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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject: European Council meeting (17 and 18 October 2024)
– Draft conclusions

In accordance with Article 3(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Council, delegations will find attached the draft conclusions prepared by the President of the European Council, in close cooperation with the member of the European Council representing the Member State holding the six-monthly Presidency of the Council and with the President of the Commission.

I. UKRAINE

1. The European Council addressed Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in all its dimensions and reviewed progress on the Union's comprehensive support to Ukraine and its people as Ukraine exercises its inherent right to self-defence.
2. The European Council reiterates its resolute condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a manifest violation of the UN Charter, and reaffirms its continued support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. It also reconfirms the European Union's unwavering commitment to providing continued political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes and as intensely as needed. Russia must not prevail.
3. The European Council reiterates its support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law, in line with the key principles and objectives of Ukraine's Peace Formula. In follow-up to the Summit on Peace in Ukraine, the European Council took stock of the EU's and Member States' global outreach efforts to build the broadest international support and identify steps forward. The European Union will remain closely involved in the matter and further joint international efforts. The European Council also stresses that no initiative about Ukraine can be taken without Ukraine.

4. The European Council reviewed work done on the delivery of military support to Ukraine. It calls on the Council to swiftly finalise work on the European Peace Facility assistance measures that will further incentivise the delivery of military support to Ukraine. The European Council calls for rapid stepping up of military support and acceleration in its delivery, in particular air defence systems, ammunition and missiles which are urgently needed to protect Ukraine's population and critical energy infrastructure, and underlines the importance of increasing support for Ukraine's defence industry. The European Council also welcomes the progress reached on the extension of the mandate of the EU Military Assistance Mission and takes note of ongoing work on its strategic review.
5. The European Council underlines the importance of living up to the commitment taken at the G7 Apulia Summit to provide together with G7 partners approximately EUR 45 billion (USD 50 billion) by the end of the year to support Ukraine's current and future military, budget and reconstruction needs. In this respect it invites the High Representative and the Commission to engage with Ukraine on those different components. Subject to EU law, Russia's assets should remain immobilised until Russia ceases its war of aggression against Ukraine and compensates it for the damage caused by this war. In full respect of the security and defence policy of certain Member States, the European Council [welcomes the] agreement on the use of extraordinary revenues stemming from Russia's immobilised assets, while continuing to address all relevant legal and financial aspects and aiming at ensuring solidarity with our G7 partners in our commitment to provide this support to Ukraine.
6. Military support will be provided in full respect of the security and defence policy of certain Member States and taking into account the security and defence interests of all Member States.

7. The European Council strongly condemns the persistent shelling by Russia of Ukraine's critical energy and civilian infrastructure and supports all efforts, both public and private, to urgently increase Ukraine's energy security before the winter and address the immediate humanitarian and civil protection needs of the Ukrainian population while making Ukraine's energy system more resilient in the long-term. The European Council stresses the unacceptability of any action that endangers the safety and security of nuclear facilities and welcomes the effort of the International Atomic Energy Agency to monitor the situation and assist in maintaining nuclear safety and security. In this context, it calls for the further integration of Ukraine's energy system with the Union's energy network, and acknowledges the important role played by Member States in the neighbouring region. The European Council will closely follow the situation related to energy prices in the EU.
8. The European Union remains ready to further limit Russia's ability to wage war. The European Council reiterates its call for the full and effective enforcement of sanctions and for further measures to counter their circumvention, including through third countries.
9. The European Council strongly condemns the continued material and other support to Russia's war of aggression by third countries, and urges such countries to stop providing such support. [The European Union has responded swiftly and in coordination with international partners, including with a package of new and significant restrictive measures against Iran, including the designation of individuals and entities involved with Iran's ballistic missile and drone programmes.]

II. MIDDLE EAST

10. The European Council is deeply alarmed by the dramatic military escalation in the Middle East and the risk this represents for the entire region. It calls on all parties to exercise the utmost restraint, put an end to all hostilities immediately and fully abide by international law, including international humanitarian law. The European Union is fully committed to helping de-escalate the situation and reduce tensions.
11. The European Union remains committed to continue providing its needs-based assistance to the people in the Middle East with particular attention to the most vulnerable, scaling up its humanitarian engagement given the rising needs.
12. The European Council condemns in the strongest terms the Iranian attacks on Israel on 1 October which constitutes a serious threat to the regional stability. It reiterates Israel's right to defend itself and the European Union's commitment to Israel's security and to regional stability. International humanitarian law must be respected by all parties and the dangerous cycle of attacks and retaliations must end.

