform objectives. Some partners may want to move further in their integration effort, which will entail a greater degree of alignment with EU policies and rules leading progressively to economic integration in the EU Internal Market. The EU does not seek to impose a model or a ready-made recipe for political reform, but it will insist that each partner country's reform process reflect a clear commitment to universal values that form the basis of our renewed approach. The initiative lies with the partner and EU support will be tailored accordingly.

4. COM (2011) 200 of 8.03.2011.

Increased EU support to its neighbours is conditional. It will depend on progress in building and consolidating democracy and respect for the rule of law. The more and the faster a country progresses in its internal reforms, the more support it will get from the EU. This enhanced support will come in various forms, including increased funding for social and economic development, larger programmes for comprehensive institution-building (CIB), greater market access, increased EIB financing in support of investments; and greater facilitation of mobility. These preferential commitments will be tailored to the needs of each country and to the regional context. They will recognise that meaningful reform comes with significant upfront costs. It will take the reform track record of partners during the 2010-12 period (based on the annual progress reports) into account when deciding on country financial allocations for 2014 and beyond. For countries where reform has not taken place, the EU will reconsider or even reduce funding.

The EU will uphold its policy of curtailing relations with governments engaged in violations of human rights and democracy standards, including by making use of targeted sanctions and other policy measures. Where it takes such measures, it will not only uphold but strengthen further its support to civil society. In applying this more differentiated approach, the EU will keep channels of dialogue open with governments, civil society and other stakeholders. At the same time and in line with the principle of mutual accountability, the EU will ensure that its resources are used in support of the central objectives of the ENP.

The resources that the EU and its international partners are mobilising in support of the democratic transitions in the neighbourhood must cover both the immediate and urgent needs as well as the medium- and longer-term requirements.

1. TO SUPPORT PROGRESS TOWARDS DEEP DEMOCRACY

We shall:

- adapt levels of EU support to partners according to progress on political reforms and building deep democracy.

1.1. Supporting 'deep democracy'

A functioning democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law are fundamental pillars of the EU partnership with its neighbours. There is no set model or a ready-made recipe for political reform. While reforms take place differently from one country to another, several elements are common to building deep and sustain-

able democracy and require a strong and lasting commitment on the part of governments. They include:

- free and fair elections;
- freedom of association, expression and assembly and a free press and media;
- the rule of law administered by an independent judiciary and right to a fair trial;
- fighting against corruption;
- security and law enforcement sector reform (including the police) and the establishment of democratic control over armed and security forces.

Reform based on these elements will not only strengthen democracy but help to create the conditions for sustainable and inclusive economic growth, stimulating trade and investment. They are the main benchmarks against which the EU will assess progress and adapt levels of support.

1.2. A partnership with societies

We shall:

- establish partnerships in each neighbouring country and make EU support more accessible to civil society organisations through a dedicated Civil Society Facility
- support the establishment of a European Endowment for Democracy to help political parties, non-registered NGOs and trade unions and other social partners
- promote media freedom by supporting civil society organisations' (CSOs') unhindered access to the internet and the use of electronic communications technologies
- reinforce human rights dialogues.

A thriving civil society empowers citizens to express their concerns, contribute to policy-making and hold governments to account. It can also help ensure that economic growth becomes more inclusive. Key to making any of this happen is the guarantee of the freedoms of expression, association and assembly. Another challenge is to facilitate the emergence of democratic political parties that represent the broad spectrum of the views and approaches present in society so that they can compete for power and popular support. This challenge of fostering civil society and pluralism is felt throughout the neighbourhood but is particularly acute for

countries engaged in fast political change or where repressive political regimes continue to stifle pluralism and diversity.

In order to address this situation and support political actors striving for democratic change in their countries (especially political parties and non-registered NGOs or trade unions and other social partners), the High Representative and the Commission support the establishment of a European **Endowment for Democracy**⁵. This Endowment will seek to bring greater influence and consistency to the efforts of the EU, its Member States and several of the large European political foundations that are already active in this field.

Civil society plays a pivotal role in advancing women's rights, greater social justice and respect for minorities as well as environmental protection and resource efficiency. The EU will support this greater political role for non-state actors through a partnership with societies, helping CSOs to develop their advocacy capacity, their ability to monitor reform and their role in implementing and evaluating EU programmes. In-country EU Delegations will seek to bring partner countries' governments and civil society together in a structured dialogue on key areas of our co-operation. EU funding for such actions could be delivered through the establishment of a dedicated **Civil Society Facility** for the neighbourhood.

Media freedom and free access to information are key elements of functioning democracies. Social networks and new technologies play a significant role in promoting democratic change. EU support is already available through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). Additional tools may be developed to allow the EU, in appropriate cases, to assist civil society organisations or individual citizens to have unhindered access to the internet and other forms of electronic communications technologies, as well as independent media in print, radio and television.

Commitment to **human rights and fundamental freedoms** through multilateral treaties and bilateral agreements is essential. But these commitments are not always matched by action. Ratification of all the relevant international and regional instruments and full compliance with their provisions, should underpin our partnership. This includes a strong commitment to promoting gender equality, in line with the major role once again played by women in recent events in the South, fighting against all forms of discrimination, respecting freedom of religion and protecting the rights

5. While the objectives and financial and managerial modalities of this Endowment will be different from the other democratisation tools, they shall be applied with a view to reinforce synergies and coherence.

of refugees and beneficiaries of international protection. Reinforced **human rights dialogues** will allow monitoring of commitments in this area, including addressing cases of human rights violations. Boosting cooperation with the Council of Europe could also help in promoting compliance.

Parliaments can build links between our societies. The EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly (the joint Assembly of the European Parliament and counterparts from Eastern Partnership countries), the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly and Joint Parliamentary Committees between the European Parliament and partner countries' Parliaments constitute an essential forum for dialogue and increased mutual understanding between decision-makers. Parliamentarians can also bring a meaningful contribution to enhancing reform efforts and monitoring commitments in each country's ENP Action Plan, including on major political and human rights issues.

1.3. Intensifying our political and security co-operation

We shall:

- enhance EU involvement in solving protracted conflicts
- make joined-up use of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and other EU instruments
- promote joint action with European Neighbourhood Policy partners in international fora on key security issues.

The Lisbon Treaty provides the EU with a unique opportunity to become a more effective actor. Nowhere is this more relevant than in our neighbourhood. But rising to the challenge requires that EU and Member States policies be much more closely aligned than in the past, in order to deliver the common message and the coherence that will make our actions effective. EU instruments and policies will be effective only if properly backed by Member States policies. Business as usual is no longer an option if we want to make our neighbourhood a safer place and protect our interests.

The persistence of protracted conflicts affecting a number of partner countries is a serious security challenge to the whole region. EU geopolitical, economic and security interests are directly affected by continuing instability. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and other conflicts in the Middle East, the South Caucasus, the Republic of Moldova and Western Sahara continue to affect sizeable populations, feed radi-

calisation, drain considerable local and international resources, and act as powerful impediments to reform.

The EU is already active in seeking to resolve several of these conflicts. The EU is part of the Quartet on the Middle East. It co-chairs the Geneva talks directed at peace and security in Georgia. It participates as an observer in the “5+2” talks on the Transnistrian conflict in the Republic of Moldova. It would be ready to step up its involvement in formats where it is not yet represented, e.g. the OSCE Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The EU intends to enhance its support for confidencebuilding and outreach to breakaway territories, for international efforts and structures related to the conflicts, and, once that stage is reached, for the implementation of settlements. It will also continue to oppose border changes brought about through use of military force. Many of the instruments we use everywhere in the neighbourhood to promote economic integration and sectoral co-operation could also be mobilised to support confidence-building and conflict-resolution objectives. The EU is also ready to develop, together with the relevant international organisations and key partners, post-conflict reconstruction scenarios which could act as a further incentive in the resolution of conflicts by showing the tangible benefits of peaceful settlements.

