

### *Interculturalism between the twin hazards of multiculturalism and assimilation*

The simmering debate in Europe about multiculturalism versus assimilation has now 'exploded'. The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, famously stated in November 2010 that 'multiculturalism in Germany ('Multikulti') had failed, completely failed'. On behalf of Belgium, Prime Minister Yves Leterme immediately agreed with her. In February 2011 both Prime Minister David Cameron and President Nicholas Sarkozy could be heard also declaring that multiculturalism was a failure, although only the French President endorsed assimilation as the alternative. Professor Olivier Roy, an eminent French scholar of contemporary Islam, has broadened the critique, declaring that 'both assimilation and multiculturalism have failed'.

How should one interpret the overall trend in policy making in this broad field where there are multiple policy mechanisms that represent different paradigms, which are being executed through multiple tiers of governance (EU, national and sub-national governments)? Some things are clear. The legal rights-based non-discrimination paradigm is strongly installed at the level of EU and thence national law, as confirmed now through the Lisbon Treaty in the Charter for Fundamental Rights (Article 21). This in itself can be described either as a passive liberal multiculturalism, or support for assimilation. But active multiculturalist policies on the part of member states are on the wane in those countries such as the Netherlands and the UK where they were most explicit, and elsewhere as in France and Germany such policies are being explicitly rejected at the highest political level. The big terrorist acts of the last decade and securitisation of multicultural relations have had an impact, pushing in favour of active integration policies incorporating obligations alongside rights, while at the same time underlining the importance of organisations representative of Muslim minorities. Immigration and citizenship policies have become more restrictive and more conditional on positive integration criteria and tests, which means movement in the assimilationist direction. On the other hand some extreme exclusionary provisions have been moderated in favour of general rights (e.g. the shift in German citizenship law). Moreover the Charter for Fundamental Rights also requires that the Union 'shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity' (Article 22). Overall this is looking like a political landscape favouring a compromise middle ground between the polar opposites of assimilation versus multiculturalism, driven by experience and comparisons, based on a combination of rights, obligations and active policies, and which for want of a better term may be called 'interculturalism'.

Still there is clearly a powerful movement of public opinion and political action continuing to push the policy set more towards assimilation and further away from multiculturalism.

But this movement is so far only a partial tendency, with hybrid interculturalism occupying space between the two polar types. The movement towards assimilationist regimes aiming at better integration is certainly understandable, but it is also a movement full of dangers for European politics and society. European centre-right parties in government see themselves competing for support with extreme right wing parties that have racist and therefore undemocratic agendas. This is witnessed in both political discourse (Chancellor Merkel's statement about the failure of multiculturalism) and selective actions (President Sarkozy's campaign against the Roma, and proposals for withdrawal of citizenship). Analogous positions can be observed in the politics of the Netherlands, Flemish Belgium and the Italy. Some writers are sounding the alarm bell, interpreting these current developments in European politics in more fundamental terms<sup>1</sup>. For S. Zizek the old political competition between centre-right and centre-left policies is giving way to a new configuration, in which a broad amorphous centre finds itself in competition with an extreme right on the rise. The governing class of the centre is sliding into increasing acquiescence towards moderate versions of the agenda of the extreme right on matters of immigration and citizenship policy. It is debatable how far this argument should be taken, yet it has sufficient credibility at least to reinforce the crucial need, as regards policies towards Europe's minorities and especially the Muslims, for discourse and practice coalesce around an intercultural compromise. If the European extreme right gains further support for racist and exclusionary policies (the French National Front leader is now ahead of President Sarkozy in the polls) the scene is set for the most fundamental challenge to European political values since the second world war. Ominously, these movements towards the extreme right are common now to virtually the whole of the old core Europe, or the founding states of the European Union (France, Germany, Belgian Flanders, Netherland and Italy).

Even so, the 'explosion' of the internal European debate about multiculturalism looks relatively gentle compared to the revolutionary implosion of authoritarian regimes of the Arab world. These two seemingly independent political movements are in fact deeply interconnected. Both are products of the inability of the North African states and even Turkey to have provided adequate living standards and opportunities to their peoples, leading to the masses of population that have resorted to migration, or would like to do so, as the escape. The North African peoples are now insisting on democratic change, which is a movement that Europe wants to see succeed. The EU now debates how it can best encourage and help Arab democracy. But if the EU at home developed increasingly exclusionary or populist assimilation policies towards the diaspora communities of these same countries it will find itself entangled with a

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<sup>1</sup> Slavoj Zizek, Liberal Multiculturalism Masks an Old Barbarism with a Human Face, *Guardian*, 3 October 2010.

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dreadful web of political contradictions and hypocrisy over its declared values. The promotion of an 'intercultural' compromise or model, with this term to be used as label for a careful and complex blend of policy instruments, becomes an urgent imperative.

The EU's adoption through the Lisbon Treaty of the Charter of Fundamental Rights reinforces its legal and political bulwark against the slide towards racism and exclusion. But in addition the leadership of the European Union institutions – President Van Rompuy, President Barroso, High Representative Ashton and Commissioner Waldstrom – have an important role to play here in elaborating a coherent European political discourse overarching both internal and external spheres.

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## London Conference on Libya: Chair's statement

London, 29 March 2011. [Link](#)

Today Foreign Ministers and leaders from the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the African Union, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the European Union and NATO gathered in London to discuss the situation in Libya.

### *Implementing UNSCRs 1970 and 1973*

Participants today have reaffirmed the importance of full and swift implementation of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973 (2011). Participants reaffirmed their strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya. They have reaffirmed their commitment to enforce the restrictions and sanctions on the regime and to act to prevent the supply and operations of mercenaries. We are working together to ensure that all states implement these Resolutions, of which Qadhafi still stands in breach. We agreed to consider pursuing, in the UN and regional organisations, additional sanctions on individuals and entities associated with the regime. Participants here today are implementing these measures as a clear message to Qadhafi that he cannot attack civilians with impunity.

UNSCR 1973 (2011) authorises all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form. A no-fly zone is in place over Libya and is preventing Qadhafi from attacking civilians from the air. We have a broad based coalition to implement the military actions mandated by UNSCR 1973 (2011). So far, the action we have taken has been successful in protecting countless civilians from Qadhafi's forces and in effectively wiping out Qadhafi's air capability. Participants paid tribute to the bravery and professionalism of military personnel from all contributors in the coalition.

Current and potential contributors to military operations, including NATO Allies, also met to underline their commitment to the necessity of military action to implement fully the provisions of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973 (2011). They reaffirmed their unified support for this course of action through making effective and sustained contributions to military operations until the international community's goals are secured. Participants, including regional states, welcomed NATO's contribution in agreeing to take on command and control of all military operations to enforce the arms embargo, the no-fly zone, and other actions needed, as authorised in UNSCR 1973 (2011), to protect civilians.

Participants here today have reaffirmed their support through military, logistical, financial or humanitarian contributions and pledges in support of the people of Libya. UNSCR 1973 (2011) laid out very clear conditions that must be met, including the establishment of an immediate ceasefire, a halt to all attacks on civilians and full humanitarian access to those in need. Participants agreed to continue their efforts until all conditions are fulfilled. The Libyan regime will be judged by its actions and not its words.

