



Brussels, 20 June 2025  
(OR. en)

8197/25

LIMITE

CO EUR-PREP 19

**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council  
Subject: European Council meeting (26 and 27 June 2025)  
– Draft conclusions

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*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.*

*The European Council marks the 40th anniversary of the signature of the Schengen Agreement and stresses that the Schengen area is one of Europe's fundamental achievements, which underpins freedom of movement, enhances security, and fosters cross-border life and the Single Market.*

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## **I. UKRAINE**

1. [The European Council held an exchange of views with Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine.]
2. Recalling its previous conclusions, the European Council reiterates its support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law. Reiterating the principles set out on 6 March 2025, the European Council welcomes all efforts towards achieving such a peace, including those led by the United States. The European Union and its Member States will continue to contribute to all these efforts, including by intensifying their global outreach.
3. The European Council strongly condemns the continuous bombing of civilians and civilian infrastructure by Russia and calls for a full, unconditional and immediate ceasefire. The European Council welcomes Ukraine's readiness in this regard. It urges Russia to show real political will to end its war of aggression, to agree to such a ceasefire, and to engage in meaningful negotiations. The European Union stands ready to increase pressure as necessary to that end.
4. The European Council underlines the importance of humanitarian relief efforts and confidence-building measures, notably the exchange of prisoners of war, the release of civilians and the return of all abducted Ukrainian children and other civilians unlawfully deported and transferred to Russia and Belarus.

5. The European Council reaffirms its continued and unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. In line with the 'peace through strength' approach, which requires Ukraine to be in the strongest possible position, with its own robust military and defence capabilities as an essential component, the European Union will continue to provide, in coordination with like-minded partners and allies, comprehensive political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people.
6. The European Council calls on Member States to keep stepping up efforts to address Ukraine's pressing military and defence needs, in particular the delivery of air defence and anti-drone systems, to help Ukraine, as it exercises its inherent right to self-defence, to protect its citizens and territory against Russia's intensified daily attacks. The European Council underlines the importance of accelerating work to further support and develop Ukraine's defence industry and to deepen its cooperation with the European defence industry. It also calls for decisions under the European Peace Facility to be operationalised as soon as possible. It underlines the importance of the military needs component of the G7 ERA initiative.
7. For peace to last, a comprehensive peace agreement will have to be accompanied by robust and credible security guarantees for Ukraine to deter future Russian aggression. The European Union and Member States are ready to contribute to security guarantees, in particular by supporting Ukraine's ability to deter and defend itself effectively, based on their respective competences and capabilities, in line with international law. The European Union and Member States are committed to contributing to training and equipping the Ukrainian Armed Forces for this purpose.
8. All military support as well as security guarantees for Ukraine 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.

9. The European Union, together with partners, is determined to limit Russia's ability to continue waging its war of aggression. Sanctions are an essential part of the EU's policy to achieve this common objective. The European Council welcomes the adoption of the 17th package of sanctions, targeting notably Russia's 'shadow fleet' of oil tankers and their operators. [The European Council calls for further measures against Russia's shadow fleet, which is used by Russia to circumvent sanctions and poses significant environmental and security risks.] [*p.m.: 18th package*] It also underlines the importance of further strengthening the anti-circumvention measures. 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.
10. The European Council strongly condemns support by third countries, and actors and entities therein, which enable Russia to sustain its war of aggression against Ukraine. The European Council condemns the continued military support provided by Iran, Belarus and the DPRK. It urges all countries to immediately cease any direct or indirect assistance to Russia in its war of aggression against Ukraine.
11. The European Union will continue to provide Ukraine with regular and predictable financial support in the long term. In 2025, the European Union will provide Ukraine with EUR 30.6 billion, of which EUR 3.5 billion have already been disbursed under the Ukraine Facility, and EUR 7 billion under the G7 ERA initiative, which is repaid by the windfall profits stemming from immobilised Russian assets.
12. The European Union remains committed, including as part of Ukraine's path to EU accession, to supporting Ukraine's repair, recovery and reconstruction, in coordination with international partners, including in the areas of psychological and psychosocial rehabilitation and for increased demining assistance. In this context, the European Council looks forward to the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Rome on 10 and 11 July 2025.

