EU leaders at NATO Summit in Chicago

The European Union participated on 20-21 May at the NATO Summit in Chicago. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, and Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, were in Chicago, along with 60 Heads of State and Government representing NATO members as well as third states.

As most of its Member States are also members of NATO, the EU has in recent years developed a strong partnership with the organisation: at political level through enhanced institutional cooperation, in operations since both are deployed together in several theatres – such as Afghanistan, Kosovo, or the fight against piracy in the Horn of Africa – as well as in the development of military capabilities. The overall context of financial crisis and the new US strategic orientations have made this collaboration even more essential.

The future of Afghanistan was a major topic of the Summit. The EU reiterated the continued long-term commitment to support Afghanistan’s security and development, including significant support to an effective Afghan civilian police force. The EU and its Member States currently provide around €1 billion a year in overall assistance to the country, and they committed to maintain funding at least at current levels after 2014. In the security sector, Member States have agreed in principle to extend until the end of 2014 the mandate of the EU police mission, which focuses on institutional reform of the Afghan police, leadership and specialised training, and improving the links between the police and the justice sector.

In the area of European defence capabilities, the EU presented the substantial progress made through concrete projects facilitated by the European Defence Agency (EDA) on the Pooling & Sharing of defence capabilities among Member States, for example in the areas of Air-to-Air Refuelling or Medical Field Hospitals. The close cooperation between the EU and NATO ensures that the EU’s work on Pooling and Sharing and NATO’s equivalent Smart Defence concept are, in practice, complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Read statements by H. Van Rompuy, J.M. Barroso and Catherine Ashton

Framework agreement for the participation of Albania in EU crisis management operations

The Executive Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) Pierre Vimont and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania Edmond Haxhinasto, signed on the 5 June 2012 in Brussels a Framework Agreement on the participation of Albania in EU crisis management operations.

Albania is already a partner in the area of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), having negotiated ad hoc arrangements for its participation in two European Union military operations: EUFOR Tchad/RCA in Chad and the Central African Republic, and EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

More

EU launches negotiations on an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities

The European Union officially launched on the 6 June in Vienna the multilateral diplomatic process to discuss and negotiate its initiative for an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. Under the chairmanship of Maciej Popowski, Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service, 110 participants from more than 40 countries gathered for this multilateral meeting, at which the European Union introduced a revised version of its draft Code, based on comments received in bilateral meetings with various partners.

Space activities are expanding and their importance is crucial. Space is a resource for all countries in the world, and those which do not yet have space activities will have them in the future. Therefore the EU considers necessary to ensure greater security in outer space and believes a pragmatic and incremental process can assist in achieving this goal. The EU initiative for an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities was launched at the end of 2008 as a means to achieve enhanced safety and security in outer space through the development and implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures.

Press release
Le Conseil proroge de deux ans la mission EULEX Kosovo

Le Conseil a décidé le 6 juin de proroger la mission “État de droit” menée par l’Union européenne au Kosovo d’une période supplémentaire de deux ans jusqu’au 14 juin 2014. Un budget de 111 millions d’euros est alloué pour la première année.

Mme Catherine Ashton, Haute Représentante de l’Union, a déclaré : “EULEX accomplit un travail important et efficace en soutenant l’État de droit au Kosovo. J’encourage les autorités du Kosovo à tirer parti de l’expertise d’EULEX, sa mission s’adaptant à l’évolution des circonstances et aux progrès déjà réalisés. À l’avenir, de plus en plus de responsabilités devront être assumées par les autorités locales.”

Plus d’infos: [EN] [FR]

Les cadres de la police de RDC formés à l’encadrement et au commandement

Trente officiers supérieurs de la Police Nationale Congolaise (PNC) ont terminé le 1er juin à Kinshasa une formation en matière de “Management général et opérationnel”.

Soutenue par la mission EUPOL RD Congo, les Nations Unies et la Coopération allemande, cette formation innovante constitue une étape essentielle vers une gestion plus professionnelle des services et unités de police.

Plus d’infos

EUSEC RD Congo permet le contrôle biométrique de la paie de l’armée en RDC

Malgré la situation sécuritaire précaire à l’Est de la République Démocratique du Congo (RDC), une mission mixte de EUSEC RDC et des Forces Armées de la RDC (FARDC) a permis en mai le contrôle de la paie des effectifs du régiment de Rumangabo, au Nord-Kivu. Il est en effet nécessaire de renforcer le contrôle afin de s’assurer que tous les militaires soient payés chaque mois.

Cette activité est une des multiples facettes du soutien apporté par la mission EUSEC RDC à la bonne gouvernance budgétaire et financière des FARDC, après notamment le recensement des militaires et la distribution de la carte d’identité militaire.

Plus d’infos

Third intake of EUTM Somalia ready to go back to Mogadishu

The third intake of Somali soldiers trained by the EU Training Mission has graduated following an intensive 6 month training course in Bihanga Camp, in Uganda. The 600 non-commissioned officers and recruits are ready for redeployment back to their home country, equipped with new skills sets including fighting in built-up areas, weapon marksmanship, communications, countering improvised explosive devices and life saving.

The passing out parade on 10 May was the symbolic pinnacle of the training effort and was attended by representatives of the EU, Uganda, and Somalia, and covered by key international media organisations, including BBC, Al Jazeera and Agence France Presse. The Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service, Maciej Popowski, praised the work of the mission as a shining example of the success of Uganda-EU cooperation in the quest of stabilising Somalia, which is a top priority for the EU.

More info

Upcoming activities:
11-13 June: High Representative Ashton addresses the European Parliament in Strasbourg
18-19 June: High Representative Ashton at talks on Iran’s nuclear programme in Moscow
25 June: Foreign Affairs Council in Luxembourg