



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



7939/06 (Presse 95)

**PROVISIONAL VERSION**  
**reflecting work on 10 April.**  
**Development issues to be discussed**  
**on 11 April**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

2723rd Council Meeting

### **General Affairs and External Relations**

### **External Relations**

Luxembourg, 10-11 April 2006

President            **Ms Ursula Plassnik**  
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria

\* Some external relations items were adopted without debate at the 2722nd meeting on General Affairs (ST 7938/06 Presse 94).

# **P R E S S**

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7939/06 (Presse 95)

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**EN**

## **Main Results of the Council**

*In view of the recent events in **Belarus**, the Council adopted restrictive measures against President Lukashenko, the Belarusian leadership and officials responsible for the violations of international electoral standards and international human rights law, as well as for the crackdown on civil society and the democratic opposition. The individuals concerned will be subjected to a visa ban and possible further targeted measures. Such measures will not be directed against the Belarusian population. The Council also reiterated its commitment to engage with Belarusian society by further strengthening its support for civil society and democratisation, intensifying and facilitating people-to-people contacts and enhancing access to independent sources of information.*

*On the **Middle East**, the Council indicated that, consistent with Quartet policy, the EU was reviewing its assistance to the Palestinians against the new government's commitment to the Quartet's principles. It recalled that the absence of such commitment will inevitably have an effect on direct assistance to that government. The Council underlined that it remained committed to supporting the Palestinian people and that the EU will continue to provide necessary assistance to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian population.*

*In its "General Affairs" session, the Council:*

- *established an EU planning team in the perspective of a possible EU crisis management operation in **Kosovo** in the field of rule of law and other areas that might be identified by the Council in the context of the future status process,*
- *approved an agreement - which was signed the same day - between the European Union and the **International Criminal Court** on cooperation and assistance*

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**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

*None*

<sup>1</sup>

- 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.

**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

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Denmark:**

Mr Per Stig MØLLER

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Germany:**

Mr Frank-Walter STEINMEIER

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Estonia:**

Mr Urmas PAET

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Greece:**

Ms Theodora BAKOYANNIS  
Mr Ioannis VALINAKIS

Minister for Foreign Affairs  
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

**Spain:**

Mr Alberto NAVARRO GONZÁLEZ

State Secretary for the European Union

**France:**

Ms Catherine COLONNA

Minister with responsibility for European Affairs

**Ireland:**

Mr Dermot AHERN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Italy:**

Mr Rocco CANGELOSI

Permanent Representative

**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 with responsibility for  
Foreign Affairs and Immigration

Mr Nicolas SCHMIT

Minister with responsibility for Foreign Affairs and  
Immigration

**Hungary:**

Mr Ferenc SOMOGYI

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Malta:**

Mr Michael FRENDU

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Netherlands:**

Mr Bernard BOT

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Austria:**

Ms Ursula PLASSNIK  
Mr Hans WINKLER

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs  
State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Poland:**

Mr Stefan MELLER

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Portugal:**

Mr Fernando DE OLIVEIRA NEVES

State Secretary for European Affairs

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**Slovenia:**

Mr Dimitrij RUPEL

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Slovakia:**

Mr Eduard KUKAN

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Finland:**

Mr Erkki TUOMIOJA

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ms Paula LEHTOMÄKI

Minister for Foreign Trade and Development

**Sweden:**

Ms Carin JÄMTIN

Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with  
responsibility for Development Assistance

**United Kingdom:**

Mr Jack STRAW

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

.....

**Commission:**

Ms Benita FERRERO-WALDNER

Member

Mr Peter MANDELSON

Member

.....

**General Secretariat of the Council:**

Mr Javier SOLANA

Secretary-General/High Representative for the CFSP

.....