13. The European Council reaffirms the EU's strong commitment to ensuring full accountability for war crimes and the other most serious crimes committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. In this context, the recent progress made on establishing a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, within the framework of the Council of Europe, is an important step.
14. The European Council reiterates the inherent right of Ukraine to choose its own destiny, based on the UN Charter and international law. The European Union remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine's path towards EU membership. The European Council commends Ukraine for the pace of its accession-related reforms under the most challenging circumstances, welcomes the significant progress achieved, and encourages Ukraine and the Commission to intensify work. The European Council looks forward to the next steps in the accession process in line with the merit-based approach, with clusters being opened when the conditions are met. It notes the assessment of the Commission that the fundamentals cluster is ready to be opened.
15. The European Council will revert to this issue at its next meeting.

## II. MIDDLE EAST

16. Recalling its previous conclusions, the European Council addressed the situation and latest developments in the Middle East, in particular the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, and the dangerous escalation of tensions following Israeli strikes on Iran and Iran's response.

17. The European Council calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the unconditional release of all hostages, leading to a permanent end to hostilities. It deplores the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, the unacceptable number of civilian casualties and the levels of starvation. The European Council calls on Israel to fully lift its blockade on Gaza, to allow immediate, unimpeded access and sustained distribution of humanitarian assistance at scale into and throughout Gaza and to enable the UN and its agencies, and humanitarian organisations, to work independently and impartially to save lives and reduce suffering. Israel must fully comply with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. The European Council recalls the imperative of ensuring the protection of all civilians, including humanitarian workers, at all times, as well as of civilian infrastructure, including medical facilities, schools and UN premises. [*p.m.: review of Israel's fulfilment of its obligations under Article 2 of the Association Agreement*]
18. Recalling its conclusions of 17 October 2024, the European Council reiterates its strong condemnation of the escalation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, following increased settler violence, the expansion of illegal settlements and Israel's military operation. It reiterates its call on the Council to take work forward on further restrictive measures against extremist settlers and entities and organisations which support them. The European Council calls for further work on restrictive measures against Hamas.
19. The European Union remains firmly committed to a lasting and sustainable peace based on the two-state solution. The European Union is ready to contribute to all efforts towards this solution and calls on all parties to refrain from actions that undermine its viability. It will continue to work with regional and international partners to that end. The European Union will continue supporting the Palestinian Authority and its reform agenda. The European Council looks forward to the forthcoming High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution.

*p.m.: Iran*

## *Syria*

20. The European Council welcomes the recent lifting of economic sanctions against Syria, as part of the European Union's gradual, reversible approach. It recalls the importance of a peaceful and inclusive transition in Syria, free from harmful foreign interference, the protection of the rights of Syrians from all ethnic and religious backgrounds without discrimination, and of transitional justice and reconciliation. Syria's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within secure borders should be fully respected, in accordance with international law.

## *Lebanon*

21. The European Council reiterates the European Union's support for the Lebanese people and welcomes the efforts of the new authorities to stabilise the economic and security situation. It supports the Lebanese State's sovereignty and territorial integrity and recalls the fundamental stabilisation role of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in southern Lebanon. The European Council reiterates its call on all parties to implement the terms of the 27 November 2024 ceasefire agreement and for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

### **III. EUROPEAN DEFENCE AND SECURITY**

22. Europe must become more sovereign, more responsible for its own defence and better equipped to act and deal autonomously and collectively with immediate and future challenges and threats, with a 360° approach. To deliver on its objective of decisively ramping up Europe's common defence readiness within the next five years, the European Council took stock of progress in the implementation of its previous conclusions.