### *Preparing for Libya's future*

We agreed that it is not for any of the participants here today to choose the government of Libya: only the Libyan people can do that. Participants agreed that Qadhafi and his regime have completely lost legitimacy and will be held accountable for their actions. The Libyan people must be free to determine their own future. Participants recognised the need for all Libyans, including the Interim Transitional National Council, tribal leaders and others, to come together to begin an inclusive political process, consistent with the relevant UNSCRs, through which they can choose their own future. We call on the international community to support this process, working closely with the UN Secretary General's Special Representative Abdel-Elah Mohamed Al-Khatib. Regional actors, particularly Libya's fellow African countries and Arab neighbours, have an important role to play.

Participants today are concerned for the wellbeing of up to 80,000 internally displaced persons. We have agreed priorities for a humanitarian response. We have also agreed on the need to develop and coordinate the international approach to ensure the availability of sufficient resources to meet the humanitarian needs of the Libyan people. We noted the offer of Qatar to facilitate the sale of Libyan oil where consistent with international law, in particular the provisions of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973 and other relevant UN resolutions, and to support the people of Libya in using the proceeds to help meet their humanitarian needs. Learning the lessons from the past, we agreed on the need for priorities for long-term support. Activities to stabilise the situation will need to start early and be part of an integrated and comprehensive international response.

### *Taking forward support from the International community for the people of Libya*

To take this work forward, participants of the conference agreed to establish the Libya Contact Group. This Contact Group will meet to: provide leadership and overall political direction to the international effort in close coordination with the UN, AU, Arab League, OIC, and EU to support Libya; provide a forum for coordinating the international response on Libya; and provide a focal point in the international community for contact with the Libyan parties. Qatar has agreed to convene the first meeting of the Group as soon as possible. Thereafter, the chairmanship will rotate between the countries of the region and beyond it. The North Atlantic Council, meeting alongside its coalition partners, will provide the executive political direction to NATO operations. Participants welcomed the UN Secretary-General's offer to lead the coordination of humanitarian assistance and planning for longer-term stabilisation support. Turkey, other key regional players and international agencies offered to support this work and take it forward with the Contact Group.

This Conference has shown that we are united in our aims. We are united in seeking a Libya that does not pose a threat to its own citizens, the region or more widely; and in working with the people of Libya as they choose their own way forward to a peaceful and stable future.

UNSC: ‘all necessary measures’ to protect civilians in Libya  
Press release  
New York, 17 March 2011. [Link](#)

The Security Council today effectively authorized the use of force in Libya to protect civilians from attack, specifically in the eastern city of Benghazi, which Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi has reportedly said he will storm tonight to end a revolt against his regime.

Acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which provides for the use of force if needed, the Council adopted a resolution by 10 votes to zero, with five abstentions, authorizing Member States “to take all necessary measures... to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamhoriya, including Benghazi, while excluding an occupation force.”

The abstentions included China and Russia, which have the power of veto, as well as Brazil, Germany and India.

Expressing grave concern at the deteriorating situation, the escalation of violence, and the heavy civilian casualties, the Council established a no-fly zone, banning all flights – except those for humanitarian purposes – in Libyan airspace in order to help protect civilians. It specifically calls on Arab League states to cooperate with other Member States in taking the necessary measures.

The Arab League last weekend requested the Council to impose a no-fly zone after Mr. Qadhafi was reported to have used warplanes, warships, tanks and artillery to seize back cities taken over in what started out a month ago as mass protests by peaceful civilians seeking an end to his 41-year rule.

The resolution further strengthens an arms embargo that the Council imposed last month when it unanimously approved sanctions against the Libyan authorities, freezing the assets of its leaders and referring the ongoing violent repression of civilian demonstrators to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The Council called on Member States today to ensure strict implementation of the embargo, including through inspection of suspect ships on the high seas and of planes going to or from Libya, deplored the flow of mercenaries into Libya whom, according to media reports, Mr. Qadhafi has recruited.

Demanding an immediate ceasefire and a complete end to violence and all attacks against and abuse of civilians, and condemning the “gross and systematic violation of human rights, including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and summary executions,” the Council noted that the attacks currently taking place may amount to crimes against humanity.

ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo has already opened an investigation into Mr. Qadhafi, some of his sons and members of his inner circle for such crimes in repressing peaceful protesters. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said Mr. Qadhafi lost his legitimacy when he declared war on his people.

Mr. Ban spoke with Libya’s Foreign Minister Musa Kusa by phone yesterday and, through him, urged the authorities to immediately halt the violence against civilians.

In its resolution, the Council condemned acts of violence and intimidation committed by the Libyan authorities against journalists, media professionals and associated personnel, and the head of the UN agency entrusted with promoting the right to freedom of expression today urged the authorities to respect human life and ensure that citizens are not denied their rights, notably the right of children to education in a safe environment.

UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Director-General Irina Bokova reiterated her previous call to the Government to respect freedom of expression and ensure that journalists can carry out their duties freely without fear of intimidation or attack.

The UN World Food Programme (WFP), meanwhile, has boosted aid delivery to people fleeing the violence in Libya with the provision of more than 15,000 daily hot meals cooked in a transit camp along Libya’s border with Tunisia. Some 300,000 people, mainly migrant workers, have fled over the borders to Tunisia and Egypt in the past month.

Over the past week, WFP and its partner humanitarian organizations have been running the two largest food distribution points in Choucha transit camp on the Tunisian border. The centre hosts between 15,000 and 18,000 people, mainly Bangladeshis and African migrant workers, waiting to depart for their home countries.

The recent protests in Libya are part of a broader wave of unrest across North Africa and the Middle East that has led to the ousting of long-standing regimes in Tunisia and Egypt.

Related Document:  
- Full text of the UN Security Council resolution 1973.  
[Access here.](#)

President Van Rompuy and EUHR Ashton on UNSC resolution  
Brussels, 17 March 2011. [Link](#)

We welcome Resolution 1973 approved tonight by the United Nations Security Council.

We fully endorse the UN demand for a complete end to the violence and all attacks against, and abuses of, civilians, and finding a solution to the crisis. The European Council has called on Colonel Kadhafi to relinquish power immediately and urged Libya to rapidly embark on an orderly transition to democracy through broad-based dialogue.

We stress our grave concern for the situation of the population. We reiterate the 11 March Declaration of the European Council



that the safety of the people must be ensured by all necessary means. Resolution 1973 provides a clear legal basis for the members of the international community to provide protection to the civilian population.

We underline the important role of the Arab League and our Arab partners. Their cooperation is essential and their role is clearly recognised by the Resolution. We must ensure that we continue to coordinate closely, together with the United Nations, the Arab League, the African Union and other international partners on how we can best contribute as soon as possible to the implementation of the decisions of the Security Council.

The European Union is ready to implement this Resolution within its mandate and competences.

The European Council of 24-25 March and the Foreign Affairs Council of 21 March will discuss the situation in Libya and adopt the necessary decisions in that regard.

### *EU imposes additional sanctions on Libya* *Press release*

Brussels, 24 March 2011. [Link](#)

The Council of the European Union adopted legislation on 23 March 2011 to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1973 which broadened the scope of the restrictive measures against Libya imposed by UNSCR 1970 and introduced further measures.

The new Council Decision amends Decision 2011/137/CFSP in order to prevent all flights in the air-space of Libya and strengthen the enforcement of the arms embargo. It also bans Libyan aircraft from EU Member States' airspace as well as any aircraft it has reason to believe is carrying prohibited items, including armed mercenary personnel.

The visa ban and the assets freeze imposed under Decision 2011/137/CFSP are extended to include the additional persons listed in UNSCR 1973 deemed to be involved in or complicit in serious human rights abuses that violate international law, including those resulting from aerial bombardments or other attacks on civilian populations and facilities.