Where the EU is already engaged operationally on the ground, e.g. with the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia, the EU Border Assistance Mission in Republic of Moldova/Ukraine, or the EU Police Mission and the EU Border Assistance Mission Rafah in the occupied Palestinian territories, further steps will be taken to exploit the synergies between this operational presence and the efforts to promote reforms. In particular, wherever it is appropriate, the EU will offer to back partner countries’ efforts to reform their justice and security sector reforms with rule of law missions or other Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) instruments that they will consider useful.

Looking beyond conflict resolution, the EU will make full use of the Lisbon Treaty’s provisions in addressing other security concerns and specific common interests, e.g. energy and resource security, climate change, non-proliferation, combating international terrorism and trans-border organised crime, and the fight against drugs. It will engage with ENP partner countries to undertake joint actions in international fora (e.g. UN, international conferences) on CFSP issues, as well as other global issues.

2. TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

We shall:

- support partner countries' adoption of policies conducive to stronger, sustainable and more inclusive growth, to the development of micro, small and medium-sized companies and to job creation
- strengthen industrial cooperation and support improvements to the business environment
- help to organise events to promote investment
- promote direct investment from EU SMEs and micro-credit
- build on the pilot regional development programmes to tackle economic disparities between regions
- launch pilot programmes to support agricultural and rural development
- enhance the macro-economic policy dialogue with partners making the most advanced economic reforms
- improve the effectiveness of Macro-Financial Assistance by streamlining its decision-making process
- enhance dialogue on employment and social policies.

2.1. Sustainable economic growth and job creation

Economic and social challenges in our neighbourhood are immense. Poverty is rife, life expectancy is often low, youth unemployment is high and the participation of women in political and economic life is low in several countries of the region. Natural capital is being eroded and the rising food and energy prices have severe effects across the neighbourhood. Most partner countries have weak and poorly diversified economies that remain vulnerable to external economic shocks. The immediate objectives are therefore creating jobs, boosting growth, improving social protection and revitalising sectors affected by recent crises (such as tourism). Tackling these challenges is crucial to ensure the sustainability of political reforms and can also contribute to reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Feeble growth, rising unemployment and an increased gap between rich and poor are likely to fuel instability.

The ENP will continue encouraging partner countries' adoption of policies conducive to stronger and more inclusive growth. This includes support for efforts to improve the business environment such as simplifying procedures and catering to

small and medium-sized businesses and to promote employability. Partner countries' efforts to strengthen respect for the rule of law and to fight corruption will also have a positive impact on the business environment, facilitating increased foreign direct investment and technology transfer which in turn stimulate innovation and job creation. The EU will pay particular attention to the challenge faced by countries emerging from political change – helping to organise initiatives such as investors' conferences to clarify national investment priorities and seek to build **investors' confidence**. A powerful signal for investors and traders would also be an **enhanced investment protection scheme**. The Commission will explore options to provide legal security to investors in neighbouring countries.

To provide additional support for SMEs the Commission will also discuss with the EIB and other stakeholders the possible role for the **European Investment Fund**⁶ in partner countries and will examine measures, including **guarantees** to promote direct investment from EU SMEs and microcredits.

The Commission can also contribute to addressing high unemployment and poverty through **pilot programmes supporting agricultural and rural development**, as well as pilot regional development programmes, drawing on the EU's extensive experience in these fields.⁷

The regional development programmes can contribute to addressing economic imbalances and disparities between regions that undermine the capacity of a country's economy as a whole. The current pilot programmes will help members of the Eastern Partnership identify appropriate structures and activities to address these challenges, within their territories and if appropriate cross-border with their neighbours in the region. A similar approach will be explored for the southern neighbourhood.

Policy dialogue will continue on macro-economic governance and budgetary sustainability. This **macro-economic dialogue** will be enhanced with those partners that go furthest in their economic integration with the EU and be based on a review of macro-economic policies and key structural reforms. This will be accompanied by an enhanced **dialogue on employment and social policies**.

6. The EIF has specific experience as a provider of risk financing to small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) in EU and enlargement countries and an extensive network of business contacts. It is therefore ideally placed to promote investments of EU SMEs in partner countries.

7. The scope of the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) included in the Communication "Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the southern Mediterranean" - COM(2011) 200 - will be expanded to also cover the eastern neighbourhood.

The **Macro-Financial Assistance** (MFA) instrument may be mobilised to assist partner countries to address short-term balance-of-payments difficulties. In the short term this is most relevant to those dealing with the immediate economic and social impact of the recent political changes. The Commission will propose a Framework Regulation in order to make the decision-making process of MFA allocation more efficient, provide a more transparent legal basis for this instrument and refine some of its criteria.

2.2. Strengthening trade ties

We shall:

- negotiate Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas with willing and able partners
- further develop trade concessions, especially in those sectors most likely to offer an immediate boost to partners' economies.

Most of our neighbours rely on the EU as their main export market and import source. Trade in goods and services is a powerful instrument to stimulate economic growth, enhance competitiveness and support economic recovery. It is therefore essential that we establish with each of them mutually beneficial and ambitious trade arrangements matching their needs and their economic capacities.

The main and most effective vehicle for developing closer trade ties is the **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area** (DCFTA). DCFTAs provide for the gradual dismantling of trade barriers and aim for regulatory convergence in areas that have an impact on trade, in particular sanitary and phytosanitary rules (SPS), animal welfare, customs and border procedures, competition and public procurement. They are designed to be dynamic in order to keep pace with regulatory developments in the EU's Internal Market. For the most advanced partners, a DCFTA can lead to a progressive economic integration with the EU Internal Market. Through progressive approximation of EU rules and practices, DCFTAs require a high degree of commitment to complex and broad-ranging reforms. This requires strong institutional capacity. The reforms can be politically challenging and require the involvement of the business community as well as other interested parties. To embark on negotiations, partner countries must be WTO members and address key recommendations enabling them to comply with the resulting commitments. They must also have made sufficient progress towards common values and principles.

Trade mostly relies on a bilateral approach between the EU and each partner. This allows the most advanced countries to move faster and is consistent with the differentiation principle. The principle is also consistent with the long-term vision of an economic community emerging between the EU and its ENP partners.⁸ Regional economic integration is important to boost trade between partners and develop wider economic networks. In the longer term, such a community would be based on a common regulatory framework and improved market access for goods and services among ENP partners and the EU. Such an approach would consider allowing partners that have a fully functioning independent judiciary, an efficient public administration and have made significant progress towards eradicating corruption, into the **non-regulated area of the Internal Market for goods**. This could only happen once participating countries have reached a sufficient level of administrative and legal reliability.

In the shorter term, for those partners not ready or willing to embark on DCFTA negotiations, other measures can be taken to boost and facilitate trade. Taking into account the circumstances and level of ambition of each partner country, the EU will seek to extend trade concessions in existing agreements or ongoing negotiations, notably in those sectors best positioned to provide an immediate boost to partners' economies including asymmetry in the pace of liberalisation to take into account the circumstances of each partner country. Greater market access for goods can be achieved through Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of industrial products (ACAAs), which will allow free movement of industrial products in specific sectors through mutual acceptance of conformity certificates. The ACAAs aim to cover all sectors where the legislation is harmonised at EU level. A partner having reached that stage would in fact become part of a free trade area for industrial products between the EU, the EEA and Turkey. Close cooperation with European bodies and organisations in the areas of standardisation, conformity assessment, and metrology can facilitate ACAAs' implementation. In order to speed the preparation of ACAAs, the Commission is ready to enhance the technical support given to our partners. ACAAs are likely to be signed with Tunisia and Egypt already in 2011.