23. The European Council recalls that a stronger and more capable European Union in the field of security and defence will contribute positively to global and transatlantic security and is complementary to NATO, which remains, for those States that are members of it, the foundation of their collective defence.
24. The European Council reviewed work on the relevant financing options and stresses the need to continue to substantially increase expenditure on Europe's defence and security, and invest better together[, including in light of the commitment made at the June 2025 NATO Summit by the Member States that are also NATO allies]. The European Council invites Member States to coordinate among themselves the implementation of relevant commitments.
25. The European Council welcomes the adoption of the Regulation establishing the Security Action For Europe (SAFE) and the imminent activation of national escape clauses under the Stability and Growth Pact. The European Council asks the co-legislators to rapidly examine, with a view to a swift agreement, the proposal on incentivising defence-related investments in the EU budget and to advance work on the proposal to address strategic challenges in the context of the mid-term review of cohesion policy, including in the area of security and defence, while recalling the voluntary basis of this use of funds. It recalls the importance of mobilising private financing for the defence industry, welcomes the efforts by the European Investment Bank in this regard, and invites it to pursue efforts to adapt its practices for lending to the defence industry, notably by continuing to re-evaluate the list of excluded activities and by increasing the volume of available funding in the field of security and defence, while safeguarding its operations and financing capacity.

26. Considering the urgency of strengthening the European defence technological and industrial base across the Union so that it is in a position to better produce and supply equipment in the quantities and at the accelerated pace needed, the European Council reiterates the importance of demand aggregation, harmonisation of requirements, standardisation and joint procurement, as well as the proper functioning and further integration of the European defence market across the Union.
27. Work on capabilities in the priority areas identified at EU level must be accelerated, in full coherence with NATO. The European Council encourages the rapid development and delivery of collaborative projects in that regard, including by making full use of SAFE. In particular, the European Council welcomes the work to identify concrete opportunities and to aggregate demand in the framework of the European Defence Agency. It underlines the need for Member States to swiftly take work forward, including towards the execution of most advanced short-term projects and the launch of longer-term initiatives, with the support of the European Defence Agency, the High Representative and the Commission. In this context, specific attention should be devoted to strategic enablers and innovation in the field of defence, in order to harness the full potential of new technologies.
28. The European Council encourages further work to enable the European defence industry, including SMEs and mid-caps, to scale up production. In particular, the European Council welcomes the political agreement reached in the Council on the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP) proposal and urges the co-legislators to conclude the negotiations swiftly. It also encourages them to advance rapidly on the ‘Defence Readiness Omnibus’ proposals.
29. The European Council underlines that the defence of all EU land, air and maritime borders contributes to the security of Europe as a whole, in particular as regards the EU’s eastern border, considering the threats posed by Russia and Belarus.

30. The European Council invites the Commission and the High Representative to present further proposals to strengthen military mobility, thereby allowing defence equipment and personnel to be moved efficiently across the Union.
31. The European Council underlines the importance of working together with like-minded partners. It welcomes in that regard the EU's recent Security and Defence Partnership[s] with the UK[ and Canada].
32. The above is without prejudice to the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States, and takes into account the security and defence interests of all Member States, in accordance with the Treaties.
33. The European Council will review progress at its October meeting and discuss the next steps in the implementation of its defence readiness objective. It invites the Commission and the High Representative to present a roadmap to that end.

#### **IV. EU IN THE WORLD**

34. The European Council discussed preparations for upcoming summits with third countries and relations with partners, in the light of the current global political and economic context.

#### **V. COMPETITIVENESS**

35. The European Council exchanged views on economic developments. It underlines that boosting Europe's competitiveness and further integrating the Single Market is key for sustaining Europe's prosperity and social model, and will contribute to strengthening the EU's global influence and position as a predictable, reliable and credible partner, including by enhancing the international role of the euro.

36. Recalling its conclusions of 20 March 2025, the European Council calls for the further strengthening of EU competitiveness, including through innovation, and deepening of the Single Market, ensuring a level playing field. The European Council reaffirms the commitment to the objectives of the Single Market and reiterates its calls to remove remaining barriers, in particular in the areas of services and goods, including essential goods, to overcome fragmentation, and improve the application and enforcement of Single Market rules. In that context, the European Council welcomes the Commission's 'Strategy for making the Single Market simple, seamless and strong' and its 'EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy' and calls for work to begin swiftly on implementation.
37. In this context, the European Council invites the Council, the Commission and the European Central Bank to take work forward to reinforce the international role of the euro, including as a reserve currency and as a transaction currency.
38. The European Council underlines the key role of an ambitious and horizontally-driven simplification and better regulation agenda in ensuring Europe's competitiveness. The European Council stresses the importance of a 'simplicity by design' approach. In this regard, it recalls the need for continued efforts at all levels – EU, national and regional – to ensure a clear, simple, smart and innovation- and SME-friendly regulatory framework, without undermining predictability, policy goals and high standards. The European Council welcomes the progress achieved so far and urges the co-legislators to maintain the momentum with a view to swiftly agreeing the simplification packages presented by the Commission. The European Council calls on the Commission and the co-legislators to avoid over-regulation and the introduction of administrative burdens, throughout the legislative and implementation processes.

