



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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“I/A” ITEM NOTE

From: Political and Security Committee
To: Coreper / Council
Subject: EU Priorities for the 66th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations

1. The Working party on UN affairs (CONUN) examined at several occasions the above-mentioned draft document and reached an agreement on the text using a written procedure.
 2. The Political and Security Committee (PSC) endorsed the text on 10 June 2011.
 3. Coreper is therefore invited to advise the Council to adopt as an “A” item the EU priorities for the 66th General Assembly of the United Nations as they appear in the Annex.
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**EU PRIORITIES FOR THE 66th SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

1. PROMOTING A STRONGER UNITED NATIONS

1. The entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon and the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) increases the European Union's (EU) capacity to act on the international scene as a global actor. We will work towards ensuring that this change is fully reflected at the United Nations (UN). In this connection, the adoption of the **resolution 65/276 on the modalities of EU participation in the work of the General Assembly** on 3 May will enable the EU to make an increasingly effective contribution to the work of the UN. The EU will now attach importance to full and effective implementation of the resolution.
2. The Treaty of Lisbon reaffirms the EU's commitment to the **principles of the UN Charter**, calling for multilateral solutions to common problems and challenges and the provision of global public goods. To contribute to the achievement of this objective, the EU will continue to strive for building a **stronger multilateral system**, notably by enhancing the representativeness, transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations. In this regard, the EU will actively engage in the reflection started in the General Assembly on the role of the UN in Global Governance.

2. INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

3. The EU will continue to support the **preventive diplomacy** capacity of the UN, in particular its mediation capacity, as well as the training and participation of women in peace processes, while also making efforts to reinforce its own mediation and mediation-support capacity.
4. Ahead of the London 2012 Olympic Games, we also support the principle of a UN **Olympic Truce** resolution.
5. The EU reiterates its support to the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** and welcomes the adoption of UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions 1970, 1973 and 1975 (2011) which confirmed the increasing relevance of the ICC for international peace and security. The EU remains committed to the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern and emphasizes that justice is a key factor for lasting peace. We welcome the adoption of resolutions 1954, 1955 and 1966 (2010) and note that the existing subvention granted at the end of 2010 by the General Assembly of the United Nations will help the Special Court of Sierra Leone (SCSL) to achieve its mission in 2012. The EU is committed to the preservation of the **legacy and integrity** of the work of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and SCSL. The EU recalls UNSC Resolution 1757 (2007) on the establishment of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and supports the continuation of the Tribunal's work in fulfilling its mandate
6. The EU will strive for the operationalization of the concept of **Responsibility to Protect (R2P)** on the basis that the concept is not open for renegotiation. The EU will apply a "*narrow but deep approach*" to R2P-related policies and will particularly focus on its preventive pillar. The EU welcomes the reference to this concept in UNSC Resolutions 1970, 1973 and 1975 (2011).

7. The EU will seize the political momentum generated by the 2010 Review of the **Peacebuilding Commission**, and contribute to the implementation of its recommendations. We will underline the need to strengthen the PBC's advisory role and enhance the linkage between peacekeeping and peacebuilding to ensure a continuum for peacekeeping to stabilization, transition and consolidation phases. The EU will closely follow, and support as appropriate, the implementation of the recommendations in the civilian capacities review.
8. The EU reasserts its commitment to contribute to the objectives of the United Nations in **crisis management** and is actively engaged in a discussion on how to enhance EU support to UN peacekeeping operations. The EU will continue its support to the ongoing review of UN peacekeeping in line with the provisions of the New Horizon initiative, including capability driven approach, and the Global Field Support Strategy.
9. The EU attaches great importance to the mainstreaming of the **Protection of Civilians** in a comprehensive manner. The EU prioritizes the improved implementation of Protection of Civilians' mandates ensuring close coordination between all relevant actors in the field as well as effective communication with local communities, and will advocate a robust-focused approach, when necessary, in mandates of UN peacekeeping missions. Part of our approach will be to strengthen the Rule of Law, by enhancing compliance with International Humanitarian, Human Rights and Refugee Law, by ensuring accountability and by improving the provision of information and reporting to the UNSC. In this regard it will also be important for the EU to actively participate in the negotiations on the organization of the **Rule of Law** high level segment for the 67th Session, which is going to be prepared during the 66th Session.

10. In the context of last year's 10th anniversary of the adoption of UN SC Resolution 1325 on "**Women, Peace and Security**", the EU will continue to actively support initiatives aimed at the training of civilian and military personnel in gender issues and monitor the implementation of the Resolution and follow-up Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960 through the appropriate means, including the operationalization of the set of indicators and the monitoring and reporting mechanisms, as well as to strive to engage more women on all levels of crisis management, including in mediation. The EU will work together with UN and all relevant UN actors to ensure the consideration of women's and girls' needs and greater participation of women in post-conflict peacebuilding.