13. The European Council expresses its utmost concern regarding the military escalation in Lebanon, and condemns the loss of civilian life and the forced displacement caused by the escalating violence and indiscriminate attacks. It recalls the need to ensure that civilians are protected, that civilian infrastructure is not targeted and that international law is respected. Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected. The European Council calls for an immediate ceasefire across the Blue Line and for full and symmetrical implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701. The European Council calls on all partners to respond to the growing humanitarian crisis in Lebanon and the European Union will continue to provide support to the people affected. The European Council reiterates the Union's strong support for the state institutions of Lebanon, including the Lebanese Armed Forces. It calls on all partners of Lebanon to contribute to strengthening the Lebanese Armed Forces and reaffirms the Union's readiness to facilitate international coordination of such efforts as appropriate. The European Council supports the fundamental stabilisation role of the UN mission (UNIFIL) in southern Lebanon, and calls on all parties to protect and support UNIFIL's important mission.
14. Following the tragic anniversary of Hamas' brutal terrorist attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023, the European Council condemns once again in the strongest possible terms such unjustified acts of deliberate violence and stands with the families of the victims and the hostages taken by Hamas.

15. The European Council reiterates its call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the unconditional release of all hostages, the urgent improvement of access and sustained distribution of humanitarian assistance at scale throughout Gaza, and an enduring end to hostilities, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2735. The European Council deplores the unacceptable number of civilian casualties, especially women and children, as well as the catastrophic levels of hunger and imminent risk of famine caused by the insufficient entry of aid into Gaza. It also recalls the need to fully implement the International Court of Justice (ICJ) orders.
16. The European Council recalls its June 2024 conclusions and strongly condemns the further escalation in the West Bank following increased settler violence, the expansion of illegal settlements and Israel's military operation. It invites the Council to take work forward on further restrictive measures against extremist settlers and against entities and organisations which support them.
17. The European Council reiterates the European Union's unwavering commitment to a just, comprehensive and lasting peace based on the two-state solution and the Union's support to the Palestinian Authority to help address its most pressing needs and support its reform agenda. The EU will actively support and engage with international partners on concrete steps towards the implementation of the two-state solution. The European Council stresses that a credible pathway to Palestinian statehood is a crucial component of that political process.
18. The European Council affirms its support to the UN Secretary-General and stresses the essential role of the UN and its agencies, notably UNRWA which provides crucial support to the civilian population, both in Gaza and the wider region. The European Council condemns any attempt to label a UN Agency a terrorist organisation.

19. The European Council also discussed the situation in the Red Sea and calls on the Houthis to stop immediately all attacks and to allow maritime security to be restored.

III. ENSURING A RULES-BASED INTERNATIONAL ORDER

20. In times of heightened conflict and tension, alongside an alarming trend to disregard international law, the European Council reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the rules-based international order, steadfastly upholding the United Nations and the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, including those of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and of political independence and self-determination.
21. The European Council remains committed to ending impunity and ensuring accountability for violations of international law and international humanitarian law, throughout the world, and recalls the importance of supporting and implementing decisions of international courts.

IV. COMPETITIVENESS

22. Following its conclusions of April 2024, and in line with the 2024-2029 Strategic Agenda, the European Council calls for more efforts to enhance the Union's competitiveness, strengthen its economic resilience and achieve the full potential of the Single Market. The European Council highlights the urgency of taking effective action.
23. The European Council invites the Council and the Commission, as a matter of priority, to take work forward, notably in response to the challenges identified in the reports by Enrico Letta ('Much more than a market') and Mario Draghi ('The future of European competitiveness').

24. This issue will be addressed at the informal meeting in Budapest in November and the European Council will continue to monitor progress regularly.
25. The European Council endorses the integrated country-specific recommendations as discussed by the Council, thus allowing the conclusion of the 2024 European Semester.