The Governments of the Acceding States were represented as follows:

**Bulgaria:**

Mr Ivailo KALFIN

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr Lyubomir KYUCHUKOV

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Romania:**

Mr Mihai-Răzvan UNGUREANU

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**ITEMS DEBATED**

**WTO/DOHA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

The Council was briefed by Commissioner Mandelson on the situation and on prospects for further progress in the current round of trade negotiations under the World Trade Organisation's Doha Development Agenda. It took note of the Commission's assessment and of remarks made by delegations as the deadline of 30 April approaches. The EU will intensify bilateral contacts with its partners in the coming weeks.

A special session of the Council will be convened, if necessary, in the margins of negotiations in Geneva around the end of April, at a date to be determined by the Presidency in the light of developments, to contribute to and take position on any progress in the negotiations and to adopt the necessary decisions in this connection.

**UKRAINE**

The Council discussed the situation in Ukraine following the 26 March parliamentary elections, and notably current negotiations on the formation of a new government.

It was noted that the elections, which were considered free and fair, consolidated the democratic breakthrough in Ukraine and should provide a strong basis for renewed efforts to move forward in key reforms aimed at strengthening the rule of law, the transformation of society and strengthening market economy.

**BELARUS - Council conclusions**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. Recalling its previous conclusions on Belarus, notably those of 7 November 2005 and 30 January 2006, and the Declaration adopted by the European Council on 23-24 March 2006 as well as the Presidency declaration on behalf of the European Union of 22 March 2006, the Council once again deplors that the Presidential elections of 19 March were not held in a free and fair manner, and condemns the violence used by the Belarusian authorities against demonstrators and the ensuing arrests of demonstrators and members of the opposition.
2. The Council condemns the treatment of all the political detainees and demands their immediate release. It calls on the Belarusian authorities to respect freedom of expression and assembly in compliance with commitments undertaken by Belarus in the framework of the OSCE and international human rights law.
3. The Council equally condemns the actions taken by the Belarusian authorities against citizens of EU member states, in particular arrests, beatings and humiliating treatment in detention.
4. The Council urges the Belarusian authorities not to penalise or discriminate against those exercising their right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, including the leaders of the opposition parties.
5. In view of the recent events, the Council has decided to adopt restrictive measures against President Lukashenko, the Belarusian leadership and officials responsible for the violations of international electoral standards, in particular those of the OSCE, and international human rights law, as well as for the crackdown on civil society and democratic opposition. The individuals listed in annex will be subjected to a visa ban and possible further targeted measures. Such measures will not be directed against the Belarusian population.

6. The Council will keep the measures to be adopted and the list of persons targeted open and under constant review. The measures should be reviewed in light of the speedy release and rehabilitation of all political detainees, and in the light of reforms made to the Electoral Code to bring it in line with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections as recommended by the OSCE/ODIHR, the conduct of future elections, and concrete actions by the authorities to respect democratic values, the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of expression and of the media, and the freedom of assembly and political association.
7. The EU will continue to act in close coordination with international partners, and urges all countries to adopt similar measures.
8. These steps are adopted in addition to those taken by the Council on 24 September 2004 against four Belarusian officials identified as key actors in the disappearances of four Belarusian personalities; and those taken on 13 December 2004 against two officials responsible for the October 2004 fraudulent elections and referendum as well as severe human rights violations in the repression of peaceful demonstrators.
9. In the course of the election campaign, the European Union has witnessed the emergence of pluralistic forces and the consolidation of a genuine Belarusian opposition as well as a politically active civil society. In very difficult circumstances and at great personal risk, opposition candidates and their supporters have offered the Belarusian population a democratic alternative. The Council reiterates its commitment to engage with Belarusian society by further strengthening its support for civil society and democratisation; it will also intensify and facilitate people-to-people contacts and enhance access to independent sources of information.
10. The EU remains open to developing bilateral relations with Belarus, including in the context of a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the European Neighbourhood Policy, provided the Belarusian authorities prove a sincere willingness to respect human rights, the rule of law and democratic values and initiate democratic reforms.