11. The EU is committed to the implementation of the recommendations and follow-on actions agreed at the 2010 **Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference**, including the implementation of the Resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. We will continue efforts to achieve a rapid entry into force of the **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)**. The EU will press for commencement of substantive work of the **Conference on Disarmament** and an immediate start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a **Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)** including on verification provisions. Within the context of this overarching objective, we will support an effective follow-up to the "High-Level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations". Furthermore, the EU will work constructively towards the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament.

12. The EU will actively participate in the **7th Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) Review Conference** (5-22 December). The EU's main objectives for this Review Conference are: building confidence in compliance, supporting national implementation, and promoting adherence. The EU will strive to achieve a successful outcome of the **Convention on certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Review Conference** on 14-25 November 2011, which should aim at agreeing on a meaningful, legally binding document on cluster munitions that is compatible with and complementary to the text of the CCM. Future restrictions in a new CCW protocol should make a significant humanitarian contribution. The protocol should allow countries, as yet not in a position to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions, but which nonetheless share its humanitarian concerns, to take a step in the same direction so as to agree a significant enhancement of international humanitarian law.
13. The EU highlights the importance of sustained support to counter the devastating consequences of **landmines, cluster munitions and other explosives remnants of war**, devoting particular attention to assisting the victims of these weapons. The EU will thus actively participate in the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (12-16 September).
14. The EU firmly supports the UN process leading to the negotiation of a legally binding, strong and robust **Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)**. The EU will contribute constructively to the preparation for the 2012 UN Conference mandate to negotiate the ATT.
15. The EU will fully contribute to the preparation of the **2012 Review Conference on the UN Programme of Action** to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

16. The EU supports an integrated approach in the **fight against transnational threats** (i.e.: organised crime, trafficking in drugs and human beings and corruption) and will continue to promote the universality and the full and effective implementation of the UNTOC (Palermo Convention) as a crucial tool in fighting Transnational Organized Crime in all of its forms. The EU will also actively participate in the implementation of the UN Resolution on *“Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity”* (A/RES/65/232). In this context, the EU is promoting security and development in the Sahel, together with the countries in the region and international partners.
17. Driving forward the negotiations on the **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism** remains an EU priority. The EU will also continue to contribute to the implementation of the **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy** through concrete projects according to its regional priorities. The EU will continue to promote the respect of international law, human rights and the rule of law in the fight against terrorism. In addition, the EU will put emphasis on the role of victims of terrorism and their appropriate treatment.
18. The EU will continue to promote the concept of **Human Security** as a comprehensive, integrated and people centred approach in addressing interrelated threats to security, livelihood and dignity of people and vulnerable communities. Further reflection is needed to identify the thematic areas in which this approach can best show its added value and concrete applications to achieve this objective.
19. The EU supports the objectives of the UN initiative of the **Alliance of Civilisations** and will continue to support the Alliance’s delivery of substantive projects with cross-cultural band.

20. The EU will continue to promote consolidation of the humanitarian architecture throughout the UN system and the UN's leading role as coordinator of **International Humanitarian Assistance**. The EU will be putting emphasis on better humanitarian access and security of humanitarian missions in line with International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, as well as further promotion of the humanitarian principles, the needs-based approach and advocating for building response capacity and preparedness towards complex and new humanitarian challenges. The EU will continue to promote the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship among humanitarian actors and respect for the international guidelines on civil military coordination (Oslo and MCDA Guidelines).
21. The EU is determined to continue **fighting against piracy** in collaboration with the UN and all the concerned countries. In line with the UNSC Resolution 1976 (2011), the EU recognizes that piracy is a crime subject to universal jurisdiction and underlines the importance of enhancing the capacity of judicial systems of the concerned countries to effectively prosecute suspected pirates. The EU supports the UN Secretary General to take appropriate measures to ensure that the objectives of the Resolution 1976 are met. To this end, securing funding to projects related to prosecution and detention, as well as to regional maritime capacity building to follow up the Resolution will continue to be a priority for the EU, in cooperation with its international and regional partners.

3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

22. The EU will work with all partners to take forward the actions to follow up on the Outcome Document of the 2010 **High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs**, as well as the results of the 4th Conference on Least Developed Countries (Istanbul, May 2011). Reducing the vulnerability and fragility of the least developed countries and improving their resilience to cope with shocks are key elements in their development processes. The EU remains concerned with slow progress in MDG 5, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The EU supports the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health for accelerated progress towards MDG 4 and 5 and will work for an active follow-up to the High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS as well as for a successful outcome of the High level Meeting on Non Communicable Diseases. In order to meet the MDG's and remaining committed to the full implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)/Cairo Declaration and Programme of Action and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the EU will pay special attention to gender equality and the right of women and men to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexual and reproductive health. To this end, the EU will work actively to ensure that health systems provide information and health services addressing the sexual and reproductive needs of women, as this is crucial for women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment. The EU is deeply concerned about the impact of recent crises (food, energy, natural disasters, financial and economic) for development and for the achievement of the MDGs.