The assets freeze is extended to the new entities on the UN list under UNSCR 1973, including the National Oil Corporation and also to five subsidiaries of the NOC designated autonomously by the EU.

The Council also adopted a regulation implementing Regulation 204/2011 to take account of new UN and EU autonomous designations for the assets freeze.

The legislation, i.e.

– Council Decision 2011/178/CFSP of 23 March 2011 amending Council Decision 2011/137/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya, and 8110/11 2

– Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 288/2011 implementing Article 16(1) and (2) of Council Regulation (EU)

No 204/2011 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya

was adopted by written procedure and appear in the Official Journal of the European Union of Thursday, 24 March 2011.

The restrictive measures are kept under constant review.

### *Remarks of the President Van Rompuy following the Council's meeting*

Brussels, 25 March 2011. [Link](#)

Regarding Libya, we have showed our unity and our determination. Yesterday, we set out an appropriate course to stop Kadhafi from killing his own people.

At the extraordinary European Council of 11 March we determined the conditions together. In the following international diplomatic effort, the Europeans were in the lead. This resulted in the UN

Security Council resolution on the protection of civilians as a reason for intervention: it is a historic resolution. The actions taken in conformity with that resolution, and again with the Europeans in the lead, have helped to save thousands of lives.

The concrete decisions of this European Council on LIBYA are also very significant.

- Further sanctions against the regime; we want to stop their income flow from oil and gas sales.
- More humanitarian assistance if needed; because the situation remains worrisome.
- And a confirmation of our political objectives: Kadhafi must go, and there must be a political transition, led by the Libyans.

### *NATO takes over Libya operation* *Press release*

Brussels, 27 March 2011. [Link](#)

NATO Allies have decided to take on the whole military operation in Libya under the United Nations Security Council Resolution. Our goal is to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas under threat of attack from the Gaddafi regime. NATO will implement all aspects of the UN Resolution. Nothing more, nothing less.

This is a very significant step, which proves NATO's capability to take decisive action. In the past week, we have put together a complete package of operations in support of the United Nations Resolution by sea and by air. We are already enforcing the arms embargo and the No Fly Zone, and with today's decision we are going beyond. We will be acting in close coordination with our international and regional partners to protect the people of Libya. We have directed NATO's top operational Commander to begin executing this operation with immediate effect.

### *EU additional sanctions on Libya*

*Press release*

Brussels, 24 March 2011. [Link](#)

The Council decided today to extend restrictive measures to further persons and entities in view of the gravity of the situation in Libya.

The travel ban and the freeze on assets are extended to another 11 persons and the assets freeze is applied to a further nine entities.

On 28 February 2011, the Council adopted Decision 2011/137/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya. The additional persons and entities will be included in the lists of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures set out in Annexes II and IV to Decision 2011/137/CFSP. The new lists will be published in the Official Journal on 22 March.

### *PM Putin on the UNSC resolution*

*First appeared on RT*

*Transcribed by Marjolein van den Broek*

Votkinsk, 21 March 2011

The Libyan regime does not meet the criteria of a democratic country by any parameters. It is obvious. I cannot add more. But of course, it is a complicated country, based on relations between tribes. It needs special regulation. The situation in the country collapsed into military conflict. But it does not mean you or anyone can interfere by defending one side. About the UN resolution (which gives grounds for the present military intervention): this resolution is defective. If we look at what is written there, it becomes obvious that it allows everybody to take any action against a sovereign state. And it reminds me of Medieval call for a Crusade – when countries call on each other to go out and liberate something. Now concerning the core of events: by the way Russia did not vote for this resolution. It is obvious that this is military interference from the outside. But you know, I do not worry more about this military intervention – there are a lot of military conflicts going on – and unfortunately will unfold in future. I am worried more about the ease with which decisions are being made to use force in international affairs nowadays. For example it has become a steady trend in U.S. policy. During Clinton's era they bombed Yugoslavia and Belgrade. Bush invaded Afghanistan. Iraq was invaded under far-fetched false pretences, liquidating an entire administration, including Saddam's children. And now it's Libya's turn. It opens with a pretext to defend civilians. But it's the civilians who die under the bombs during air strikes. Where is the logic and conscience here? Both are absent. There are already victims among the civilians. What I want to say here is that we want and we plan to live in peace with everybody. We desire not to quarrel with anyone and more-so to be at war. But current developments in Libya confirm Russia's policy of building up its defenses is correct.

### *President Medvedev on the UNSC resolution*

*First appeared on RT*

*Transcribed by Marjolein van den Broek*

Moscow, 21 March 2011.

There are different comments regarding what is happening but I believe we should be extremely careful in our assessments. In no way is it acceptable to use expressions which essentially lead to a clash of civilisations, such as 'crusade' and so forth. This is unacceptable. Otherwise, everything can end considerably worse than what is happening today.

### *Statement by EUHR Ashton on the Referendum in Egypt*

Egypt, 21 March 2011. [Link](#)

I have closely followed the unfolding events in Egypt since the popular uprising started on 25 January. I have visited Egypt twice, on 22 February and 14 March, engaging closely with the interim leadership, political parties, civil society and young people, and conveying the EU's support to Egypt's democratic transition. The referendum on the Constitutional amendments, organised on 19 March, is a first step in Egypt's path to an open, democratic and pluralistic society.

I welcome the smooth conduct of the referendum which was generally held in a constructive and friendly atmosphere. It shows Egypt is making good progress towards a more open political system.

Egypt's future lies in the hands of the Egyptians and it is the Egyptian people alone who can establish and maintain a stable and democratic society. However, the EU, as a neighbour and partner, stands ready to lend support in this crucial and irreversible process.

### *Egypt: EU imposes assets freeze*

Brussels, 21 March 2011. [Link](#)

The Council adopted today a decision and a regulation imposing the freezing of all funds and economic resources owned or controlled by persons identified as responsible for the misappropriation of Egyptian state funds, and natural or legal persons associated with them.

The decision and the regulation target a list of 19 persons, including former president Hosni Mubarak. The list will be published in the Official Journal later this week.

On 21 February, the European Union declared its readiness to support the peaceful and orderly transition to a civilian and democratic government in Egypt based on the rule of law, with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and to support efforts to create an economy which enhances social cohesion and promotes growth.

**Statement by EUHR Ashton and EU Commissioner Füle on Morocco's future constitutional reform**  
Brussels, 10 March 2011. [Link](#)

We welcome the King of Morocco's announcement yesterday of extensive constitutional reform.

It represents a commitment to further democratization. The proposed constitutional reform touches on key elements for modernisation, such as regionalisation, the independence of justice, the separation of powers, the strengthening of the government's role and equality for women. Once fully implemented, it will be a qualitative leap in the process of reforms already initiated by Morocco.

It opens a period of political debate that should include all political actors and civil society and be a response to the legitimate aspirations of the Moroccan people.

The proposed constitutional reform is in line with the ambitions of the Advanced Status. The European Union stands ready to support Morocco's efforts to implement such far-reaching reforms.

**Statement by EUHR Ashton on violence in Syria**  
Brussels, 24 March 2011. [Link](#)

I am deeply concerned by the increasing number of persons killed and demonstrators arrested in the Southern city of Deraa.

The use of live ammunition and excessive force against peaceful protestors must cease immediately and is to be sharply condemned.

I reiterate the EU's call on the Syrian authorities to uphold the right to peaceful assembly and to abide by international standards calling for the use of non violent means by law enforcement officials. I call for the immediate release of all persons arrested during the demonstrations.

