



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



9499/05 (Presse 131)

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PRESS RELEASE

2667th Council Meeting

General Affairs and External Relations

GENERAL AFFAIRS

Luxembourg, 13 June 2005

President **Mr Jean ASSELBORN**
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Immigration of Luxembourg

* The 2668th meeting, on External Relations, is the subject of a separate press release (9500/05).

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9499/05 (Presse 131)

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Main Results of the Council

*The Council gave Irish full status as an official and working language under **the rules governing the languages** of the institutions of the European Union, and decided to authorise limited use at EU level of languages recognised by Member States other than the official working languages.*

*It approved draft Regulations intended to implement the reform of the EU **Stability and Growth Pact** decided on in March.*

*Following the government reshuffle in **Zimbabwe**, it updated the list of persons covered by sanctions there.*

*In addition, at an informal meeting the day before the Council meeting, the Ministers examined a text drafted by the Presidency in preparation for a European Council agreement, at the meeting on 16 and 17 June, on **the budgetary framework for the EU** for the period 2007-2013.*

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site <http://ue.eu.int>.
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the abovementioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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PARTICIPANTS

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

Belgium:

Mr Karel DE GUCHT
Mr Didier DONFUT

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for European Affairs, attached to the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Czech Republic:

Mr Cyril SVOBODA
Mr Vladimír MÜLLER

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs with responsibility for
European Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Per Stig MØLLER
Mr Friis PETERSEN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Germany:

Mr Joschka FISCHER

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Federal
Chancellor

Estonia:

Mr Urmas PAET

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Greece:

Mr Petros MOLYVIATIS
Mr Ioannis VALINAKIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Spain:

Mr Miguel Ángel MORATINOS CUYAUBÉ
Mr Alberto NAVARRO GONZÁLEZ

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

France:

Mr Philippe DOUSTE-BLAZY
Ms Catherine COLONNA

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister with responsibility for European Affairs

Ireland:

Mr Dermot AHERN T.D.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Italy:

Mr Gianfranco FINI

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Cyprus:

Mr George IACOVOU

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Latvia:

Mr Artis PABRIKS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Lithuania:

Mr Antanas VALIONIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean ASSELBORN

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Immigration
Minister with responsibility for Foreign Affairs and
Immigration

Mr Nicolas SCHMIT

Hungary:

Mr Ferenc SOMOGYI
Mr Etele BARÁTH

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister without Portfolio with responsibility for
European Affairs

Malta:

Mr Michael FREUDO

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr Bernard BOT
Mr Atzo NICOLAI

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for European Affairs

Austria:

Ms Ursula PLASSNIK

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs

Poland:

Mr Adam Daniel ROTFELD
Mr Jarosław PIETRAS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary, Office of the Committee for European
Integration

Portugal:

Mr Diogo FREITAS DO AMARAL
Mr Fernando NEVES

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for European Affairs

Slovenia:

Mr Dimitrij RUPEL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Slovakia:

Mr Eduard KUKAN
Mr József BERÉNYI

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Mr Erkki TUOMIOJA

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Sweden:

Ms Laila FREIVALDS
Mr Lars DANIELSSON

Minister for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary to the Prime Minister

United Kingdom:

Mr Jack STRAW

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

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Commission:

Ms Margot WALLSTRÖM
Mme Benita FERRERO-WALDNER
M. Olli REHN

Vice-President
Member
Member

.....

General Secretariat of the Council:

Mr Javier SOLANA

Secretary-General of the Council of the European
Union/High Representative for the CFSP

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The Governments of the acceding States were represented as follows:

Bulgaria:

Mr Petro DRAGANOV

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

Romania:

Mr Mihai-Razvan UNGUREANU

Minister for Foreign Affairs

ITEMS DEBATED**PREPARATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING IN JUNE**– *Draft conclusions*

The Council examined draft conclusions prepared by the Presidency with a view to the European Council meeting to be held in Brussels on 16 and 17 June 2005.

The draft conclusions covered the following topics:

- the financial framework for the EU budget for the period 2007-13;
- strategy for economic reforms and sustainable development;
- Justice and Home Affairs (in particular terrorism);
- External Relations.

The European Council will also discuss the progress of ratification of the Constitutional Treaty by the Member States.

– *Terrorism*

The Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Mr Gijs de Vries, informed the Council of the implementation of the Union's Action Plan to combat terrorism. In particular he stressed the need for the Union to intensify cross-border cooperation on civil protection. He referred, in particular, to the need for the Member States to be better able to provide each other with assistance in the event of biological, chemical or radiological terrorist attacks.