ANNEX:

31 individuals to be targeted by the restrictive measures (visa ban):

1. Lukashenko Aleksandr Grigorievich (30.08.1954. Kopys, Vitebsk oblast) President
2. Nievyhlas Hienadz Mikalayeovich; Nevyglas Gennady Nikolaevich (11.02.1954. Parahonsk, Pinsk district) Head of President's Administration
3. Petkevich Nataliya Vladimirovna (1972. Minsk) Deputy Head of President's administration
4. Rubinov Anatoly Nikolaevich (1940.) Deputy Head in charge of media and ideology, PA
5. Praliaskowski Alieh Vitoldavich; Proleskovskiy Oleg Vitoldovich (01.10.1963. Zagorsk - Russia, now Sergijev Posad) Aide and Head of the Main Ideological department, PA
6. Radkov Aleksandr Mikhailovich (01.07.1951. Votnya) Minister of Education
7. Rusakevich Vladimir Vasilevich (13.09.1947. Vygonoshchi) Minister of Information
8. Halavanaw Viktor Ryhoravich; Golovanov Viktor Grigorevich (1952. Borisov) Minister of Justice
9. Zimowski Aliaksandr Lieanidavich; Zimovsky Alexander Leonidovich (10.01.1961. Possibly Ukraine) Member of the Upper House of the Parliament; Head of the national state teleradio company
10. Kanapliow Uladzimir Mikalayeovich; Konoplyev Vladimir Nikolaevich (03.01.1954. Akulintsy) Chairman of the Lower House of the Parliament
11. Charhiniets Mikalay Ivanavich; Cherginets Nikolai Ivanovich (17.10.1937. Minsk) Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Upper House
12. Kastsian Siarhiey Ivanavich; Kostyan Sergey Ivanovich (15.01.1941. Usokhi, Mogilev oblast) Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House
13. Orda Mikhail Siarhieyevich, Orda Mikhail Sergeyevich (28.09.1966. Dyatlovo, Grodno oblast) Member of the Upper House, leader of BRSM
14. Lozovik Nikolay Ivanovich (1951.Nevinyany, Minsk oblast), Deputy of the Central Election Commission of Belarus
15. Miklashevich Pyotr Petrovich (1954. Kosuta, Minsk oblast) Prosecutor General
16. Slizhevsky Oleg Leonidovich, Head of the Division of Social organisations, parties and NGOs, Ministry of Justice
17. Khariton Alexandr, Consultant of the Division of Social organisations, parties and NGOs of the Ministry of Justice
18. Smyrnov Yevgeny (1949. Ryazan oblast, Russia), First Deputy of the Chairman of the Economic Court
19. Reutskaya Nadezhda, Judge of the Moscow district of Minsk
20. Trubnikov Nikolay, Judge of the Partizanskiy district of Minsk
21. Kupriyanov Nikolai, Prosecutor of Minsk
22. Sukhorenko Stepan Nikolaevich (27.01.1957. Zdudichi, Mogilev oblast) Chairman of KGB
23. Dementei Vasily Ivanovich, First deputy, KGB
24. Kozik Lieanid Piatrovich; Kozik Leonid Petrovich (13.07.1948. Borisov) Head of the Federation of Trade Unions
25. Koleda Alexandr, Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Brest oblast
26. Usov, N.D., Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Gomel oblast
27. Luchina Leonid, Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Grodno oblast
28. Kravchenko Tayana Aleksandrovna, Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Minsk City
29. Kurlovich Vladimir, Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Minsk oblast
30. Metelitsa Nikolai, Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Mogilev oblast
31. Pischulenok, M.V., Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Vitebsk oblast."

**MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council discussed the situation of the Middle East Peace Process following the swearing in of the new Palestinian government and the result of general elections in Israel.

The Council noted with grave concern that the new Palestinian government has not committed itself to the three principles laid out by the Council and the Quartet in their statements of 30 January: non-violence, recognition of Israel's right to exist and acceptance of existing agreements. It urged the new Palestinian government to meet and implement these three principles and to commit to President Abbas' platform of peace. This would further the Palestinian people's aspirations to peace and statehood.