The leadership in Syria must meet the legitimate grievances and aspirations of the people calling for political and socio-economic reforms, the end of the state of emergency and the release of all political prisoners and human rights defenders.

**EU Council conclusions on Yemen**  
Brussels, 21 March 2011. [Link](#)

The Council expresses its utmost concern at the situation in Yemen and the increasing level of violence. It strongly condemns the use of force against protestors and deeply deplores the injuries and loss of life caused. It urges the security forces to refrain from the use of violence immediately. Should the safety of demonstrators not be ensured, the Council and Member States will review their policies towards Yemen. The Council calls on all parties concerned to ensure respect for

humanitarian aid principles and provide unimpeded access to people in need.

It is the responsibility of the Yemeni authorities to ensure respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Those responsible for loss of life and injuries caused should be held accountable for their actions and brought to justice.

To achieve an orderly political transition, the Council urges the government of Yemen and all parties to engage in constructive, comprehensive and inclusive dialogue, without delay.

The EU reiterates its view that political and economic reforms are essential for the future of Yemen and remains ready to support the Yemeni people in this respect.

**EU Council conclusions on Iran**  
Brussels, 21 March 2011. [Link](#)

1. The European Union is deeply concerned that the human rights situation in Iran continues to deteriorate. The EU is alarmed by the dramatic increase in executions in recent months and the systematic repression of Iranian citizens, including human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, women's activists, bloggers, persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities and members of the opposition, who face harassment and arrests for exercising their legitimate rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. The EU reiterates its strong condemnation of the use of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

2. The EU calls on the Iranian authorities to live up to the international human rights obligations that Iran has entered into, so as to protect and promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms to which the Iranian people are entitled. In particular it calls on Iran to release immediately all political prisoners and to halt executions.

3. The European Union attaches great importance to the improvement of the human rights situation in Iran and will increase its efforts to that end. The European Union will also continue to speak out in support of individuals and civil society organizations which stand up for the human rights which all Iranians should enjoy.

4. The EU is ready to discuss human rights issues with the Iranian authorities and to keep channels of communication open to that end.

5. The European Union will continue to address human rights abuses in Iran, including by swiftly introducing restrictive measures targeted against those responsible for grave human rights violations.

### *EUHR Ashton on attacks in Jerusalem and Gaza* Brussels, 21 March 2011. [Link](#)

I condemn in the strongest terms the terrorist attack in Jerusalem this afternoon. I express my condolences to the family of the deceased, and extend my sincere wishes to the persons injured for their full and speedy recovery.

I deeply regret yesterday's loss of life in Gaza and express my most serious concern at the escalating violence in the Strip. I condemn the recent mortar and rocket attacks out of the Gaza strip against Israeli civilian population. Attacks on any civilians are completely unacceptable in any circumstance. I urge all parties to show restraint and to avoid further escalation of violence. I call for the establishment of a lasting truce in Gaza.

I reiterate the EU's position and my personal conviction that the only way forward in resolving the conflict in the Middle East is through peaceful negotiations.

### *EU Council conclusions on Bahrain* Brussels, 21 March 2011. [Link](#)

The Council is extremely concerned at the serious and deteriorating situation in Bahrain, and deplores the loss of life and the escalation of violence. The European Union urges all security forces in the country not to use violence against the demonstrators. It calls on demonstrators to refrain from deliberately intimidating actions.

The Council is equally concerned by reports that opposition figures have been arrested. The Government and the security forces must respect and protect the human rights of peaceful protestors, including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. The authorities must also ensure full access for all to emergency medical treatment in accordance with international standards.

The Council also calls on all parties to enter into meaningful and constructive dialogue without delay or preconditions, with a view to bringing about reforms.

### *EUHR Ashton after extended ministerial meeting on Eastern Partnership* Bratislava, 3 March 2011. [Link](#)

I am very grateful for this opportunity to meet with partners to discuss the Eastern Partnership.

This meeting comes at a particularly timely moment. Events in the Southern part of the European Neighbourhood have underlined the importance of deepening our relations with all partners on the basis of an agenda of systemic political and economic reform.

As a result our commitment today to strengthening relations with our Eastern Neighbours through political association and further economic integration is solid and unwavering. In nearly two years since its launch, the Eastern Partnership has provided an ambitious and forward-looking vehicle to achieve these goals. It has provided political impetus in key areas such as our negotiations on new Association Agreements with partners; mobility; trade and investment and energy cooperation.

Through its multilateral track we have developed a network of contacts and expertise at all levels in key areas of mutual concern: government to government; business to business and people to people. We have also supported the establishment of a Civil Society Forum representing civil society in all partner countries and in the European Union, thereby ensuring that civil society has a strong voice in the Eastern Partnership.

We discussed with partners today ways of maximising the impact of the Eastern Partnership and making it more visible. And we reviewed progress in the run up to the Eastern Partnership Summit which will co-hosted by Hungary and Poland in the autumn.

The Eastern Partnership is based on a joint commitment: on the EU's side to support reform and to bring our Eastern partners closer. On our partners' side that commitment is to undertake necessary political, economic and sectoral reforms. We recognise renewed efforts are required on both sides if the Eastern Partnership is to be a lasting success.

Above all the Eastern Partnership is about promoting a positive reform agenda leading to closer relations between us. It is deeply practical and concrete. It is not about words. And we should judge the ultimate success of this initiative in practical terms. By this I mean on the basis of: positive democratic developments in partner countries; increases in trade and investment between us; enhanced mobility; improved energy and transport links; the development of ever more dynamic relations between us at every level.

### *EU further extends restrictive measures on Belarus* *Press release*

Brussels, 21 March 2011 [Link](#)

As foreseen by the Prague Declaration from 2009 an Eastern Partnership Summit is due to be organized in 2011. In light of the fact that a number of important international events will also take place at the originally planned dates, the Hungarian Presidency and the incoming Polish Presidency have, in consultation with the President of the European Council, initiated to re-schedule the Eastern Partnership summit for the second half of 2011 in Poland. The reasons for the change of date and venue are purely logistical.

The Hungarian Presidency reiterates the importance it attaches to the Eastern Partnership and is determined to continue its preparations in co-ordination with the incoming Polish Presidency, the President of the European Council, and the European Commission, to ensure a successful and substantial summit meeting and a reinforced commitment to the goals



and values of the Eastern Partnership. The incoming Polish Presidency expressed its readiness to include this Summit in its Presidency programme and to cooperate closely with the Hungarian Presidency in order to ensure that the results of the preparations will be taken into account as much as possible.

#### Related Document:

- Council Implementing Decisions 2011/174/CFSP and 2010/639/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus

22 March 2011.

[Access here.](#)

#### *EU statement on arrests of youth activists in Azerbaijan*

Baku, 10 March 2011. [Link](#)

- The EU Delegation takes note with concern of the increasing number of reports of arrests of youth activists in the country.
- The EU Delegation closely monitors domestic developments in Azerbaijan, notably in the domain of democracy and human rights. Those are essential elements for political stability, and key elements of the foundation on which the Eastern Partnership is built upon.
- The EU Delegation reiterates the great importance it attaches to all fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.
- The EU Delegation encourages Azerbaijan to maintain an open dialogue with members of civil society organisations expressing views and opinions in a peaceful manner.
- The EU Delegation calls on Azerbaijan to ensure due process in all the recent cases of arrest of youth activists and support the cooperation established with OSCE on the area of democracy and human rights.

#### *EU Commissioner Füle signed Memorandum of Understanding on the NIP for Ukraine*

Brussels, 2 March 2011. [Link](#)

[Extracts]

European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood policy Stefan Füle signed today a Memorandum of Understanding on the National Indicative Programme for Ukraine for €470 million Euros for the period of 2011-13.