Further progress could also be made to encourage trade flows between partner countries as well as with the EU. The rapid implementation of the new Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin will be one important element

8. See COM(2006) 726, 4.12.2006, Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy.

for the partners in the South. The Commission will examine how the Convention can be extended to other ENP partners and will make appropriate proposals.

The EU will continue to support reforms to help partners build their capacities, through providing public sector expertise, including through Comprehensive Institution-Building programmes or other mechanisms such as twinning and TAIEX⁹. This will help partners meet standards for food safety, animal and plant health and animal welfare and hence enhance their export potential. Likewise, in order to assist the agricultural sectors to modernise, the EU will offer rural development programmes so as to assist inter alia in improving agricultural and food product quality.

2.3. *Enhancing sector co-operation*

We shall:

- enhance sector co-operation, with a particular focus on knowledge and innovation, climate change and the environment, energy, transport and technology
- facilitate partner countries' participation in the work of selected EU agencies and programmes.

Enhanced cooperation can take place in all sectors relevant to the Internal Market, ranging from social policy and public health to consumer protection, statistics, company law, research and technological development, maritime policy, tourism, space and many others. Co-operation and exchange will be stepped up significantly, in line with the more-for-more approach, in the following areas:

- The EU will propose to neighbouring partners to work towards the development of a **Common Knowledge and Innovation Space**. This would pull together several existing strands of cooperation: policy dialogue, national and regional capacity-building, co-operation in research and innovation, and increased mobility opportunities for students, researchers and academics. In parallel co-operation in the area of **higher education** will be expanded through increased support for **student and academic staff mobility** within university partnerships (un-

9. TAIEX is the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument managed by Commission services. TAIEX supports partner countries with regard to the approximation, application and enforcement of EU legislation. It is largely demand-driven and facilitates the delivery of appropriate tailor-made expertise to address issues at short notice; http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/taix/what-is-taix/index_en.htm

der Erasmus Mundus) and structured cooperation for university modernisation (through Tempus).

- The EU will join up efforts with its neighbours on **climate change** by enhanced co-operation to address low-carbon development and improve resilience to climate impacts (adaptation), with a view to implementing the Cancun agreement and moving towards a comprehensive global climate regime. The EU and partner countries should also pursue a higher level of **environment protection**¹⁰ aimed at enforcing higher standards of air and water quality, improved environmental governance, higher resource efficiency, protection of biodiversity and ecosystems and supporting the necessary infrastructure investments.
- **Energy** co-operation will be stepped up through increased energy policy dialogue aiming at further market integration, improved energy security based on converging regulatory frameworks, including on safety and environmental standards, the development of new partnerships on renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, and nuclear safety. In the medium term this could lead to extending the Energy Community Treaty to neighbours not yet party to it or, building on its experience, establishing a complementary ‘EU-Southern Mediterranean Energy Community’.
- The Commission will propose a new framework for **transport** co-operation, aiming at closer market integration in the transport sector, notably extending trans-European transport networks (TEN-Ts) to partner countries, addressing administrative bottlenecks with a focus on safety and security issues (including issues such as air and rail traffic management and maritime transport), and enhancing co-operation with various EU transport agencies.
- The Commission also supports a more strategic approach and cooperation on **maritime affairs**, aiming at enhancing cooperation across maritime sectors and allowing for sustainable economic development.
- Recent developments in the South Mediterranean countries have shown the importance of **information and communication technologies** as tools for political and social change. Cooperation with partner countries will therefore be stepped up to support the development of a digital economy, using ICT to tackle national and global challenges.

Finally, the EU will further facilitate partner countries’ participation in the work of EU agencies and the EU programmes which are open to them¹¹. This has been on offer for some years and has led to some co-operation in areas such as drugs moni-

10. In its Communication on the EU 2020 Initiative “Resource efficient Europe” COM(2011)21, the Commission highlighted the need to cooperate closely with key partners including those in neighbourhood.

11. COM(2006) 724, 4.12.2006

toring or aviation safety. The Commission will put together a list of programmes in which partners may participate as a matter of priority, with a focus on those offering opportunities for youth and people-to-people contacts. It will also support partner countries in fulfilling the legislative pre-requisites for participating in EU agencies and provide support for covering some of the associated costs of participation.

2.4. Migration and mobility

We shall:

- pursue the process of visa facilitation for selected ENP partners and visa liberalisation for those most advanced
- develop existing Mobility Partnerships and establish new ones
- support the full use by Member States of opportunities offered by the EU Visa Code.

Mobility and people-to-people contacts are fundamental to promoting mutual understanding and economic development. They are indispensable for trade, especially in services, as well as for exchanging ideas, spreading innovation, tackling employment and social issues, establishing strong relationships between companies, universities and civil society organisations.

Labour mobility is an area where the EU and its neighbours can complement each other. The EU's workforce is ageing and labour shortages will develop in specific areas. Our neighbourhood has well-educated, young and talented workers who can fill these gaps. In attracting this talent, the EU is conscious of the risks of brain drain, which could require additional mitigating support measures.

Partner countries are also important countries of origin and transit for irregular migrants. Cooperation on fighting irregular migration is essential to reduce the human suffering and diminished security that is generated. Such cooperation will be one of the conditions on which Mobility partnerships will be based.

The ENP aims to develop a mutually beneficial approach where economic development in partner countries and in the EU, well-managed legal migration, capacity-building on border management, asylum and effective law-enforcement co-operation go hand in hand. This approach is in line with the three pillars of the EU Global

Approach and the recently adopted Communication on migration¹²: better organising legal migration, maximising the positive impact of migration on development, enhancing capacity-building in border and migration management. The promotion and respect of migrants' rights are also an integral part of the approach.

Mobility Partnerships provide the comprehensive frameworks to ensure that the movement of persons between the EU and a third country is well-managed. These partnerships bring together all the measures which ensure that mobility is mutually beneficial. They provide for better access to legal migration channels and to strengthen capacities for border management and handle irregular migration. They can include initiatives to assist partner countries to establish or improve labour migration management, including recruitment, vocational and language training, development and recognition of skills, and return and reintegration of migrants.¹³ With a view to enhancing the mobility of citizens between partner countries and the EU, in particular for students, researchers and businesspeople, the Commission calls on Member States to make full use of the opportunities offered by the EU Visa Code. It will examine ways to support them in this process and to monitor implementation. In this context the possibilities to waive the visa fee and to issue multi-entry visa to the categories of visa applicants referred to should be underlined.

So far amongst our neighbours, Mobility Partnerships have been established with the Republic of Moldova and Georgia. The Commission believes that various countries in our neighbourhood would be good candidates for such partnerships. The Commission will seek to conclude negotiations with Armenia and prepare for the launch of negotiations with e.g. Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt¹⁴.