39. In the light of global instability and pressure on energy markets, and their impact on Europe's competitiveness, the European Council reiterates the importance of building a genuine Energy Union before 2030 with a fully integrated and interconnected EU energy market, ensuring energy security and resilience as well as the security of supply of affordable and clean energy for all Member States.
40. The European Council reiterates the importance, for Europe's competitiveness and strategic autonomy, of reducing energy dependencies, and welcomes the progress achieved since 2022. In this context, the European Council underlines the importance of security of supply, affordability and legal certainty and for Member States' concerns to be addressed, in a spirit of solidarity, including with a view to ensuring economically viable alternative energy transit routes, taking the specificities of landlocked countries into account. The European Council calls on the Commission to support Member States in addressing these concerns, and welcomes the work programme agreed between the Commission and Slovakia, inviting other Member States to support the agreed objectives, as relevant.
41. In the context of the European Semester, the European Council discussed the integrated country-specific recommendations on the basis of a horizontal note.
42. The European Council welcomes the fulfilment by Bulgaria of all the convergence criteria as set out in the Treaty. It endorses the Commission's proposal that Bulgaria adopt the euro on 1 January 2026 and invites the Council to swiftly adopt the relevant Commission proposals.
43. The European Council will revert to competitiveness and the green and digital transitions in October 2025 to assess progress and provide further guidance.

## **VI. MIGRATION**

44. Recalling its previous conclusions, the European Council took stock of progress in their implementation, including in the light of the [recent letter] from the President of the Commission, and encourages an intensification of work in particular on: the external dimension, notably through comprehensive partnerships; the implementation of adopted EU legislation and the application of existing legislation; the prevention and countering of irregular migration, including through new ways in line with EU and international law; efforts to facilitate, increase and accelerate returns, using all relevant EU policies, instruments and tools; the concepts of safe third countries and safe countries of origin; the fight against instrumentalisation, human trafficking and smuggling; visa policy alignment by neighbouring countries; as well as safe and legal pathways in line with national competences. The European Council recalls the EU's determination to strengthen security at its external borders and ensure their effective control, in line with EU and international law.
45. In particular, it invites the co-legislators to examine the Commission proposals on returns, on the establishment of a list of safe countries of origin at Union level and on the application of the safe third country concept.

## **VII. REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

46. The European Council looks forward to the first Moldova-EU Summit to be held on 4 July 2025 and reiterates the European Union's firm support for the Republic of Moldova's sovereignty, territorial integrity, resilience and economic development. The European Union will continue to work closely with the Republic of Moldova to enhance the country's resilience and stability in the face of persistent destabilising activities by Russia, including hybrid attacks, aimed at undermining the country's democratic institutions.

47. The European Council reiterates the European Union's steadfast support for the Republic of Moldova on its accession path. The European Council commends the Republic of Moldova for the pace of its accession-related reforms, welcomes the significant progress achieved, and encourages the Republic of Moldova and the Commission to intensify work. The European Council looks forward to the next steps in the accession process in line with the merit-based approach, with clusters being opened when the conditions are met. It notes the assessment of the Commission that the fundamentals cluster is ready to be opened.

## **VIII. WESTERN BALKANS**

48. The European Council held an exchange of views on the situation in the Western Balkans and recalls its previous conclusions. The European Union will continue to work closely with the Western Balkans and support their reform efforts on their European paths, as well as the gradual integration between the region and the European Union.