Assistance provided under the ENPI National Indicative Programme for Ukraine should focus on three priority areas: Good Governance and the Rule of Law Facilitation of the entry into force of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area) and Sustainable Development.

The overall indicative budget for the EU assistance to Ukraine under the ENPI is EURO 470.05 million. This includes the €43.37 million earmarked for the Comprehensive Institution Building Programme (CIB), and Euro 30.79 million for Eastern Partnership pilot regional development programmes.

Commissioner Stefan Füle said "I was very happy to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on the National Indicative Programme for Ukraine with Mr Kluyev today. There has been progress. I took that opportunity to remind Deputy Prime Minister Kluyev that the DCFTA is part of a broader Association Agreement which includes crucial elements on human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms. It is essential to the success of the Agreement that progress is made by the Ukrainian side in these areas. In this context, I underlined our strong desire to see critical reforms in Ukraine pursued as quickly as possible, especially on the constitutional, judicial and electoral fronts.

#### *EULEX statement on war crime arrests*

Pristina, 17 March 2011. [Link](#)

EULEX can confirm that yesterday (16 March) nine people were arrested in an investigation relating to war crimes. The warrants for arrest were issued by a Pre-trial Judge at the District Court of Pristina. Following the arrests and the individuals' appearances in court, five individuals were ordered to be detained for thirty days; two individuals were given house arrest and an eighth individual was ordered to appear at a police station three times a week. A ninth individual has been detained in Switzerland. The charges against these individuals relate to murder, torture and violations of body integrity and health of Kosovo Albanian and Serb civilians and prisoners of war in the area of Kleçkë/Klečka in 1999. The investigation is under the supervision of a EULEX Prosecutor from the Kosovo Special Prosecution Office (SPRK).

EULEX can confirm that there is an arrest warrant for Fatmir Limaj. The warrant also relates to the so-called Kleçkë/Klečka case and serious allegations of war crimes. EULEX prosecutors have been in contact with Mr Limaj to discuss his situation as Mr Limaj is a Deputy in the Kosovo Assembly and therefore is entitled to immunity. The issue of immunity is currently being clarified.

Everyone is innocent until proven guilty. Everyone is equal before the law. But it is the duty and obligation of independent prosecutors to initiate investigations when serious allegations are made.

EULEX would like to make it clear that the judicial process should be absolutely free from political interference.

The Government of Kosovo has consistently expressed its desire to improve the rule of law in Kosovo. Indeed, the Government has made this a priority. EULEX calls on the Government to continue to respect the basic principles.

*EU Council conclusions on Bosnia and Herzegovina*  
Brussels, 21 March 2011. [Link](#)

1. The Council reiterates its unequivocal commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU perspective, as agreed at the 2003 Thessaloniki European Council. The EU will continue to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in this regard, including through a strengthened presence. The Council reaffirms its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign and united country.
  2. The Council believes that anchoring the EU agenda at the core of the political process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and addressing the political criteria are essential for progress. The Council expresses its deep concern that governments have not yet been formed at every level in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It calls on the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to engage responsibly and in a spirit of compromise to achieve as soon as possible the formation of governments at every level in order to address the outstanding urgent and necessary reforms to achieve qualitative steps forward on its path towards the EU.
  3. The Council emphasises, while referring to Council conclusions of 14 December 2010, that as a matter of priority, the country needs to bring the Constitution into compliance with the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). A credible effort in this regard is key to fulfil the country's obligations under the Interim/Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The adoption of a State Aid Law at state level is a further obligation stemming from the IA/SAA. In addition, the adoption of a state level census law and speeding up reforms are important elements of the country's EU integration process. Progress in addressing these issues would demonstrate the commitment of the authorities and the political parties to the EU integration process. A satisfactory track record in implementing obligations under the SAA/IA would be a key element for a credible membership application to be considered by the EU.
- The Council stresses the importance of improving and strengthening the efficient functioning of the state and the institutions, including through necessary constitutional changes. In particular, the country will need to be in a position to adopt, implement and enforce laws and rules of the EU.
4. The EU is finalising the preparations to establish a reinforced, single EU Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina who will take a lead in supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina on EU related matters. It will take these steps in coordination with the broader international community. The single EU representative will have a broad and balanced set of instruments to maximise the incentives provided by the EU, in line with established procedures. These will include continued political facilitation on issues related to the EU integration process, IPA financing and the monitoring and support of reform progress through bodies established by the SAA/IA.
  5. The Council also remains determined to support the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and supports the proposals from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the possible use of restrictive measures.

The Council underlines the EU's CSDP missions, namely the EU Police Mission and EUFOR Operation Althea, as important elements of its overall strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council reiterates its agreement to keep these missions under regular review, including on the basis of the situation on the ground, with a view to assessing in the future EU engagement in this area.

6. The Council reaffirms its full support for the current HR/EUSR Valentin Inzko. The Council calls on Bosnia and Herzegovina to meet the outstanding objectives and conditions which remain necessary for the closure of the OHR. In the framework of the EU's overall strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina and the effective establishment of the reinforced EU presence, the Council looks forward to discussions of the international community on the reconfiguration of the international presence, including consideration of the possible relocation of the OHR.

*EUHR Ashton's and EU Commissioner Füle's statement on slow progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina*  
Brussels, 15 March 2011. [Link](#)

We are deeply concerned about the continued lack of progress in the government formation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in particular about the situation in the Federation. Bosnia and Herzegovina's leadership needs urgently to overcome their differences. A solution, which respects the priorities of all sides concerned, is within reach. We welcome and fully support the facilitation efforts of the office of HR/EUSR Valentin Inzko in this regard.

Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot afford to lose more time. The political leaders must urgently address EU-related reforms as a matter of priority if the country is to take steps forward on its European integration path. For this to happen, Bosnia and Herzegovina needs representative, broad and solid governments at all levels to tackle the outstanding issues in this regard.

*EU Commissioner Füle on reforms in Croatia*  
Brussels, 15 March 2011. [Link](#)

I am glad to have this opportunity to debrief you on the latest developments as regards the accession negotiations with Croatia. I will focus in particular on Chapter 23 - Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, on which the Commission has just adopted an Interim Report.

In our last Strategy Paper of November 2010, the Commission stated that it will closely monitor Croatia's progress in the field of chapter 23, and that it will take stock of the situation in the first quarter of 2011. This is the purpose of this Interim Report on reforms in Croatia.

The Commission made the commitment to present such an interim report to the Member States by 11 March at the latest, but we have been able to present this report already today. To be clear, it is not our final assessment of progress made by Croatia in this field. It rather seeks to assess the progress made and to identify those issues requiring further attention in order to close the established benchmarks. The final assessment will be only presented once the Commission has ascertained that all the established closing benchmarks are met.

We know the concerns which exist in our Member States about the process. The area of judiciary and fundamental rights is perhaps the area of greatest concern of all and intrinsically linked to the credibility of the enlargement process.

But let me underline that success in this area is of paramount importance also to the citizens of Croatia. It will ensure that they see and feel a tangible difference in their daily life.

Beyond this, we are setting the standard for the rest of the candidate and potential candidate countries. In terms of the fight against corruption, minority rights war crimes and refugees, indeed across the board, we are setting the reference levels for the standards which all candidate countries will have to achieve before negotiations can be closed.

We must be fair, but we must also be demanding and rigorous. To be even clearer, the Interim Report is directly about the progress made in Croatia in this crucial area. It is de facto a test of our own credibility and that of the enlargement process as a whole.