The EU will continue to assist Ukraine and Republic of Moldova in their efforts to implement visa liberalisation action plans. Along with the visa facilitation and readmission agreements in force or under elaboration with Eastern Partnership countries, the EU should also seek to conclude visa facilitation agreements, simultaneously with readmission agreements, with partner countries in the South. All such agreements will require co-operation with the EU on migration, mobility and security. Specific measures will need to be taken to prevent irregular migration, manage their borders effectively, ensure document security and fight organised crime, including trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants. In the long-term,

12. COM(2011) 248 final, 4.5.2011

13. The Commission will finance capacity-building under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

14. In line with the Communication on a Dialogue for migration, mobility and security with the southern Mediterranean countries - COM(2011)292/3

gradual steps towards visa liberalisation should be considered on a case-by-case basis, where conditions for well-managed and secure mobility are in place.

Concerning asylum, the EU will contribute to strengthening international protection in the region by continuing the implementation of the Regional Protection Programme for Belarus, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Circumstances allowing, it will also start implementing the Regional Protection Programme for Egypt, Libya and Tunisia. Other initiatives by individual ENP partners in this area will also be supported. Resettlement of refugees in the EU must be an integral part of the EU's efforts to support neighbouring countries confronted with significant refugee flows.

3. TO BUILD EFFECTIVE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

While fully recognising their diversity, the EU offers partnership to each individual neighbour through a single policy, based on mutual accountability. The eastern and southern dimensions of the ENP seek to complement that single policy by fostering regional cooperation and developing regional synergies and responses to the specific geographic, economic and social challenges of each region. They build on the different historical legacies of past EU policies towards the regions. In the South, fifteen years of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation across all areas of the relationship have been complemented recently by the Union for the Mediterranean. The Eastern Partnership has significantly boosted relations between the EU and its eastern neighbours over the past two years.

3.1. Strengthening the Eastern Partnership

We shall:

- move to conclude and implement Association Agreements including DCF-TAs
- pursue democratisation
- pursue the visa facilitation and liberalisation process
- enhance sectoral cooperation, notably in the area of rural development
- promote benefits of the Eastern Partnership to citizens
- increase work with civil society and social partners.

The establishment of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) has strengthened mutual relations with partner countries in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus. It has helped to initiate and consolidate a difficult process of change. The region has seen general progress towards democracy over the past decade, including situations of regime change. The region continues to face major economic challenges – it is poor, with significant differences between individual countries, and susceptible to external factors and influences.

The degree to which the partners have addressed key elements of the Eastern Partnership varies (for example respect for universal values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law; continuous efforts to reform; and a strengthened focus on the resolution of protracted conflicts). While some are clearly committed to reaching its full potential, others have only made piecemeal progress. The EU will ensure that partners most advanced and committed to the democratic reforms that underpin the Eastern Partnership benefit the most from it. At the same time, Eastern Partnership instruments need to be better tailored to the situations of individual countries, based on experience following this first phase of implementation – notably by identifying tools to bridge the long period required to negotiate far-reaching and complex Association Agreements.

Association Agreements (AAs), most of which include DCFTAs, offer each Eastern Partnership country the opportunity to choose the level of ambition it wishes to pursue in driving forward integration and reform. With sustained commitment and support by the EU, partner countries can use the Agreement for regulatory and institutional convergence. They include alignment with EU laws, norms and standards leading progressively to economic integration in the internal market.

Association Agreement negotiations have started with five partner countries and provide a sound political basis for advancing relations. DCFTA negotiations within the framework of the AA have started with Ukraine and will start with other partners as relevant conditions are met. In spite of their relatively small size, and therefore the limited trade exchanges between Eastern Partnership countries and the EU, DCFTAs are of high priority for the EU as efficient tools to reinforce the political and economic links between the EU and its Eastern neighbours. In order to help partner countries develop the administrative capacity required for in-depth reforms, the Eastern Partnership also provides for Comprehensive Institution-Building (CIB) programmes. To complement this, Pilot Regional Development Programmes are the newest EU instrument to assist partners in addressing

economic, social and regional imbalances. They will help partners to establish appropriate structures and activities to address regional challenges.

Some EaP countries attach great importance to their European identity and the development of closer relations with the EU enjoys strong public support. The values on which the European Union is built – namely freedom, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law – are also at the heart of the process of political association and economic integration which the Eastern Partnership offers. These are the same values that are enshrined in article 2 of the European Union Treaty and on which articles 8 and 49 are based.

People-to-people contacts are an important part of the partnership. The EU will continue to assist Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova in their efforts to implement **visa liberalisation** action plans. These Plans could become models for other Eastern Partnership countries. In the meantime, Eastern Partnership countries should fully exploit opportunities offered by visa facilitation.

Eastern partners have benefited from five flagship initiatives¹⁵ in the areas of border management, SME development, energy cooperation, civil protection and environmental governance. These programmes will now be adapted to better support bilateral partnership objectives. For example, work under the Integrated Border Management flagship initiative is increasingly geared towards supporting partners in fulfilling the conditions for visa facilitation and liberalisation. Boosting the visibility of the Eastern Partnership's bilateral and multilateral activities is important to explain their benefits to the general public. To help increase regional solidarity, the EU should develop its support for sub-regional cooperation that concentrates on specific subjects involving fewer partners. The multilateral framework has to be used more strategically to advance bilateral relations between our partners, including in the area of conflict resolution.

In line with the aim of the renewed ENP to focus on links between societies, the EU will promote more intensive engagement with stakeholders, including parliaments in the framework of EURONEST, established by the European Parliament; regional actors in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions; business leaders, in the frame of an Eastern Partnership Business Forum; and civil society and social

15. These are: Integrated Border Management; Small and Medium Enterprises; Regional Electricity Markets, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources; Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters; Environmental Governance.

partners building on the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and its national platforms.

Co-operation under the Eastern Partnership will continue with policy dialogue in areas such as:

- education, youth and culture: expanding participation in programmes such as Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Youth in Action and eTwinning; opening of future new EU programmes such as Lifelong Learning to Eastern Partnership countries; follow-up of the Special Action Culture Programme 2009-10 and of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme;
- transport: connecting infrastructure networks of the EU and its Eastern partners;
- energy, environment, climate change: intensified dialogue, following the establishment of the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership (EESP), and accession to the European Energy Community Treaty by Ukraine and Republic of Moldova in order to strengthen co-operation on energy security;
- knowledge sharing, research and information society: full integration of the research and education communities in the region within the e-infrastructure (e.g. the GÉANT panEuropean data network for networking, and the European Grid Infrastructure for grids and distributed computing).
- customs and law enforcement issues on the basis of Strategic Frameworks for Customs Cooperation with Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Belarus as well as co-operation in the area of fight against smuggling;
- rural development measures (in line with the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development);
- employment and social policies;
- justice, freedom and security on the basis of the Justice and Home Affairs Eastern Partnership Action Plan to be presented later this year under the Stockholm Programme¹⁶, including mobility partnerships;
- Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

EU Member States, third countries and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have shown interest in furthering the goals of the Eastern Partnership and supporting projects of strategic importance. Additional resources are being mobilised from the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF), bilateral partners and IFIs, in particular the EIB, the EBRD and the World Bank. Such co-operation should be pursued

16. Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme - COM(2010) 171: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0171:FIN:EN:PDF>.

dynamically, building on the establishment of the SME Facility, the EIB's Eastern Partners Facility and its Eastern Partnership Technical Assistance Trust Fund to which the EU and Member States are invited to contribute.

The Eastern Partnership Information and Co-ordination Group gathers IFIs and third countries interested in donor coordination and more generally in the development of Eastern Partnership, including Canada, Japan, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey and the USA. This informal cooperation will be intensified in line with the interests of Eastern Partnership partners.