ENLARGEMENT– *Croatia – Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council pointed out in March 2005 that Croatia was a candidate country for accession and it determined that the bilateral intergovernmental conference would be convened by common agreement as soon as the Council had established that Croatia was cooperating fully with the ICTY.

In his letter to the Presidency on 7 June 2005, the ICTY Chief Prosecutor noted that by implementing its action plan, Croatia was on the road to full cooperation with the ICTY but that three to four months were required to determine whether these further efforts had produced tangible results.

The Council has noted this new element with satisfaction and encourages Croatia to continue to step up its efforts in this direction. It undertakes to continue to study this dossier in July".

EVENTS IN THE MARGINS OF THE COUNCIL***– Informal Ministerial meeting on the budgetary framework for 2007-2013***

The Ministers held an exchange of views at an informal meeting ("conclave") on 12 June on a negotiating box drawn up by the Presidency with a view to the establishment of a financial perspective for the European Union for the period 2007-13 (9637/05).

The third version of the document, which was circulated on 2 June, gives more precise indications of amounts by category of expenditure and an outline of a proposal concerning the EU's own resources. The Presidency's intention is to reach agreement on the new financial framework at the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 June 2005.

In order to do so, the Presidency is holding bilateral talks with the Member States, at Head of State or Government level, which will go on until 14 June. It proposes to make the final adjustments to the negotiating box in the light of those talks.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**EXTERNAL RELATIONS****Zimbabwe – Restrictive measures – Updating of the list of persons**

The Council adopted a Decision updating the list of persons subject to restrictive measures in Zimbabwe to take account of the recent government reshuffle there (9064/05).

Those measures, first introduced in February 2002, consist in a ban on entry into the territory of the Member States, a freeze on financial assets and an embargo on the supply of arms and equipment intended for military operations.

On 8 June this year the EU condemned the actions of the Zimbabwean government in the context of Operations Clean Sweep and Restore Order, which involved more than 20 000 arrests, the destruction of housing and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of persons within the country. The EU called on the Zimbabwean government to put an end to that operation.

Democratic Republic of the Congo – Restrictive measures

The Council adopted:

- a common position incorporating in a single text the arms embargo imposed by Common Position 2002/829/CFSP and the measures imposed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1596(2005) in order to deny entry to EU territory to the persons named by the United Nations Sanctions Committee and to freeze their assets;
- a Regulation authorising a derogation from the embargo for the supply of equipment and technical assistance relating to military activities to allow aid for activities intended to support the United Nations' mission in the DRC and the supply of humanitarian and protective equipment (8892/05).

Weapons of mass destruction – Progress report on EU strategy

The Council took note of a six-monthly report on the implementation of EU strategy to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction with a view to its submission to the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 June 2005 (9898/05).

The strategy to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was adopted by the European Council in December 2003.

Association Agreement with Turkey – Enlargement of the EU

The Council adopted a Decision approving the signing of an additional protocol to the Association Agreement with Turkey to take account of the enlargement of the EU in May 2004 (9616/05).

The Council also agreed that a request for assent be sent to the European Parliament concerning the draft Decision on the conclusion of that protocol.

The Association Agreement between the EU and Turkey was signed in 1963 and entered into force in 1964. Its purpose is to promote the continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between the parties.

Turkey confirmed its intention of signing the protocol on the adaptation of the Association Agreement in December 2004.

Relations with Russia – Outcome of the Moscow summit

The Council took note of the outcome of the fifteenth EU-Russia summit, which took place in Moscow on 10 May this year (8799/05 + ADD 1).

The Mediterranean and the Middle East – the EU strategic partnership

The Council approved a report on the EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East with a view to its submission to the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 June 2005.

The objective of this partnership is to promote the development of a common zone of peace, prosperity and progress in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Northern dimension – Action plan – Progress report

The Council took note of the 2004 annual progress report on the implementation of the EU northern dimension action plan with a view to its submission to the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 June 2005 (9520/05).

The purpose of the report, which was drawn up by the Commission, is to give an overall view of the most important measures the Commission has taken in recent months with a view to the implementation of the northern dimension action plan.

EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY**Presidency six-monthly report on the ESDP**

The Council approved a Presidency report on the European Security and Defence Policy with a view to its submission to the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 June 2005.