In assessing the situation in Croatia, we have drawn on several targeted peer assessment missions where senior judges, prosecutors and police officers from Member States have reviewed the situation in Croatia. We received considerable input from the Croatian authorities in early February, as well as from various international and non-governmental organisations like OSCE, UNCHR, Amnesty International and local NGOs. In the opening draft Common Position on Chapter 23, adopted by the Member States in June 2010, we have set ten closing benchmarks which need to be fulfilled to provisionally close this negotiation chapter.

They are covering four main areas:

- 1) judiciary
- 2) fight against corruption and organised crime
- 3) fundamental rights, and
- 4) co-operation with ICTY.

Most of the ten benchmarks were divided into sub-benchmarks which focus on the implementation of measures and the establishment of track records.

It is against these benchmarks that we are assessing the progress made in Croatia. In addition to the considerable steps taken so far, the report also identifies the shortcomings, and highlights precisely what Croatia still needs to do to fulfil the closing benchmarks. We have tried to be as concrete as possible to help Croatia continue to move in the right direction. Let me highlight some main issues that are addressed in the report:

- 1) In the area of judiciary there are improvements. However, there are two broad areas where benchmarks are not met.

First, we need to see the new State Judicial Council and State Prosecutorial Council demonstrate proper self-regulation and establishment of convincing track records of recruiting and appointing judges and prosecutors.

Second, in the field of efficiency of the judiciary, we need to see further reductions in case backlogs especially as regards enforcement decisions and old civil cases. The backlog of old civil cases pending for 3 years or more has for instance increased by 3.8%.

We also remain concerned with the handling of war crimes. More needs to be done to properly investigate and prosecute war criminals in Croatia. This is important not only in the interests of justice, but also for reconciliation in the region.

2) The Croatian government is committed to fighting corruption and organised crime. Institutions have been strengthened. However, Croatia needs to establish a convincing track record at the relevant stages of the legal process: from investigation, through prosecution to court rulings.

3) Under fundamental rights, there has been progress, for example on minority rights and access to justice. However, more needs to be done on issues such as protection of minorities and refugees, which is of particular importance in the Western Balkans given its recent history. Here we are asking for a longer term strategy on how to implement Croatian legislation dealing with minority rights, and concrete actions to facilitate further refugee return.

4) As regards co-operation with ICTY, as requested by Mr Bammertz, a task force has begun exploring new avenues to locate the missing artillery documents. The next report from Bammertz to the UN is scheduled for May 2011.

I am pleased to note that many of these issues addressed in the interim report have also been addressed by the European Parliament in its resolution of 16 February 2011 on the 2010 progress report on Croatia.

Let me summarise the current situation: we have a mixed picture in front of us. Overall, Croatia and its government have made considerable progress in the field of the judiciary and fundamental rights. However, much remains to be done. Croatia has not met all closing benchmarks so far, and we are not therefore proposing closure of this chapter.

I expect that this report will focus minds in Croatia and efforts on these areas so as to ensure the timely and complete fulfilment of all the closing benchmarks.

The interim report does not include a position on the time needed for Croatia to meet the remaining benchmarks. Substance rather than timing is what matters and we will present our closing benchmark report and draft common position when the tasks identified in this report are completed.

I know however that the Croatian Government has set as its own target the month of June and is backed by the Hungarian Presidency who has made this one of the key priorities of its Presidency. I consider this to be highly ambitious, but I am encouraged by the priority Croatia attaches to completing the remaining work.

Beyond chapter 23, the accession negotiations with Croatia are well underway and we have provisionally closed 28 out of 35 negotiation chapters. Croatia has made good progress in the other remaining chapters recently, such as regional policy, agriculture and competition. This should lead to the provisional closure of further chapters in the coming months, some of them already at the next Intergovernmental Conference which is scheduled for mid-April by the Hungarian Presidency.

When negotiations can finally be closed depends on Croatia meeting all the requirements in the remaining chapters. The Commission continues to support Croatia on the last stretch of its path towards EU membership, but it is up to Croatia to maintain and accelerate this momentum.

**Related Document:**  
- Interim report from the Commission on the reforms in Croatia  
[Access here.](#)

*EP: Slow progress by Turkey regretted; Montenegro's candidacy welcomed*  
*Press release*  
Brussels, 9 March 2011. [Link](#)

In two resolutions adopted on Wednesday on the progress of Turkey and Montenegro in their EU membership negotiations, Parliament express concern at the "slow progress" on human rights and key reforms in Turkey in 2010, while welcoming Montenegro's official candidate status despite concerns over corruption.

The Cyprus-Turkey deadlock, lack of dialogue among Turkish political parties and the undermining of press freedom and other basic rights in Turkey are the key factors slowing down the country's EU accession talks, said rapporteur Ria Oomen-Ruijten (EPP, NL) during the debate.

The resolution, adopted with the support of a large majority of MEPs, welcomes Turkey's adoption of constitutional amendments but stresses that "an overall constitutional reform" is still needed to transform Turkey into a real democracy. MEPs also applaud the recent finalisation of negotiations on a readmission agreement to handle migration. Once this enters into force, the Commission should initiate "a visa dialogue, with particular attention to the matter of entry conditions for business people and students".

Among the main remaining challenges, MEPs list the worrying deterioration of press freedom, including self-censorship of national media and internet sites; the situation of women and rising rates of honour killings and forced marriages; and the lack of protection of religious minorities. "Only limited progress" has been made to ensure their legal protection so that they can own properties, open houses of worship or train clergy, adds the resolution.

The wording and specific demands of the text were hammered out in tough negotiations among Parliament's political groups. During the drafting process by the Foreign Affairs Committee,

the EPP group agreed to withdraw an amendment calling on EU institutions to "study the possibility" of establishing a "privileged partnership" with Turkey, as an alternative to full EU membership.

In exchange, the committee avoided mentioning the "common goal of full EU membership" for Turkey, as the socialists would have wished. The final text instead has the same wording as last year, describing the opening of Turkey's accession negotiations in 2005 as the "starting point for a long-lasting and open-ended process."

Montenegro: MEPs favour EU accession talks, worry about corruption

In the second resolution, approved by a large majority, Parliament welcomes the European Council's decision to grant Montenegro EU candidate country status, expressing hope that accession talks with Montenegro could begin this year. MEPs nevertheless voice several concerns, particularly about corruption, organised crime, discrimination and curbs on media freedom.

"I regret that the Commission insists on a gap between the granting of candidate status and the opening of negotiations," said rapporteur Charles Tannock (ECR, UK). "Montenegro should be judged solely on merit, facts and achievements. The onus is now on Montenegro to meet the EU's expectations, especially in combating corruption and organised crime". "That said, Montenegro remains a good news story in the Western Balkans", he added.

Parliament welcomes the "general consensus and high priority given to European integration by the government and opposition parties", particularly the work done on finalising Montenegro's legal and constitutional framework and its "good track record in implementing economic reforms".

The resolution emphasises that "corruption is still prevalent in many areas, especially in the construction, privatisation and public procurements sector" and that organised crime, above all money-laundering and smuggling, remains a problem. The House is also worried that "women continue to be under-represented in decision-making processes and in leading positions." While welcoming the "generally good inter-ethnic relations and good general protection of minority rights in the country", MEPs call on the authorities to improve the living conditions of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian minorities.