The second Eastern Partnership Summit will take place in September 2011 in Warsaw. The European Commission and the High Representative will subsequently put forward a roadmap to guide the future implementation of the Eastern Partnership, drawing on the results of the Summit.

3.2. Building the Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity in the Southern Mediterranean

We shall:

- undertake Comprehensive Institution-Building programmes similar to those implemented with the eastern partners
- launch a dialogue on migration, mobility and security with Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt (as a first step towards a Mobility Partnership)
- strengthen Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation
- launch pilot programmes to support agricultural and rural development
- focus the Union for the Mediterranean on concrete projects with clear benefits to populations of the Mediterranean region
- advance sub-regional cooperation
- enhance dialogue on employment and social policies.

The ENP must provide an ambitious response to the momentous changes currently ongoing in the Southern Mediterranean region. The joint Communication on a Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity in the Southern Mediterranean¹⁷, issued on 8 March outlined first elements of the EU's offer of a new partnership with partners engaged in building democracies and extensive reforms. The three main directions along which the EU intends to further develop its relations with its Mediter-

17. COM(2011) 200.

anean partners are carried over into this communication: democratic transformation and institution-building; a stronger partnership with the people; and sustainable and inclusive economic development. Through its different policies and instruments, the partnership will be comprehensive and wide, but will be more clearly differentiated according to the specific needs as well as the level of ambition of each partner. The EU is already engaged in a process of strengthening relations with a number of partners, notably through granting ‘advanced status’¹⁸.

Those partners that want to establish a Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the EU are expected to make progress on the key elements highlighted in section 1.1. The long-term vision for our most advanced Mediterranean partners is close political association with the EU and economic integration into the Internal Market. In the short term, the following options will be available to partners making progress on reforms.

To support democratic transformation, **Comprehensive Institution-Building programmes** similar to those implemented with its Eastern neighbours will be set up: they will provide substantial expertise and financial support to build the capacity of key administrative bodies (customs, enforcement agencies, justice) and will be targeted in priority towards those institutions most needed to sustain democratisation.

To build a **stronger partnership with people**, the Commission will launch a dialogue on migration, mobility and security with e.g. Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt (as a first step towards a Mobility Partnership). These proposals are further detailed in the Communication on migration, mobility and security in the southern neighbourhood¹⁹. School co-operation (eTwinning), student and academic staff mobility within university partnerships (Erasmus Mundus), structured cooperation for university modernisation (Tempus), and mobility of Young People (Youth in Action) will also be expanded to provide a better support to the youth. New initiatives may also be promoted in the field of culture.

In the short term, to build **sustainable and inclusive economic development**, the EU will step up efforts to enhance the trade provisions of the existing Association Agreements by concluding the ongoing negotiations on agriculture and those on

18. The advanced status, based on the good implementation of the ENP Action Plan, was granted to Morocco in 2008 and to Jordan in 2010. It could be extended to other ENP Southern countries making progress in reforms. Depending on the country it may entail the strengthening of political and security cooperation, trade concessions and greater integration in the EU Internal Market and additional financial support for reforms. It is based on a new and more comprehensive Action Plan.

19. COM (2011) 292/3

services and the right of establishment. Selected southern neighbours will also be given the opportunity to enter into preparations for future DCFTA negotiations. To accompany the structural adjustments linked to market opening and promote inclusive growth, the Commission will finance pilot programmes for agricultural and rural development and, drawing on the experience of the Eastern Partnership, pilot regional development programmes.

The Commission will promote industrial cooperation at Euro-Mediterranean level by continuing to implement the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise, by adapting the Charter to the needs of SMEs in line with the EU's Small Business Act and by sharing good practices and opening activities and networks in priority sectors (textiles, tourism, raw materials). It will enhance dialogue on employment and social policy and encourage effective social dialogue including through the Euro-Mediterranean Social Dialogue Forum. Regulatory cooperation on a regional level could facilitate trade exchanges and improve the investment climate. The development of an efficient, safe, secure and sustainable multi-modal Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network will also contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development. The Commission is already working with the EIB and the International Maritime Organisation to identify pilot actions to improve cooperation between maritime sectors in the Mediterranean.

The **Union for the Mediterranean** (UfM) which complements the bilateral relations between EU and partners should enhance its potential to organise effective and result-oriented regional cooperation. It further ensures the inclusive character of regional cooperation in the Mediterranean by including actors such as Turkey and the Western Balkan countries. The High Representative and the Commission are ready to play a bigger role in the UfM in line with the Lisbon Treaty. Revitalising the UfM requires a switch to a more pragmatic and project-based approach. The UfM Secretariat must operate as a catalyst to bring states, the EIB, International Financial Institutions and the private sector together around concrete economic projects of strategic importance and generating jobs, innovation and growth throughout the region. Partner countries' participation in these projects could follow the principle of variable geometry depending on their needs and interests. Co-financing for specific infrastructure projects from the EU budget could be provided through the Neighbourhood Investment Facility. In the current economic and political context, flagship projects identified at the Paris Summit remain fully relevant, notably the Mediterranean Solar Plan, the de-pollution of the Mediterranean or the development of Motorways of the Sea and land highways, the Mediterranean Business Development Initiative. To support sustainable development, implementation

of existing regional agreements such as the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean should be given greater priority.

Finally, **sub-regional co-operation** involving fewer neighbours and concentrating on specific subjects can bring benefits and can create greater solidarity. Sub-regional cooperation in the Maghreb could be advanced, for example through supporting greater physical interconnection. The EU will put forward specific proposals in the near future, including on ways to support the possible opening of borders in the region.

4. A SIMPLIFIED AND COHERENT POLICY AND PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK

4.1. *Clearer priorities through stronger political steering*

We shall:

- Focus ENP Action Plans and EU assistance on a smaller number of priorities, backed with more precise benchmarks.

Bilateral relations between the EU and each of its neighbours have become stronger in recent years. Close and intensive dialogue has developed not only on general political matters but on all specific areas of our co-operation. These very close relationships and a higher level of commitment call for much stronger political dialogue and co-operation. The Lisbon Treaty provides the means for the European Union to deliver coherent and consistent policies and programmes by bringing together strands of EU foreign and assistance policy that were previously run by different institutions.

There is a consensus among partner countries and Member States that more substantive Association Councils would allow for more in-depth discussion at political level. But political dialogue need not be reduced to a yearly discussion in the Association Council: more frequent and more ad hoc opportunities should be envisaged when conditions so require. A more continuous and more intimate political dialogue is key to establish the confidence and trust required to tackle our common challenges. In addition, the Commission intends to enhance dialogue on sectoral policies (such as energy, education, youth, migration and transport) with their Ministerial counterparts in partner countries.

While **ENP Action Plans** remain the framework for our general cooperation, the EU will suggest to partners that they focus on a limited number of short and medium-term priorities, incorporating more precise benchmarks and a clearer sequencing of actions. The EU will adapt the priorities for its financial assistance accordingly. This list of priorities will set the political pace and help both the EU and each neighbour to produce key deliverables, within a mutually agreed timeframe. This will also allow better linking of policy objectives and assistance programming. Building on that basis programming documents can be simplified and focus on identifying Action Plan priorities requiring particular EU assistance.

Further simplification of provision of financial assistance will also be sought in drafting the new European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) regulation in the context of the next multi-annual financial framework, in order to translate the need for a more flexible and more focused delivery of financial assistance into practice.

In parallel, the EU will continue to report on an annual basis on progress in line with the Action Plans. Reports will put greater focus on democracy and a stronger link between the outcomes measured in these reports, assistance and levels of financial support will be developed over time.

