EU Foreign Ministers discussed Europe’s Southern Neighbourhood

The Foreign Affairs Council on 20 June, chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, discussed recent developments in Europe’s southern neighbourhood - concerning in particular Syria, Libya and Yemen - as well as the Middle East peace process. Ministers also discussed the situation in Sudan, Albania and Belarus, as well as the strategic review of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

On Belarus the Council toughened its sanctions on the Belarus regime, in view of the continuing deterioration in the political and human rights situation. It imposed an arms embargo and riot gear, extended the visa ban and assets freeze to four more individuals and, for the first time, targeted certain business interests linked to the regime.

The Council welcomed the European Neighbourhood Policy Review, presented by the High Representative and the European Commission which sets out the EU’s response to the rapid changes in its neighbourhood, with support for sustainable democracy and strengthening of both eastern and southern dimensions of the ENP, based on the so called 3 M’s: money, market access and mobility.

The Foreign Affairs Council was followed by the Western Balkan Forum, focusing on the European perspective of the region. The Ministers of the EU and the region discussed progress and challenges with a focus on regional cooperation and elections.

Following the meeting, High Representative Catherine Ashton stated: “Our messages were clear: the Balkans region is very important to the EU, the European perspective is tangible and we want to see the whole region move forward in EU integration”.

The Council also adopted conclusions on conflict prevention.

Read the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions

Remarks by High Representative Catherine Ashton at the press conference after the Foreign Affairs Council

On 24 June, the European Council adopted a declaration on the Southern Neighbourhood.

www.eaeuropa.eu

EUNAVFOR: Luxemburg aircraft reaches 2,500 flight hours milestone

The Luxemburg Government has funded CAE Aviation to fly two Fairchild SW 3A Merlin aircraft from Mahe in the Seychelles in support of the EU Naval Force. Since the first flight on 29 Sep 2009, 440 sorties have been flown for a total of 2,500 hours in support of EUNAVFOR - Atalanta counter-piracy operations.

The main tasks of the aircraft are to perform Surface Search and Scan to locate designated or suspected pirate vessels, mother ships and skiffs and to help build the recognised maritime picture. The Fairchild aircraft, equipped with a comprehensive suite of sensors and inherent flexibility and speed has also been used to assist vessels under pirate attack in coordination with other assets, such as EUNAVFOR helicopters and warships.

www.eunavfor.eu

EULEX Kosovo: the Tisza River verdict – a landmark case

A mixed panel of Kosovo and EULEX judges at the District Court in Prishtinë/Priština has sentenced seven defendants to a total of sixty-six years in jail, and issued fines totaling 450,000 Euros for their role in the tragic deaths of fifteen people who drowned in the River Tisza between Serbia and Hungary in October 2009.

The case attracted international media coverage and the case was followed with great interest by EU institutions in Brussels and in EU capitals as it involved key issues for Kosovo’s and the region’s European future. Investigators began a major inquiry into organised crime and the smuggling of migrants. The culmination of that investigation came with the convictions at the Prishtinë/Priština court.

Besides the importance of achieving justice for the victims and their families, the trial is also highly significant for the rule of law not only in Kosovo but also in the region. Regional crime requires a regional approach. This was a complex investigation involving different countries and different jurisdictions.

www.eulex-kosovo.eu
**EUMM Georgia: freedom of movement was discussed at the Incident prevention and response mechanism meeting**

Recent incidents, freedom of movement and a specific detention case were amongst the issues discussed at the twenty eighth Incident prevention and response mechanism (IPRM) meeting, chaired by the United Nations, in Gali on 21 June 2011. In a constructive and professional manner, participants exchanged additional information on a specific case concerning the detention of a local resident. This discussion also included the findings of the ad-hoc fact finding team created in the framework of the IPRM, who had visited the alleged places of the detention claimed by both sides. [www.eumm.eu](http://www.eumm.eu)

**EUPOL Afghanistan is conducting ‘coordination of police and prosecutors’ training**

The fourth phase of the Coordination of police and prosecutors (CoPP) training scheme implemented by EUPOL Afghanistan is taking place in the province of Herat. The course is designed to encourage the students to participate and share their views and experience through dialogues, role plays, discussions and other exercises. The fact that all the teachings are done in the local languages supports the participatory methods.

“The group discussions and role plays have been the best part of the training. The examples bring alive so many things we all have experienced – and then we have an intense discussion on them!” Qadri, who works at the Crime Investigation Unit in the city of Herat, laughs. Twenty four legal experts and police officers of the province in the western Afghanistan attend the training course. Most of them have many years of experience working in their professions – but just a few have any vocational training.

The “Coordination of Police and Prosecutors” project, financed by the Dutch government and implemented by EUPOL with the support of German GIZ-PIU, runs over a schedule of two years and targets some 500 regional and district participants. [Read further](http://www.eumm.eu)

**EUPM: gender equality awareness project continues with training of trainers**

A two-day training on gender equality for police institution educators at the Republika Srpska Ministry of the Interior Police Academy in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been completed. This is the second of a total of seven training sessions aiming to ensure a systematic, coherent and coordinated approach by the police and judiciary to the issue of the gender equality. “[The] training is a joint activity between the BIH Gender Equality Agency and the EU Police Mission,” said the Director of the Gender Equality Agency. “We hope it will help introduce the principle of gender equality into all aspects of police work, from employment, training and promotion to the issue of harmonising family and professional life.” [Read more](http://www.esdp10years.eu)

**EUPOL RD Congo : une campagne radio de sensibilisation contre les violences sexuelles**

Une campagne radio de sensibilisation à la loi nationale contre les violences sexuelles dénommée « Halte aux violences sexuelles », a été lancée le 20 juin dans la province du Nord-Kivu. Le but de cette initiative, organisée par l’Inspection Provinciale du Nord-Kivu de la Police Nationale Congolaise (PNC) et la mission de police de l’Union européenne EUPOL RD CONGO, est de sensibiliser les policiers et la population sur la loi de 2006 sur les violences sexuelles et d’expliquer les droits et devoirs de chacun dans le cadre de cette dernière.

Au total, 17 émissions de 30 minutes seront diffusées en français et en swahili pendant 17 jours. Chaque émission sera consacrée à expliquer une des 16 infractions prévues dans la loi. Au-delà des explications techniques sur le contenu de la loi fournies par des experts de la PNC et de la mission EUPOL RD CONGO, chaque émission comportera aussi avec la présence d’invités issus d’organisations nationales et internationales œuvrant dans ce domaine au Nord-Kivu. Des contacts des organisations qui peuvent fournir un appui direct à la population dans les cas d’infraction à la loi sur les violences sexuelles seront également fournis lors de chaque émission. [www.eupol-rdc.eu](http://www.eupol-rdc.eu)

**Upcoming activities**

1 July – HR delivers the opening remarks at the Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies (Vilnius)