That report covers all ESDP questions that have been discussed in the first half of this year and also includes terms of reference for the next Presidency (United Kingdom).

Prevention of conflicts – Report on EU activities

The Council approved a Presidency report on EU activities in the framework of prevention, including implementation of the EU programme for the prevention of violent conflicts, with a view to its submission to the European Council meeting on 16 and 17 June 2005.

Those activities follow the programme for the prevention of violent conflicts adopted by the European Council in June 2001. They should also be seen in the context of the implementation of the European Security Strategy adopted in December 2003. The report concentrates on important and new events that have occurred since the last report, in June 2004, concerning cooperation with other parties involved and progress towards a more consistent, more active EU with enhanced capabilities. The EU has made progress in the efforts it is making to give preventive action greater importance. It has acted successfully in the intergovernmental field and at Community level, as is shown by the missions, programmes and other activities mentioned in the report.

EU crisis management operations – participation of Ukraine*

The Council adopted a Decision approving the conclusion of an Agreement between the EU and Ukraine establishing a framework for the participation of Ukraine in EU crisis management operations (9255/05, 9715/05 +ADD 1).

This Decision reflects the wish for conditions regarding the participation of third States in EU crisis management operations to be laid down in an Agreement establishing a framework for such possible future participation, rather than defined on a case-by-case basis for each operation concerned.

EU Exercise Programme for the period 2006-2010

The Council approved the EU Exercise Programme for the period 2006-2010.

The programme reflects the need to test rapid response procedures and structures, implementation of the EU's tactical Battlegroups concept and the participation in EU exercises of the Civilian-Military Cell and the EU Operation Centre.

COMMERCIAL POLICY**Grains – Grains Trade and Food Aid Conventions**

The Council adopted a Decision authorising the Commission to vote on behalf of the Community for a two-year extension of the Grains Trade Convention and the Food Aid Convention (9611/05).

The International Grains Agreement of 1995 comprises two parts: the Grains Trade Convention (1995) and the Food Aid Convention (1999).

Tuna and swordfish imports – Cambodia, Equatorial Guinea and Sierra Leone

The Council adopted a Regulation ending the prohibition of imports into the EU of bigeye tuna from Cambodia, Equatorial Guinea and Sierra Leone, blue-fin tuna from Equatorial Guinea and Sierra Leone and swordfish from Sierra Leone (7853/05).

The Regulation is intended to bring Community legislation into line with the latest recommendations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, which has acknowledged the efforts of the three countries regarding unreported and unregulated catches of the species in question.

The adoption of the new Regulation entails the amendment of Regulation No 827/2004 and the repeal of Regulations Nos 826/2004 and 828/2004.

GENERAL AFFAIRS

EU languages* – *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted a Regulation granting the Irish language the status of official and working language of the European Union (*9645/05 and 10020/05 ADD 1*).

Following their inclusion, the number of official and working languages of the European institutions is fixed at 21¹.

The Regulation, which will apply from 2007, amends the 1958 Regulations determining the languages to be used by the EEC and Euratom.

The Council also adopted the following conclusions:

"These conclusions relate to languages other than the languages referred to in Council Regulation No 1/1958 whose status is recognised by the Constitution of a Member State on all or part of its territory or the use of which as a national language is authorised by law.

The Council considers that, in the framework of efforts being made to bring the Union closer to all its citizens, the richness of its linguistic diversity must be taken more into consideration.

The Council believes that allowing citizens the possibility of using additional languages in their relations with the Institutions is an important factor in strengthening their identification with the European Union's political project.

¹ German, English, Danish, Spanish, Estonian, Finnish, French, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovenian, Swedish and Czech.

The official use of the languages referred to in paragraph 1 will be authorised at the Council on the basis of an administrative arrangement concluded between the latter and the requesting Member State, and possibly by another Union Institution or body on the basis of a similar administrative arrangement.

These arrangements will be concluded in accordance with the Treaty and with the provisions adopted for its implementation and must comply with the conditions below. The direct or indirect costs associated with implementation of these administrative arrangements by the Union's Institutions and bodies will be borne by the requesting Member State.

(a) Making public of acts adopted in codecision by the European Parliament and the Council

The government of a Member State will be able to send the European Parliament and the Council a certified translation of acts adopted in codecision into one of the languages referred to in paragraph 1. The Council will add that translation to its archives and provide a copy of it on request. The Council will ensure that these translations are published on its Internet site. In both cases, attention will be drawn to the fact that the translations in question do not have the status of law.