4.2. Funding

We shall:

- re-focus and target foreseen and programmed funds in the ENPI as well as other relevant external policy instruments in the light of this new approach
- provide additional resources of over EUR 1 billion until 2013 to address the urgent needs of our neighbourhood
- mobilize budgetary reinforcement from various sources
- swiftly proceed with submitting concurring budget proposals to the Budget Authority (transfers for 2011, Amending Letter for 2012, re-programming for 2013).

Implementing the new approach of the neighbourhood policy based on mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law requires **additional resources of up to EUR 1242 million until 2013**. These resources are in addition to the EUR 5700 million provided under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument for 2011-2013. In the event of new emergencies, funding of actions targeted at the region

under thematic instruments and crisis intervention mechanisms in the EU budget constitute fresh resources. Financial support will be provided to further reinforce the partnership with people across the region, support sustainable and inclusive growth, cover the additional needs stemming from the democratic transformation of partner countries, advance the achievement of Millennium Development Goals and fund the new initiatives stemming from this review, notably in the areas of partnership with societies, rural and regional development (see sections 3.1 and 3.2 above). This includes an amount of up to EUR 250 million stemming from reflows from older loan and risk-capital operations to be made available to the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) to promote growth and employment by financing new operations and to support the long-term financing needs of SMEs. To that effect, the Council should adopt the Commission proposal to amend Article 23 of the ENPI regulation.

These additional resources will be provided through reallocations from within Heading 4 of the 2007-2013 multi-annual financial framework, and by making use of the unallocated margin under the expenditure ceiling in 2012 and - to the extent necessary - through the Flexibility Instrument. The Commission will submit an Amending Letter to Draft Budget 2012 shortly.

The Commission is currently reflecting on how best to integrate the overall country situation regarding democracy, accountability, the rule of law and sound financial management into its decisions on budget support arrangements, and will outline its approach in the upcoming Communication on budget support. This should also provide the necessary flexibility to tailor levels and types of support to each partner's reform track record.

4.3. Involving the EIB and EBRD

We shall:

- secure additional loan possibilities by the EIB and the EBRD, including an extension of the latter's mandate to selected Southern partners.

To support large infrastructure projects that can help connect the EU with its neighbourhood, boost development and address key energy, environment and transport challenges, it is important to ensure that the European Investment Bank and other regional development banks such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development have sufficient financial resources. The Commission supports the in-

crease in the external mandate of the EIB for both eastern and southern neighbours as well as the extension of the EBRD mandate to selected southern Mediterranean countries. The EIB and EBRD can deliver on EU policy objectives together by maximising their comparative advantages. EBRD operations in the Southern Mediterranean countries should support EU policy objectives and should not lead to a transfer of resources from operations in the EU Eastern Neighbourhood.

The adoption of the revised EIB external mandate would provide for increased EIB lending under EU guarantee across the EU Neighbourhood. In particular, if the Council approves the additional lending envelope of EUR 1 billion proposed by the European Parliament, the EIB could provide almost EUR 6 billion to the Mediterranean countries over 2011-2013. The necessary funds up to 90 million will be mobilised to provide the budgetary guarantees needed to match the increase in EIB loans towards the Mediterranean region.

4.4. *Planning for 2013 and beyond*

We shall:

- promote more flexible and simpler aid delivery under the post-2013 successor to the present ENPI;
- step up efforts of co-ordination between the EU, its Member States and other key IFIs and bilateral donors.

In its July 2010 conclusions on the ENP the Council acknowledged “the need to accompany market opening, economic integration and regulatory convergence as well as the process of strengthening bilateral relations, throughout the neighbourhood, with appropriate financial support, technical assistance and capacity building” and indicated that it “will return to the issue of financial support in the context of discussions on the next multi-annual financial framework”. The Commission will reflect the renewed ENP vision and medium term objectives in its proposals for the post-2013 EU Multiannual Financial Framework²⁰. The key source of funding, the new European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), will provide the bulk of financial support to partner countries, essentially through bilateral, regional and cross border co-operation programmes. Its level of funding will need to reflect the ambitions of the revised ENP. It should be increasingly policy-driven and provide for increased differentiation, more flexibility, stricter conditionality and incentives for best per-

20. The Commission’s proposals will be tabled later this year.

formers, reflecting the ambition of each partnership (e.g. DCFTA negotiations). EU assistance could also be increasingly implemented by devolving it to partner countries provided that the financial rules of the Union are respected and EU financial interests protected.

To maximise external support for the reform agenda agreed in the context of ENP the EU will step up efforts of co-ordination with EU Member States, other bilateral donors, the EIB, the EBRD and the international finance institutions. This can take the form of joint programming, joint co-operation initiatives and co-financing programmes and projects. To improve EU assistance co-ordination, the EEAS and Commission services will consider the possibility of launching pilot joint programming exercises with interested Member States in the countries of the southern neighbourhood undergoing democratic transition.

CONCLUSIONS

Our neighbourhood offers great opportunities for mutually beneficial integration and co-operation, for example large and well-educated working populations, sizeable markets still to be developed, and win-win solutions in energy security. Cooperation with our neighbours is the only means to take on the challenges and threats that do not respect borders – such as terrorism, irregular migration, pollution of our common seas and rivers. It allows us to tackle sources of instability and conflict in the region.

Several neighbours in the East and in the South have embarked on an ambitious path of transition during the last decade. They need support to consolidate these processes. Others have joined the process only recently. They also need our urgent assistance and they can benefit from the lessons learnt by other partners. It is in the EU's own interest to support these transformation processes, working together with our neighbours to anchor the essential values and principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, a market economy and inclusive, sustainable development in their political and economic fabric.

The new approach to the ENP set out in this Communication is a step in this direction. The Commission and the High Representative call on the Council and the European Parliament to endorse both its overall thrust and the concrete proposals it puts forward. We now intend to pursue our consultations with our neighbours on the best way to translate this new approach into each individual partnership.

The challenges are many, and fully meeting them may take time. What we are aiming for together is a democratic, prosperous and stable region where more than 800 million people can live, work and shape their own country's future, confident that their freedom, their dignity and their rights will be respected.

PRESS RELEASE, 3101st Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 20 June 2011, 11824/11

European Neighbourhood Policy review

The Council had a broad discussion on the EU's neighbourhood, in response to the European Neighbourhood Policy Review presented by the High Representative and the Commission on 23 May 2011, and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. Welcoming the publication of the Joint Communication on a new response to a changing Neighbourhood of 25 May 2011, the Council thanks the High Representative and the Commission for this response to its invitation of 26 July 2010 to initiate a reflection on the future implementation of the ENP. The Council also welcomes the consultations that were held in view of the Joint Communication.

2. The new approach of the EU will be based on mutual accountability and shared commitment to universal values of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. The partnership between the EU and each of its neighbours will reflect their needs, capacities and reform objectives. It will be based on joint ownership and differentiation. Such a partnership may lead those countries that are willing and able to move further to closer political association and progressive economic integration into the EU Internal Market. Action Plans and equivalent documents will be used more effectively by focusing on a limited number of priorities with a clearer sequencing of actions, incorporating clearer objectives and more precise benchmarks, and be pursued with closer political steering. This will help partners prioritising reforms and will allow better linking of policy objectives and assistance programming.

