Federica Mogherini meets with Central Asian Foreign Ministers

HR/VP Federica Mogherini this evening met with the Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, ahead of the Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan: "Peace process, security cooperation and regional connectivity", which takes place tomorrow.

Tashkent, 26 March 2018

High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini this evening met with the Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, ahead of the Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan: "Peace process, security cooperation and regional connectivity", which takes place tomorrow.

The meeting took place four months after the most recent formal EU-Central Asia Foreign Ministers' meeting, in Samarkand in November 2017, and two weeks after a landmark informal meeting of Central Asian Heads of State in Astana.

The meeting in Tashkent was an opportunity to discuss the positive trend of EU-Central Asia relations and also to demonstrate the high importance that the European Union attaches to the region's stability and prosperity, as well as closer ties. The High Representative/Vice-President and the Ministers discussed the prospects for further cooperation, with the European Union already a valued partner in development, security, counter-terrorism and environmental matters, among others. The meeting also enabled the Ministers to give further feedback to the High Representative on the new EU Strategy for Central Asia, which is currently being developed. The High Representative and the Ministers exchanged on how priorities such as sustainable development, reform and modernisation, human rights, the rule of law and good governance, business, security, regional cooperation, and connectivity would feature in the updated strategy. The High Representative/Vice-President also informed the Ministers of the European Union's current elaboration of a new Strategy on Connecting Europe to Asia and its relevance for the countries of Central Asia.

On the eve of the Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan, High Representative Mogherini stressed the importance of the international community – including regional partners – delivering on their
commitment to promoting peace and prosperity in Afghanistan. Concrete regional projects involving the Central Asian countries, aiming at increasing connections with Afghanistan, such as railways, air links and pipelines, are welcome and important steps in this regard. They agreed that there is no solution to the conflict other than a peaceful one and that this opportunity must be seized by the Taliban.

The High Representative and the Ministers looked forward to continued high-level contacts over the next months, including the next round of the EU-Central Asia High-level Political and Security Dialogue in Turkmenistan, the Central Asian Environmental Forum in Uzbekistan, and the Regional Conference on Counter-terrorism and the Prevention of Violent Extremism as well as the International Conference on Water, both in Tajikistan, ahead of the next formal EU-Central Asia Foreign Ministers’ meeting in Brussels later in 2018.

More information:

High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini travels to Uzbekistan for the Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan
Factsheet on EU-Central Asia relations
Factsheet on EU-Kazakhstan relations
Website of the EU Delegation to Kazakhstan
Factsheet on EU-Kyrgyz Republic relations
Website of the EU Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic
Factsheet on EU-Tajikistan relations
Website of the EU Delegation to Tajikistan
Factsheet on EU-Turkmenistan relations
Website of the EU Liaison Office in Turkmenistan
Factsheet on EU-Uzbekistan relations
Website of the EU Delegation to Uzbekistan
Factsheet on EU-Afghanistan relations
Website of the EU Delegation to Afghanistan

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