Consistent with the Quartet statement of 30 March, the EU is reviewing its assistance to the Palestinians against the new government's commitment to the aforementioned principles. The Council recalled that the absence of such commitment will inevitably have an effect on direct assistance to that government. The EU will continue to provide necessary assistance to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian population. In this context, it also underlined the importance of improved access and movement and called on both parties to implement the 15 November 2005 Movement and Access Agreement.

The Council notes with concern the recent violent incidents in the Palestinian Territories and calls on all parties to refrain from violence and exercise self-restraint. The Council urged the Palestinian Authority to ensure security in the areas it controls, and ensure the safety of international personnel.

The Council reiterated its aim to preserve and pursue the democratic functioning and development of the institutions of the Palestinian Authority. In this context, it emphasized the central role of President Abbas as the highest representative of the Palestinian Authority and the PLO and reiterated its support for him.

The Council noted the result of the Israeli general elections. The Council underlined the importance of a strong commitment by the new Israeli government to work towards a negotiated solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on existing agreements, the relevant UNSC Resolutions and the principles laid down in the Road Map. The Council called on Israel to desist from any action, such as settlement activities and the construction of the separation barrier on Palestinian land, that is contrary to international law and threatens the viability of an agreed two-state solution. The Council urged Israel to take steps to improve the humanitarian and economic situation of the Palestinians including by resuming transfers of the withheld Palestinian tax and customs revenues.

The Council welcomed the recent statement of Acting Prime Minister Olmert to seek negotiations with the Palestinians and the positive response to it by President Abbas. In this context, the Council looked forward to an early engagement between the new Israeli government and the Palestinians in order to advance a just, viable and lasting solution which would bring peace to both the Israeli and the Palestinian people."

**IRAN - Council conclusions**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council welcomes the UN Security Council Presidential Statement of 29 March, which reinforced the role of the IAEA and called upon Iran to take the steps required by the IAEA Board of Governors, which are essential to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful purpose of its nuclear programme. It also welcomes the conclusions of the Ministerial meeting in Berlin on 30 March. The Council underlines that the international community is united and determined to uphold the authority of IAEA Board resolutions and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Council remains committed to a diplomatic solution. It calls on Iran to comply with the UN Security Council Presidential Statement and implement all IAEA Board resolutions in full and to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, to allow a return to negotiations.

The Council underlines its continued concerns about the human rights situation in Iran, in particular regarding the situation of Bahá'ís and other religious minorities as well as of human rights defenders, including Mr. Akbar Ganji and Mr. Abdolfattah Soltani."

**EU-JAPAN SUMMIT**

The Council took note of the state of preparations for the EU-Japan summit to be held in Tokyo on 24 April 2006.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Council had a discussion with a view to helping the Presidency prepare a renewed EU sustainable development strategy to be adopted at the June European Council.

In June 2005, the European Council adopted a declaration on guiding principles for sustainable development based on the four principles of environment protection, social equity and cohesion, economic prosperity and meeting international responsibilities. In December 2005, it looked forward to adopting in June 2006 an ambitious and comprehensive strategy, comprising targets, indicators and an effective monitoring procedure, integrating the internal and external dimensions and based on a positive long-term vision, bringing together the Community's sustainable development priorities and objectives.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

– ***Southeast Europe - Free trade agreement***

The Romanian delegation informed the Council on the decision by prime ministers of Southeast European countries on 6 April in Bucharest to launch negotiations on a regional free trade agreement on the basis of CEFTA (Central Europe Free Trade Agreement).

The Presidency commended the initiative.

– ***United Nations world summit follow-up***

The Council had a brief exchange of views on the implementation of the outcome of the UN world summit.

The Council also adopted conclusions on the subject (*see 7157/06*)

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**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

**None**

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