3. The Council agrees on the need to provide greater support to partners engaged in building deep and sustainable democracy, to support inclusive economic development and to strengthen both the Eastern and the Southern dimensions of the ENP, in particular in the areas of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It underlines that stronger political cooperation, closer economic integration and in-

creased EU support, will depend on progress towards reforms. They will be tailored to the needs of partners willing to undertake reforms and to cooperate effectively with the EU in all relevant domains, and may be reconsidered where reform does not take place. These principles would equally apply to all ENP partners. The Council invites the High Representative and the Commission to design the appropriate mechanisms and instruments that will help deliver these objectives.

4. The Council welcomes the emphasis in the Joint Communication on a partnership with societies. It invites the High Representative and the Commission to put forward concrete proposals in support of civil society, including on a European Endowment for Democracy and a Civil Society Facility, to develop new means for the EU to support the development and functioning of deep and sustainable democracy in the neighbouring countries, in full coherence with existing instruments and structures.

5. Recognising the economic benefits of enhancing trade in goods and services, the potential for increased investment flows and the importance of progressive economic integration with the EU Internal Market, the Council supports the EU continuing to pursue such integration through the establishment of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) with ENP partners, as proposed in the Joint Communication, as soon as conditions are met. The launching of DCFTA negotiations requires WTO membership and thorough preparation based on key recommendations. The Council expects rapid progress in the ongoing DCFTA negotiations with Ukraine and notes the good progress made by some of the other Eastern partners towards implementing key recommendations. It welcomes the adoption today of the negotiating directives of DCFTA with the Republic of Moldova. As regards the Southern Mediterranean, the Council encourages initiatives aimed at enhancing trade and investment relations with partners engaged in democratic and economic reforms. To this end, the Council invites the Commission to submit recommendations for negotiating directives for DCFTAs with selected Southern Mediterranean partners. The Council agrees that in the context of ongoing or future negotiations, the EU will seek to improve market access opportunities including, where appropriate, by extending trade concessions, taking into account the particular circumstances of each partner country.

6. Well-managed mobility of people is crucial for mutual understanding, business links and economic growth both in the EU and in the partner countries. Recalling the European Council Declaration of 11 March 2011 and the Justice and Home Affairs Council Conclusions of 9 June 2011, the Council invites the Commission

to pursue and intensify work with partners in this field on the basis of the Global Approach to Migration. The EU will prepare the launch of negotiations for Mobility Partnerships with Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, as a first group, as proposed by the Commission in its Communication of 25 May 2011. The EU will seek to fully utilise the potential of the EU Visa Code for bona fide travellers between the EU and all partners. In line with the JHA Council conclusions of 9 and 10 June, the EU will consider to launch, on a case by case basis, readmission and visa facilitation agreements with Southern partners and EU engagement will depend inter alia on effective cooperation against illegal migration including on readmission and border management.

Recalling its conclusions on the Eastern Partnership of 25 October 2010, the EU will seek to conclude negotiations for a Mobility Partnership with Armenia and will also seek to launch negotiations on visa facilitation agreements in parallel with readmission agreements with Belarus, for the benefit of the population at large, as well as with Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Council welcomes the entering into force of the visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Georgia. The Council welcomes the presentation of the progress reports on the implementation of the Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova Visa Liberalisation Action Plans, which could serve as useful models also for the other eastern partners bearing in mind the specificity and progress of each country, in line with the Prague declaration and subsequent Council Conclusions.

7. The Council invites the High Representative and the Commission to implement the proposals of the Communication regarding sector cooperation in close cooperation with other initiatives existing in the neighbourhood. The EU will also facilitate partner countries' participation in EU programmes and agencies.

8. Significantly increased financial support of up to EUR 1.242 billion to address the urgent needs and to respond to the new challenges and transformations underway in the Neighbourhood will be decided in accordance with the normal budgetary procedures and without prejudice notably to the Multiannual Financial Framework. The Council looks forward to the Commission proposal to the budgetary authority in that respect. Such resources shall be allocated taking fully into account partner countries' needs, their readiness to engage in reforms and their progress towards deep and sustainable democracy as defined in the Communication. The Council asks the Commission, in connection with the EIB, to consider how risk capital operations could be reinforced in the neighbourhood, taking into account sound budgetary management. The Council also underlines the need to reprioritise existing resour-

es and reaffirms its support for the increase in lending from the EIB. The Council also reaffirms its support for the extension of the EBRD area of operations to those Southern partners engaged in democratic transition and appeals to other major donors and international financial institutions to contribute to this effort.

9. In the context of the enhanced approach to the ENP, the Council looks forward to the Commission proposal to establish under the next multi-annual financial framework a new European Neighbourhood Instrument which is based on a simplified programming, is increasingly policy driven and provides for increased differentiation on the basis of a “more for more” approach, including the flexibility to allow for greater targeting of resources in line with reform performance and needs and will reflect the new level of ambition of the policy. The new instrument will also support regional cooperation and Cross Border Cooperation at the EU external border and in this regard the Council also underlines the importance of flexible mechanisms for effective implementation. The Council will revert to these issues in the context of the discussions on the next multiannual financial framework.

10. The Council looks forward to the Eastern Partnership Summit in Warsaw on 29-30 September 2011 with the view to enhancing the relations between the EU and the Eastern partners. The Eastern Partnership seeks to accelerate political association and economic integration as laid out in the Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit of 7 May 2009, based on the shared principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. These values are adhered to by all the Member States of the European Union. The Council acknowledges the European aspirations and the European choice of some partners. The Council also invites the High Representative and the Commission to propose a roadmap to guide the further implementation of the Eastern Partnership, drawing on the results of the Summit and taking into account the further implementation of flagship initiatives and concrete projects, and including proposals on how to enhance regional cooperation.

11. The Council underlines the importance of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which complements the bilateral relations between EU and partners in the South and should be enhanced to organise effective and result-oriented regional cooperation through concrete projects. The Council welcomes the nomination of Mr. Youssef Amrani as Secretary General of the UfM Secretariat. The Council reiterates its support to the UfM Secretariat that should operate as a catalyst to bring states, the EIB, International Financial Institutions and the private sector together around

concrete projects of strategic importance and support job generation, innovation and growth throughout the region.

12. The ENP will have to live up to the new challenges in the Southern Neighbourhood. Transitions may be long and difficult, nonetheless the Council underlines the strong commitment of the EU and Member States to accompany and support concrete efforts by the governments genuinely engaged in political and economic reforms, as well as the civil societies. In this respect, the Council encourages the High Representative and the Commission to ensure that the ongoing implementation of the 8 March Communication on a Partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean, in line with the related European Council Conclusions, takes into account the new approach set out in the new response to a changing Neighbourhood. The Council welcomes the setting up of the Task Force for the Southern Mediterranean by the High Representative which will enhance the EU's efforts to foster coherent international support for the strengthening of democracy and inclusive economic development in the Mediterranean region. It also welcomes the High Representative's proposal for an EUSR for the Southern Mediterranean region and stresses that the EUSR should start working as soon as possible. The Council welcomes the Deauville Partnership and the G8 support to the countries in democratic transition.

13. The Council encourages the High Representative and the Commission to seize the opportunities provided by the Lisbon Treaty to enhance EU involvement in the resolution of the protracted conflicts, taking into account existing formats, and pursue joint efforts to enhance regional security in our neighbourhood, making joined-up use of Common Foreign and Security Policy and other EU instruments. It calls on Partner Countries to increase their efforts to resolve conflicts and to make best use of the EU's support.

14. The Council agrees that Member States should complement and reinforce EU support in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy with national support programmes, while ensuring close co-ordination. It also encourages the European Commission to intensify coordination with other donors and international finance institutions.

15. The Council looks forward to the implementation of the new response to a changing Neighbourhood and invites the High Representative and the Commission to report in 2012.'