V. **MIGRATION**

26. [The European Council held an in-depth strategic discussion on migration in all its dimensions and across all routes. It recalls that migration is a European challenge that requires a European response.
27. The European Council calls on the Council, the Member States and the Commission to strengthen work on all strands of action of its comprehensive approach to migration outlined in February 2023.
28. The European Council also calls for enhanced cooperation with countries of origin and of transit, through mutually beneficial partnerships, to address root causes and to fight trafficking and smuggling with a view to preventing loss of life and irregular departures, using all relevant EU policies, instruments and tools. Safe and legal pathways are key for regular and orderly migration.
29. The European Council calls for determined action at all levels to increase and speed up returns from the European Union. It invites the Commission and the Council to swiftly put forward a new common approach on returns.
30. The European Council recalls its determination to ensure effective control of the Union's external borders through various available means.

31. In addition, new ways to prevent and counter irregular migration should be considered, in line with international law.
32. Furthermore, it reaffirms its commitment to countering the instrumentalisation of migrants for political purposes.
33. The European Council will revert to the matter.]

VI. OTHER ITEMS

Republic of Moldova

34. The European Council underlines the European Union's steadfast support for the Republic of Moldova and its accession path. It commends the consistent commitment of the Moldovan authorities to the reform process and invites them to pursue reforms and to strengthen the country's resilience and stability. The European Council reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Republic of Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
35. The European Council condemns Russia's persistent attempts to use foreign information manipulation and interference to undermine democratic elections and the choice of the Moldovan people for a prosperous, stable and peaceful European future.
36. The European Council welcomes the adoption of the 2nd package of sanctions against those responsible for actions aimed at destabilising, undermining or threatening the sovereignty and independence of Republic of Moldova.

Georgia

37. The European Council reaffirms the Union's readiness to support the Georgian people on their European path. It reiterates its serious concern regarding the course of action taken by the Georgian authorities, which runs counter to the values and principles upon which the European Union is founded.
38. The European Council recalls that such course of action jeopardises Georgia's EU path, and de facto halts the accession process. It calls on Georgia to adopt democratic, comprehensive and sustainable reforms, in line with the core principles of European integration. The European Council will continue monitoring the situation closely.
39. The European Council expects the Georgian authorities to ensure that the upcoming parliamentary elections are free and fair, in line with international standards and with unhindered access for international and domestic election observers.
40. The European Council reaffirms the European Union's unwavering support for Georgia's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. It underlines the Union's continued commitment to peaceful conflict resolution and its policy of non-recognition and engagement.

Sudan

41. The European Council expresses its deepest concern about the catastrophic humanitarian situation arising from the conflict in Sudan and strongly condemns the indiscriminate and direct targeting of civilians which is worsening the humanitarian catastrophe. All parties must abide by their obligation under international law to protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian access. The European Council reiterates its urgent call to all parties to the conflict to seek an immediate cessation of hostilities, leading to a sustainable resolution of the conflict, through dialogue. The European Union will continue to provide humanitarian support and calls on the international community to swiftly disburse the pledges made at the International Humanitarian Conference for Sudan and neighbouring countries.

Venezuela

42. The European Council remains extremely concerned about the situation in Venezuela and the human rights violations reported following the 28 July 2024 presidential election. It urges the Venezuelan authorities to respect the democratic will of the Venezuelan people and to end violence, repression and harassment of the opposition and civil society. Political prisoners must be released. Only complete and independently verifiable results will be accepted and recognised. The European Union will continue to work with regional partners to support the Venezuelan people in their democratic aspirations. The European Union stands ready to support a constructive and inclusive transition with guarantees for both sides, to resolve the country's political impasse and restore democratic institutions peacefully.

Conference of the Parties of United Nations Conventions

43. The European Council took stock of preparations for the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Baku, Azerbaijan (COP29), for the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cali, Colombia (COP16), and for the Conference of the Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (COP16), and calls for ambitious action given the context of increasing damage and disruption due to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. In a demonstration of global solidarity, the European Council reiterates the Union's commitment to deliver on financing goals, and calls on third countries to also deliver their share.

Hybrid threats

44. The European Council strongly condemns Russia's intensifying campaign of hybrid activities. It welcomes the adoption of EU restrictive measures in view of Russia's destabilising activities. The European Union and the Member States will continue to strengthen their resilience and make full use of the EU hybrid toolbox to prevent, deter and respond to Russia's hybrid activities.

Fight against all forms of discrimination

45. The European Council welcomes [the recent adoption] of the Council declaration of 15 October 2024 on fostering Jewish life and combating antisemitism. It reiterates its serious concerns about recent alarming incidents and condemns in the strongest possible terms all forms of discrimination, including antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred, intolerance, racism and xenophobia.