## **IX. INTERNAL SECURITY**

49. Serious and organised crime, and terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism, both online and offline, represent a major threat to European citizens and the security of Member States.
50. The European Council underlines that criminal infiltration of legal business structures has a detrimental impact on public finances and the Single Market as a whole.
51. The European Council calls on the EU institutions and the Member States to mobilise all relevant policy areas at national and EU level and to fully use all existing instruments to combat these phenomena.

52. Following the presentation by the Commission of its communication on the development of a European Internal Security Strategy and the guidance provided in the Council, the European Council invites the EU institutions and the Member States to take further action where necessary, notably by strengthening law enforcement and judicial cooperation, including on effective access to data for law enforcement purposes, and by ensuring information exchange and through cooperation with third countries.

## **X. PREPAREDNESS**

53. The European Council takes note of the Joint Communication of the Commission and the High Representative on the European Preparedness Union Strategy. It reaffirms the importance and urgency of this issue and encourages the Member States to enhance their resilience, preparedness and crisis prevention and response capacity in a coherent manner, in an all-hazards and whole-of-society approach, taking into account the evolving risk and threat landscape. The European Council invites the Council and the Commission to continue work on the EU policies' contribution to resilience and preparedness in the relevant fields, respecting Member States' responsibilities and competences. It recalls the specificities of different types of crises and the core responsibility of Member States in their management. In this regard, the European Council invites the Council to provide guidance for the Commission to consider improvements to the support provided by the European Union to Member States in civil protection, as well as other relevant policy areas where the EU support provides clear added value. It invites the Council, the Commission and the High Representative to report back regularly on progress.

## **XI. HYBRID ACTIVITIES**

54. The European Council strongly condemns all types of hybrid activities against the European Union and its Member States as well as its partners and in particular Russia's continued hybrid campaign, including sabotage, disruption of critical infrastructure, cyber-attacks, information manipulation and interference, and attempts to undermine democracy, including in the electoral process. In this context, it welcomes the adoption of additional listings under the framework for restrictive measures in view of Russia's destabilising activities, and the broader scope of this regime. The European Union and the Member States will continue to strengthen their resilience and make full use of all means available, including the EU hybrid toolbox, to specifically prevent, deter and respond to Russia's hybrid threats.

## **XII. OTHER ITEMS**

### ***Black Sea***

55. The European Council reaffirms the importance of security and stability in the Black Sea and welcomes the presentation by the Commission and the High Representative of the Joint Communication on the European Union's strategic approach to the Black Sea region. The European Council invites the Council, the Commission and the High Representative to take work forward swiftly.

### ***Rules-based international order***

56. Marking the 80th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter, the European Council reaffirms the European Union's steadfast commitment to effective multilateralism and to the rules-based international order with the United Nations at its core, as well as its support to the institutions upholding international law, including international courts and their officials.

## *Global agenda*

57. The European Council welcomes the outcome of the UN Ocean Conference, held in Nice from 9 to 13 June 2025. Following the presentation by the Commission of a European Ocean Pact, it invites the Council to take work forward.
58. The European Council looks forward to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Seville from 30 June to 3 July 2025, which will be an important step towards putting in place a renewed global financing framework for sustainable development.
59. [The European Council welcomes the outcomes of the Gavi High-Level Pledging Event held on 25 June 2025 and reaffirms the EU's commitment to advancing global health security, in order to enhance our collective preparedness, response capability and resilience to future health threats. The European Union will continue to work towards a more effective, coordinated, and resilient global health system.]

## *External relations*

60. The European Council addressed the worrying situation in Libya. It reaffirms the European Union's steadfast support for Libya and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya in advancing national reconciliation, institutional unity, and a transparent, inclusive dialogue anchored in Libyan ownership and consensus.
61. The European Council held an exchange of views on the Sahel. The deteriorating security situation remains a source of concern. The European Council underlines that the stability of the Sahel and the wider region, including neighbouring coastal states, is crucial for the security and prosperity of the people living in the Sahel as well as for the European Union. The European Council welcomes ongoing work, including by the EU Special Representative, on a renewed approach to the EU's contribution in this regard.