PRESS RELEASE, 3101st Council meeting, Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg, 20 June 2011, 11824/11

Eastern neighbourhood – Belarus

The Council discussed the situation in Belarus and adopted the following conclusions:

‘1. Recalling its Conclusions of 31 January 2011, the statements by High Representative Ashton on the situation in Belarus of 18 February, 12 April and 14 and 26 May as well as the Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU of 18 March 2011, the EU expresses its deep concern at the deteriorating human rights, democracy and rule of law situation in Belarus.

2. The EU strongly condemns the detention, trials and sentencing on political grounds of representatives of civil society, the independent media and the political opposition, including former presidential candidates, Nyaklyayew, Rymashewski, Sannikaw, Statkevich and Uss in the aftermath of 19 December 2010 Presidential elections. The EU reiterates its calls for the immediate release and rehabilitation of all political prisoners. It underscores its deep concern at reports of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in Belarusian prisons, and urges the authorities to respect international commitments endorsed by Belarus, notably the absolute prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

3. The EU deplores the continuing deterioration of media freedom in Belarus, including the lawsuits filed by the Ministry of Information to close two of Belarus’ largest independent newspapers, *Nasha Niva* and *Narodnaya Volya*, the trial of the journalist Poczobut, and the cancelled licence of radiostation Autoradio. It calls on Belarus to end the ongoing politically motivated persecution and harassment of democratic forces, independent media, civil society and those defending them.

4. The Council urges Belarus to respect internationally recognised diplomatic immunities and privileges of EU diplomatic representations and their personnel in Minsk and to stop the ongoing harassment and intimidation.

5. The EU remains determined to address the human rights situation in Belarus, including in international fora such as the UN Human Rights Council and the OSCE. The Council welcomes the successful adoption of the resolution on the situation on human rights in Belarus at the 17th session of the UN Human Rights Council and

calls on Belarus to implement it fully. The EU reiterates its regret at the lack of cooperation by Belarus in the framework of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism and notes with concern the findings of the OSCE Rapporteur's Report on Belarus regarding Belarus' fulfillment of its OSCE commitments in the human dimension.

6. In view of recent developments, the Council has decided to designate additional persons to travel restrictions and assets freeze. The Council has furthermore decided to impose an embargo on Belarus on arms and on materials that might be used for internal repression. It has also decided to freeze the assets of three companies linked to the regime.

7. The Council agrees that the extension of European Investment Bank operations to Belarus should only proceed if and when the EU is able to give a sufficiently positive assessment of the human rights and rule of law situation. The Council welcomes the outcome of the recent European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Country Strategy Update, which implies a recalibrating of EBRD assistance away from the Belarusian central authorities in favour of non-state and local actors implementing projects in areas which benefit the population at large. The Council expresses its hope for conditions to be re-established in Belarus that would allow the country to enjoy the full benefits of EIB and EBRD support.

8. The EU reiterates its strong commitment to strengthening its engagement with the Belarusian people and civil society. It welcomes that the EU assistance strategy towards Belarus has been revised in order to further strengthen support to civil society and that the EU's special assistance package is reaching full implementation speed, providing notably support to repressed individuals, NGOs, media and students. Donor coordination will continue, with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of aid to Belarusian civil society in the years ahead.

9. Recalling the importance it attaches to people to people contacts to the benefit of Belarusian population at large, the Council takes positive note of the ongoing work to fully use the existing flexibilities offered by the Visa Code, in particular the possibility for Member States to waive and reduce visa fees for certain categories of citizens. In the same spirit, the Council also welcomes the Commission's formal invitation to Belarus to start negotiations on visa facilitation and readmission agreements, on the basis of negotiation directives adopted by the Council on 28 February, and calls on the Belarusian authorities to engage constructively.

10. The EU will continue to closely monitor the situation in Belarus. The EU reiterates its commitment to the policy of critical engagement, including through dialogue and the Eastern Partnership, and recalls that the development of bilateral relations is conditional on progress towards respect by Belarus for the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. At the same time, and in the light of further developments, the EU stands ready to consider further targeted measures in all areas of cooperation, as appropriate.”

For the decision on further restrictive measures against the Belarus regime: see below under the ‘Other items approved section’.

[...]

Belarus – restrictive measures

The Council decided to strengthen its restrictive measures against Belarus in view of the deteriorating human rights, democracy and rule-of-law situation there.

It imposed an arms embargo and an export ban on materials that might be used for internal repression.

The Council also decided to add further names to the list of individuals subject to the EU travel restrictions and assets freeze and to freeze the assets of three companies linked to the regime.

The Decision and the Regulation will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union on Tuesday, 21 June 2011.

Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the European Union on the verdict in the case of Ms Yulia Tymoshenko

Brussels, 11 October 2011, 15394/1/11 REV 1

The EU is deeply disappointed with the verdict of the Pechersk District Court in Ukraine in the case of Ms Yulia Tymoshenko. The verdict comes after a trial which did not respect the international standards as regards fair, transparent and independent legal process which I repeatedly called for in my previous statements. This unfortunately confirms that justice is being applied selectively in politically mo-

tivated prosecutions of the leaders of the opposition and members of the former government. It is especially disappointing for a country that currently holds the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The EU urges the competent Ukrainian authorities to ensure a fair, transparent and impartial process in any appeal in the case of Ms Tymoshenko and in the other trials related to members of the former Government. The right of appeal should not be compromised by imposing limitations on the defendants' ability to stand in future elections in Ukraine, including the parliamentary elections scheduled for next year.

The EU will reflect on its policies towards Ukraine. The way the Ukrainian authorities will generally respect universal values and rule of law, and specifically how they will handle these cases, risks having profound implications for the EU-Ukraine bilateral relationship, including for the conclusion of the Association Agreement, our political dialogue and our co-operation more broadly.

The Candidate Countries Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Iceland+, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

Transatlantic relations

Statement by Catherine Ashton, European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, on ratification by the Russian Federation Council of the START Treaty

Brussels, 26 January 2011, A 028/11

I congratulate the Russian State Duma and Federation Council on their ratification of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with the US.

In approving the treaty today, the Russian parliament has paved the way for the United States and Russia - which possess 95 percent of global stockpile of nuclear weapons - to make progress in fulfilling their disarmament commitments set in this landmark agreement.

Both countries are showing that they are willing to enhance global security by reducing the number of deployed strategic warheads and their delivery systems and by establishing a verification system to the benefit of both sides.

The ratification of the new START treaty will strengthen arms control and the global non-proliferation regime. The European Union has long stressed the need for a comprehensive approach to all these issues. A combined effort by the international community is required to strengthen disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, which are joint security interests for all.

In this context, the European Union reiterates its full support to efforts of the Governments of the United States and Russia.

Statement in New York by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the death of Osama Bin Laden

New York, 2 May 2011, A 170/11

Here in New York, it is impossible not to be reminded of the murderous legacy of Osama Bin Laden. He and the Al Qaeda network have been responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocent people across the world, including the Arab world.

The special operation carried out last night in Pakistan directed at Osama Bin Laden's hideout represents a major blow against both Al Qaeda and terrorist activities worldwide. We need to remain vigilant in our efforts to completely disable the Al Qaeda network, as the threat of retaliatory action remains serious.

I would like to congratulate the US, pay tribute to its determination and efficiency in reducing the threat posed by terrorists and underline the close cooperation between the EU and US in the fight against terrorism.

I would like to emphasize that Pakistan is an important partner of the European Union and that Pakistan's role for security and stability is crucial to the region as a whole.