The resolution also urges "further steps to ensure independence and professionalism of media outlets," and draws attention to the disproportionate fines that can be imposed for defamation, thereby hampering journalistic freedom and independence. MEPs are especially troubled by reported cases of intimidation and violence on journalists and civil society activists, and call for these to be investigated and the offenders prosecuted.

**Related Documents:**  
- EP resolution of 9 March 2011 on Turkey's 2010 progress report. [Access here.](#)  
- EP resolution of 9 March 2011 on the European integration process of Montenegro. [Access here.](#)



## G8 meeting of Foreign Ministers

### Press release

Paris, 15 March 2011. [Link](#)

G8 Foreign Ministers met in Paris on 14-15 March. They offered their sympathy and condolences to the Japanese Government and people. G8 countries are ready to provide Japan with every help to overcome the consequences of the disaster. Ministers thanked their Japanese colleague, Takeaki Matsumoto, for his extensive briefing on the latest developments of the situation. They expressed their full confidence in the ability of the Japanese Government to solve the crisis and paid tribute to the courage and dignity shown by the people of Japan. G8 countries will continue to monitor the situation closely and remain ready to act in support of Japan, including through the IAEA.

### *Ministers discussed the ongoing upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa*

#### *Libya*

Ministers endorsed the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people for a future of democracy and prosperity. The Libyan people, like all peoples, have the right to choose their leadership openly and democratically. Ministers looked forward to welcoming a new Libya as a fully fledged partner of the international community and to establishing mutually beneficial relations.

Ministers called on Muammar Qadhafi to respect the legitimate claim of the Libyan people to fundamental rights, freedom of expression and a representative form of government. They warned that failure to do so would have dire consequences. They commended the unanimous adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970, the unanimous decision of the United Nations General Assembly to suspend Libya's membership of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and the appointment of a special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General. They welcomed the International Criminal Court's decision to investigate all crimes against humanity.

Ministers welcomed the fact that the UNSC is considering, as a matter of urgency, a wide range of measures to ensure the protection of the Libyan population from attack by Muammar Qadhafi's forces. In that context, Ministers welcomed the recent declaration by the League of Arab States, calling for a number of measures to protect and support the Libyan population. They stressed the importance of regional participation in any such efforts, and agreed to follow up urgently with the League of Arab States. They also agreed that the UNSC should increase the pressure, including through economic measures, for Muammar Qadhafi to leave. Ministers also recalled the decisions of the African Union and the declarations of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and decided to coordinate closely with the regional organisations. Ministers welcomed the declaration adopted by the extraordinary European Council on 11 March.

They commended the adoption of Resolution S-15/1 by the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), and in particular the decision to urgently dispatch an independent, international

commission of inquiry to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law in Libya.

They welcomed all efforts already undertaken to provide humanitarian assistance to Libya and neighbouring countries. They commended the actions of the UNHCR and the World Food Programme in that regard. Ministers stand ready to support further humanitarian measures.

### *Broader Middle East and North Africa*

Ministers recognised that populations have legitimate aspirations for democracy and want to play a role in the decisions that affect their lives and to contribute to progress and prosperity for their countries. They expressed their readiness to assist in peaceful democratic transitions and to reinvigorate their cooperation with countries in the region. Ministers are deeply convinced that there is nothing to lose from democracy as it lays the best path to peace, stability, prosperity and shared growth.

Ministers commended the brave and determined actions of men and women throughout the region to make their voices heard and bring about change. This is a movement of truly historic magnitude which has the potential to transform the global political landscape. This opportunity is here for all responsible governments to seize. G8 members are determined not to let it go by.

In particular, should Egypt and Tunisia so wish, G8 countries are ready to assist them in the transition to democracy, including in the swift organisation and monitoring of transparent, democratic and fair electoral processes which will be needed in the interest of a smooth and peaceful transition to democracy and to assist them in addressing the region's economic and social challenges. G8 countries will mobilise regional and international organisations to support urgent social, economic and fiscal measures to create employment, stabilise public finances and further open export markets.

Ministers confirm the value of the ongoing G8-BMENA Partnership for Progress and a Common Future, and reiterate their commitment to the G8-BMENA process as a mechanism for consultation and cooperation between governments, civil society organisations, and business to support political, economic and social reforms that respond to the aspirations of the region's citizens.

Ministers recalled their constant commitment to the unity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon. They reaffirmed their commitment to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) as an independent court, created by UNSC Resolution 1757. The STL must continue its work without impediment and with the cooperation of the Lebanese Government. They encouraged additional voluntary contributions for its funding.

Ministers expressed serious concern at the ongoing suppression of democratic progress in Iran, in particular the detention of Iranian opposition leaders Mir-Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi and their wives, and the suppression of peaceful protests. Ministers called on the Iranian authorities to release both leaders and all those arrested for seeking to make their voices heard.

*Further G8 action*

Ministers are convinced that events in the region offer the opportunity for a new quality of partnership. The G8 is uniquely suited to addressing both political and economic issues. Our Group also calls on other nations to join us in offering concrete measures of support for peaceful change, shared growth and increased prosperity for all. With a view to mutually-beneficial and harmonious co-development, G8 countries will work, individually and jointly in relevant forums, for the swift resumption of trade, and human and economic exchanges with the region. Ministers welcomed in this regard the efforts already undertaken by the European Union within the framework of its Neighbourhood Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean as well as the offer to support international efforts in a coordinating role.

Ministers decided to increase their dialogue with civil societies throughout the region, with a view to fostering the further emergence of free media, the empowerment of non-governmental organisations, and the development of vocational training and socially responsible businesses. They agreed to use the 2011 BMENA meeting in Kuwait to that end.

Ministers expressed their readiness to consider short-term measures to alleviate the adverse economic effects of current developments, in Egypt and Tunisia, including through short-term budgetary assistance based on established needs as well as further support regarding food and other basic staples relief in coordination with relevant organisations. They will further explore the issue with the international institutions and the regional development banks.

*Middle East Peace Process*

Ministers are convinced that the current historic developments in the region make resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through negotiations and the further integration of Israel in its regional environment even more important.

Ministers expressed serious concern about the current stalemate in the Middle East Peace Process.

In line with previous Quartet statements, they remain committed to the conclusion of a negotiated framework agreement on all final status issues by September 2011. They also share the hope expressed by President Obama that we can have an agreement that will lead to a new member of the United Nations - an independent, sovereign State of Palestine living in peace with Israel. There is no viable alternative to the two-state solution.

Ministers considered that a long-term solution to this conflict can only be achieved through negotiations. They urged both parties to return to substantive direct talks.

Ministers commended the work of the Palestinian Authority in developing the capacity to run a democratic and peaceful state, founded on the rule of law and living in peace and security with Israel. They stressed the need to continue to support these state-building efforts, both politically and financially. They welcomed the organisation by France of a second donors' conference this June in Paris.

Ministers called on parties to refrain from unilateral actions and to create an atmosphere conducive to peace. Ministers strongly reaffirm that unilateral actions by either party cannot prejudice the outcome of negotiations and will not be recognised by the international community. Ministers called for an end to rocket fire from Gaza and stressed the need for calm and security for both peoples. Settlement activities in territory occupied in 1967 constitute a major obstacle to peace and must stop.

Foreign Ministers stressed that peace in the Middle East should be comprehensive and reiterated the importance of negotiations on the Israeli-Syria and Israeli-Lebanon tracks.

They remain committed to holding a conference in 2012 on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as endorsed by the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, with a view to creating a peaceful environment in the region.