(b) Speeches to a meeting of the Council and possibly other Union Institutions or bodies

The government of a Member State will, if necessary, be able to ask the Council, and possibly other Institutions or bodies (European Parliament or Committee of the Regions), for permission to use one of the languages referred to in paragraph 1 in speeches by one of the members of the Institution or body in question at a meeting (passive interpreting). In the case of the Council, this request will in principle be granted, provided it is made reasonably in advance of the meeting and the necessary staff and equipment are available.

(c) Written communications to Union Institutions and bodies

Member States will be able to adopt a legal act providing that, if one of their citizens wishes to send a communication to a Union Institution or body in one of the languages referred to in paragraph 1, he or she shall send the communication to a body designated by that Member State. That body will send the Institution or body in question the text of the communication, with a translation into the language of the Member State referred to in Council Regulation No 1/1958. The same procedure will apply *mutatis mutandis* to the reply from the Institution or body in question.

Where the Union Institutions or bodies have a fixed period of time in which to reply, that period will commence from the date on which the Institution or body in question receives the translation into one of the languages referred to in Council Regulation No 1/1958 from the Member State. The period will cease on the date on which the Union Institution or body sends its reply to the competent body of the Member State in the latter language.

The Council invites the other Institutions to conclude administrative arrangements on this basis."

Council activities

The Council took note of a report on the progress of work in its other configurations (9734/05).

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Stability Pact – Modification of implementation instruments

The Council endorsed two draft Regulations implementing reform of the Stability and Growth Pact approved by the European Council at its meeting on 22 and 23 March 2005.

The two Regulations are intended to amend Regulation No 1466/97 on the surveillance of budgetary positions and coordination of the EU's economic policies and Regulation No 1467/97 on the implementation of the excessive deficit procedure (9812/05, 9812/05 ADD 1 and 9813/05).

The reform of the Pact, laid down in a report adopted by the Council on 20 March 2005, is aimed at enhancing the governance and national ownership of the fiscal framework, strengthening the economic underpinnings and the effectiveness of the Pact, both in its preventive and corrective arms, safeguarding the sustainability of public finances in the long run and promoting growth and avoiding the imposition of excessive burdens on future generations.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

EUROPOL

The Council approved Europol's draft budget for 2006.

Schengen Information System

The Council adopted a Decision fixing the date of application of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 871/2004 concerning the introduction of some new functions for the Schengen Information System, including in the fight against terrorism (7846/05).

EU/Iceland/Norway – Asylum

The Council adopted a Decision authorising the signing of an Agreement with Iceland and Norway concerning the criteria and mechanisms for establishing the State responsible for examining a request for asylum lodged in a Member State or in Iceland or Norway (8479/05).

CIVIL PROTECTION

Terrorist threats – Report on the consequences

The Council took note of the second annual report on the implementation of the joint programme of the Council and the Commission to improve cooperation in the EU for preventing and limiting the consequences of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear terrorist threats (2002 CBRN Programme) (8988/05).

RESEARCH

EU-Mexico Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation

The Council adopted a Decision approving the conclusion of an Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the EU and Mexico, signed on 3 February 2004 (8705/05, 12946/03).

The purpose of the Agreement is to encourage, develop and facilitate cooperation in areas of common interest by conducting scientific and technological research and development or by contributing to such activities.

APPOINTMENTS

Economic and Social Committee

The Council adopted a Decision appointing:

- Mr Vitas MAČIULIS a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Arvydas ŽYGIS for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 20 September 2006 (9318/05);
- Mr Bruno CLERGEOT a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Noël DUPUY for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 20 September 2006 (9319/05);
- Ms Daiva KVEDARAITĖ a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Ms Aldona BALSIEŅĒ for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 20 September 2006 (9320/05);
- Mr Angelo GRASSO a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Giacomino TARICCO for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 20 September 2006 (9322/05).

Committee of the Regions

The Council adopted a Decision appointing:

- Ms Barbara BORCHARDT, Mitglied des Landtags Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (member of the Parliament of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania), an alternate member of the Committee of the Regions in place of Mr Karsten NEUMANN for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 25 January 2006 (8947/05);
- Mr Mario MAGNANI, "Consigliere provinciale della Provincia Autonoma di Trento" (Provincial Councillor from the Autonomous Province of Trento), an alternate member of the Committee of the Regions in place of Mr Lorenzo DELLAI for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 25 January 2006 (8941/05).