Renewing Our Compact with the Western Balkans

On 2 June, a ministerial meeting was held in Sarajevo with the participation of delegations from the EU, the Western Balkans, the United States of America, Russia and Turkey, as well as from several international organizations.

The main goal of the meeting, held at the initiative of the Spanish Presidency of the EU Council, was to reaffirm the EU's commitment towards the European perspective of the Western Balkans countries within the new framework of the Lisbon Treaty. It takes place ten years after the Zagreb Summit, which showed the way for the structural, political and economic reforms that these countries needed to adopt in their path towards Europe.

In the context of this event an article co-signed by Hillary Rodham Clinton, Catherine Ashton, and Miguel Ángel Moratinos was recently published. See the complete article.

A delegation of French and Spanish Parliamentarians visit EUBAM Rafah

A delegation of French and Spanish parliamentarian assistants visited EUBAM Rafah Headquarters on 26 May, during a working trip organised to Israel by the Brussels-based organisation European Leadership Network (ELNET).

Strengthening EU-NATO relations

A seminar on EU-NATO relations was held in Madrid on 2 June. The aim of the seminar was to reflect on the need to strengthen strategic EU-NATO relations and to ensure greater and more efficient coordination of both organisations when they are in the same theatre. The event was opened by Spanish Minister of Defence Carme Chacón and attended by Javier Solana who was both NATO Secretary-General (1995-1999) and EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (1999-2009).

EU-Russia Summit

EU and Russian leaders met in Rostov-on-Don on 31 May and 1 June for their 25th Summit.

Foreign policy and security were part of the discussions. After the meeting, President Van Rompuy said: "We reconfirmed our interest to continue to explore possibilities for cooperation in the field of crisis management, justice and home affairs. We want to build further on our successful cooperation in Chad and in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia. In 2008, Russia contributed to EUFOR Tchad/RCA by providing four helicopters with full supporting equipment and some 120 personnel.

In the margins of the Summit, High Representative Ashton and Foreign Minister Lavrov made a joint statement on the Israeli military operation against the flotilla sailing to Gaza.

EULEX and Kosovo Police make arrests in major organized crime case

On 27 May, the Kosovo Police Anti-Organised Crime Unit together with specialised units, under the lead of a EULEX Prosecutor from the Special Prosecutor’s Office of Kosovo, arrested two men in connection with a major investigation into organized crime.

The operation, related to drugs trafficking, was carried out in the Prizren region and was accompanied by a simultaneous raid by Albanian police in the Kukes area, Albania.

Kosovo Police carried out a number of searches and seized material, including a firearm and large amounts of money. The long-term police investigation has involved a number of police services from different countries. A large amount of drugs has been seized in the past, related to the case. The drugs were thought to be destined for Western Europe.

In the operation by the Albanian police, one person was arrested in the Kukes area. The pre-trial judge at the Pristina District Court ordered both men to be held on remand for one month.
EUPOL introduces new community policing in Afghanistan

EUPOL Afghanistan will create a comprehensive model of community policing - a new way of interactive policing based on partnership between people and the police. Police officers and people work together in order to build better neighborhoods by identifying and solving problems in the communities.

Law enforcement is the main task of any police officer. However, making arrests is not the only tool of law enforcement of the community police officers. In community policing, the officers can prevent disputes, or even crime, by being present in the community, advising its inhabitants or by mediating disputes.

The creation of the comprehensive model of community policing will be done in close cooperation with other international actors and with Afghan National Police. It is important that Afghan Civilian Police have a strong ownership of the Afghan model of Community Policing being developed with EUPOL assistance.

EUPOL Afghanistan

EU Satellite Centre Software Days

In order to optimize its operational capabilities, the EU Satellite Centre (EUSC) invites software companies and developers to demonstrate their products from 15th to 17th June. They will be able to show software applications and tools that could respond to the EUSC operational needs.

Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) imagery processing, hyperspectral imagery analysis applications 3D reconstruction modelling tools, automatic or semi-automatic orthorectification and image co-registration tools, full motion video analysis and management applications, vector production, military material recognition engine/database and online documentation are some of the topics to be covered.

More information: www.eusc.europa.eu

Arrivée de nouvelles recrues pour EUTM Somalie

Cette semaine, EUTM a reçu de nouvelles recrues en provenance de Mogadiscio. Transportées par les Etats-Unis jusqu’à l’aéroport d’Entebbe, puis transférées jusqu’au camp de Bihanga par l’armée ougandaise, ce sont près de 800 soldats somaliens qui sont sur le terrain pour être formés.

EUTM Somalie

EUNAVFOR warship HNLMS Johan de Witt blocks Pirate access to the sea

EUNAVFOR HNLMS Johan de Witt has effectively blocked a known pirate camp on the Somali coast from access to the open sea.

The warship was positioned on the Somali coast to provide surveillance and reconnaissance patrols with the aim of gaining useful information while restricting and interdicting pirate movement on the coast. EUNAVFOR HNLMS Johan de Witt is providing an excellent blocking force and effectively denying pirate access to the high sea at a time when worsening weather conditions is making pirate operations increasingly more difficult.

Piracy Symposium on 10 June in Brussels

A symposium on an EU-wide comprehensive approach against piracy will take place at the European Parliament in Brussels on Thursday 10 June. High Representative Catherine Ashton and Spanish Defence Minister Carme Chacón are due to participate in the event.

Upcoming activities

4 June - President Van Rompuy and High Representative Ashton will attend the EU-Pakistan summit in Brussels.

8 June
- HR Ashton will meet with Afghan Foreign Minister Zalmai Rassoul.
- European Defence Agency: European Aerial Capabilities Seminar, Berlin

10 June
- HR Catherine Ashton will meet Montenegro’s Prime Minister Djukanovic.
- Piracy symposium at the European Parliament.