*Ministers also discussed the following regional situations:*

*Africa*

The G8 and Africa have a long-standing partnership based on shared principles and values, common interests and mutual accountability. Ministers committed to renewing this partnership and their ongoing support for the African Union's peace and security architecture, including through peace-keeping capability-building efforts. In this respect they were encouraged by many positive developments in Africa which has witnessed robust growth and attracted increased foreign direct investments. Against this background, ministers discussed several remaining challenges.

Ministers called on all Ivorian parties and stakeholders to respect the will of the people and the outcome of the credible elections of President Alassane Ouattara. They underscored their support for the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and stressed that it is binding for all parties. An escalation of violence would cause disruption of peace and security both in Côte d'Ivoire and the whole sub-region. Ministers urged those responsible to lift the barricading of the legitimate authorities of Côte d'Ivoire and to refrain from threatening, attacking or impeding the UN personnel in the discharge of their mission. They condemned the recent killings of peaceful demonstrators and called for an end to all acts of violence. They reiterated that any threat to attempts at finding a solution, any obstruction to the work of the UNOCI and other international actors, and any violation of human rights and international humanitarian law would result in the imposition of targeted measures, as outlined in UNSC Resolution 1946.

Ministers congratulated the parties of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the people of Sudan for the successful referendum. They expressed concern over the still ongoing violence and called on the parties to reach agreements on all the outstanding issues including Abyei as a matter of urgency. They noted as well the persistent violence and insecurity in Darfur and called on all parties to engage with a view to concluding a peace agreement. They expressed their readiness to offer increased assistance, including the possibility of debt relief, to authorities in Khartoum and Juba and to lend their full support to all Sudanese people.

Ministers remain deeply concerned that the Somali people continue to suffer the effects of 20 years of conflict. Somalia's instability increases the suffering of the Somali people, impedes international efforts to stem terrorism, piracy and illegal trafficking and risks further destabilising the Horn of Africa. They expressed regret over the unilateral three-year extension of the Transitional Federal Parliament and urged all Transitional Federal Institutions to work together constructively and speed up political reform. Ministers furthermore underscored the importance of international cooperation as the Transitional Period mandate expires this August. Ministers called on all actors to support an inclusive, Somali-led process as the means to resolve the conflict. They commended the action undertaken by the AU and its mission, AMISOM, and expressed their full support for the action of the UNSG's Special Representative for Somalia.

Ministers expressed their continued strong concern regarding the serious threat of piracy emanating from Somalia. Piracy is a product of Somalia's instability and poses risks to the wider region, the safety of mariners, regional economies, freedom of navigation and international trade. Ministers underlined the determination of G8 countries to continue to respond resolutely to this threat, through a coordinated response at sea and by tackling longer-term regional capability development needs, including through the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. In parallel, Ministers agreed that effective prosecution and imprisonment needs increased support. They warmly welcomed the report by the UNSG's Special Adviser on piracy. They looked forward to further work in the Security Council on this issue.

Ministers indicated their determination to assist efforts to strengthen peace and security in the whole of the Great Lakes region and underscored the importance of free and fair 2011 elections in the DRC for the long-term peace and stability of the region.

#### *Afghanistan*

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a stable, peaceful and sovereign Afghanistan, free of outside interference, terrorism, extremist violence, and illicit drug production and trafficking, with full ownership of its own security, governance and development. In support of this goal and in close coordination with the sustained efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), G8 countries will continue to support the transition process endorsed by Afghanistan and the international community at the London and Kabul Conferences as well as at the NATO Lisbon Summit. G8 countries welcomed the inauguration of the new Afghan Parliament and will continue to support efforts to strengthen Afghan democracy. Ministers welcomed the work of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to launch a political process to reconcile all who renounce violence, break ties with al Qaeda, denounce terrorism and accept the Afghan Constitution. Ministers affirmed their readiness to take appropriate measures in support of this process, which has to be Afghan-led. Ministers stressed the importance of political and economic regional cooperation for stability, peace and prosperity in Afghanistan and the wider region. In this respect, they welcomed the prospect of increased transborder cooperation on rail, water, energy and human resources.

#### *Haiti*

One year after the terrible earthquake that struck Haiti, reconstruction remains a huge challenge that needs to be undertaken by fully legitimate authorities. In this respect, Ministers stressed the importance of the second round of the presidential and parliamentary elections to be held on 20 March and called for a peaceful and orderly process. Ministers reiterated their support to Haitian efforts towards full recovery. Ministers also stressed that more concerted efforts should be taken by all actors to strengthen the rule of law and good governance in Haiti.

#### *Ministers also discussed non-proliferation and disarmament.*

They restated their resolve to spare no efforts in fighting proliferation, to take all appropriate national measures to follow up the decisions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and to promote the early entry into force and universalisation of the CTBT, early commencement of substantive negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament with an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work on an FMCT, and further development of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle as part of IAEA efforts to broaden access to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Ministers condemned the DPRK's recently disclosed uranium enrichment activities in violation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874. They urged the DPRK to comply with its international obligations and commitments and to promptly address international humanitarian concerns, such as the abduction issue.

Iran's persistent failure to comply with its obligations under six UNSC resolutions and ten IAEA Board of Governors resolutions is a cause for utmost concern. Ministers regretted that while Iran finally accepted to meet twice with China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union High Representative following the adoption of measures in UNSCR 1929, Iran has not yet entered into a constructive dialogue to resolve the international community's concerns regarding its nuclear program. Ministers recalled that they recognise Iran's right to the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy under the NPT, but that with these rights comes the responsibility for Iran to abide by its international obligations.

Ministers reaffirmed the valuable role of the G8 Global Partnership as a means for supporting non-proliferation efforts around the world.

Ministers noted that as the threat of terrorism evolves, increasingly multifaceted and coordinated partnerships are needed. Ministers emphasized their unity in the fight against terrorism and determination to enhance coordinated efforts on this track in accordance with priorities defined in Muskoka. They asked the Roma/Lyon group to prepare a status report for the Leaders' Summit in Deauville.

They were encouraged that many countries have joined the fight against terrorism, in particular in Africa. The Group of 8 and its members stand ready to deepen their cooperation with African countries and relevant regional organisations in addressing the common challenge of terrorism. Ministers

underscored the central role that the UN must continue to play in the collective fight against terrorism and recognised the need to work with partners from all regions to create a counter-terrorism forum that will strengthen the necessary international architecture to address 21st century terrorism. They look forward to the comprehensive Strategies for Security and Development in the Sahel and in the Horn of Africa currently being developed by the European Union, and other G8 members' initiatives.

Ministers look forward to the Ministerial Meeting on Transatlantic Cocaine Trafficking on 10 May as an opportunity to further international cooperation to stem the flow of illicit drugs. They also note that the Russian Federation and France have proposed to convene a Third Ministerial Meeting of the Paris Pact Initiative on the Afghan opiate trade in 2011. G8 countries will work together to develop a mutually agreeable concept and draft agenda.

Ministers agreed to the attached joint statement on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

*Spillovers from the Arab Revolts: Is Armenia next in line?*

Hrant Kostanyan

CEPS Policy Briefs, 15 March 2011. [Link](#)

[Abstract]

Regime changes through taking to the streets do not always progress peacefully and produce intended results. The recent successful revolutions that have brought down two North African dictators have also inspired reform advocates in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood. The coming months are expected to see developments of major if not decisive importance especially for the future of Armenia. Given the uncertainty of the eventual outcome in Armenia, this Policy Brief contemplates four possible scenarios for the country's future development and suggests possible responses from the EU. The revolutions of the Arab world caught everyone by surprise. There should be no surprises regarding the Union's Eastern neighbour Armenia.



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