23. The EU remains committed to increasing its **ODA level to 0.7% of GNI** and reiterates that for reaching the MDGs also other donors, including the emerging economies must do their fair share. The EU also reaffirms its commitment to channel at least 50% of collective aid increases to Africa, while stressing that ODA is an indispensable element of meaningful global development partnership. Furthermore, the EU also emphasizes the importance of policy coherence for development and of improved aid and development effectiveness in contributing to the achievement of the MDGs, as a wider political objective as well as in the framework of the “*Delivering as One*” initiative. The EU shall place special emphasis on ownership by partner countries for achieving the MDGs through the mobilisation of domestic resources and good governance, including in tax matters. Resources can also be raised through the reduction of the cost of remittances and the maximization of their impact on development as well as the establishment of innovative financing mechanisms and further involvement of the private sector as well as civil society. In this respect the EU welcomes the ongoing work by the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development. The EU will continue to support actions to improve the capabilities of developing countries to produce reliable indicators on their development, including the MDGs. **The IV High Level Forum on aid effectiveness** (Busan, 29 November-1 December 2011) is an important milestone to make further progress in achieving the MDGs.
24. The EU fully aligns itself with the Rome Principles on **Food Security**, emphasising a broad-based approach to food security. Increased investment in sustainable agriculture and rural development, in particular small-holders, and efforts by all countries to minimise post-harvest losses, discards and waste are necessary. We are ready to support developing countries that are committed to increasing the investments and improving the governance of food systems needed to provide for food security. The EU contributes actively to the ongoing work of the Committee on World Food Security and among G20 partners to tackle price volatility and looks forward to action to be taken on this issue this year.

25. It is our common responsibility **to protect the environment and its natural resources** as the fundament of human well-being and source of economic and social development for future generations. This will require increased efforts to integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. We will support the identification of models which enable the full cost of decisions, including the cost of the natural resource base and the **ecosystem** services it provides, to be taken into account in planning and decision making processes.
26. The EU is committed to strengthening the **Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development** and enhancing the International Environmental Governance. The EU has already expressed support for establishing a UN agency for environment, based on UNEP, with a revised and strengthened mandate, supported by stable, adequate and predictable financial contributions and operating on an equal footing with other UN specialised agencies. This would aim at creating a real strong environmental pillar within the broader context of strengthening overall sustainable development governance. It is also important to maintain an open process which also takes account of other broader reform options of the current system, and how it can be made more effective and efficient. The EU will also continue its work and engagement for a successful **UN Conference on Sustainable Development** (UNCSD) to be held in Rio in 2012. This will be a fundamental occasion to reaffirm political commitment to sustainable development and to achieve substantive progress on the two main themes of the Conference: the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development and Green Economy in the context of Sustainable Development Governance and poverty eradication, are important for the EU.

27. The EU will actively participate in the follow-up to the **10th Conference of the State Parties of the “Convention on Biological Diversity”** (Nagoya, October 2010), as well as in the setting up of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. The EU is committed to promotion of sustainable use of natural resources. In this context, water resources are particularly under stress as a result of climate change, degradation of ecosystems and other human action. The EU will continue implementing the International Decade for Action “*Water for Life 2005-2015*” on the basis of Resolution A/RES/64/198 as well as other water-related initiatives.
28. **Climate change** threatens sustainable development, implementation of MDGs and poverty eradication and has security implications. Therefore, climate change is a strategic priority for the EU in the whole UN system and it has to be mainstreamed into the work of the UN, notably with a view to support efforts towards a low carbon economy, consistent with sustainable development, strengthen adaptation and resilience to climate change and minimize security implications of climate change.
29. The EU reiterates its strong support to the central role of the **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC) as the forum in which negotiations on a post 2012 agreement on climate change are to take place. The UNFCCC is and remains the principal multilateral forum on global action addressing climate change and the Cancun COP 16 proves that multilateralism and the UN climate process can deliver and truly set the stage for international action.

30. The EU considers the **Cancun agreements** as real progress and that implementing and operationalizing the Cancun decisions is a top priority for all Parties, while also addressing remaining gaps. The work to devise low-carbon development strategies and to implement the Cancun emission reduction pledges by Parties must start in all countries. The EU will continue to encourage all Parties to step up their mitigation to meet the 2 degrees Celsius objective. Preparing for the next **UNFCCC** meeting in Durban, we will work closely with all Parties in the process to make the Cancun agreement fully operational. The meeting will need to fill the gaps with regards to the scope of sectors covered and in particular market based policies incentivising investments and reducing greenhouse gases cost efficiently.
31. With regards to **financing for climate change**, the EU is committed to delivering on its fast-start funding commitment – ensuring that its support is channelled to facilitate the implementation of the Cancun package, addressing possible gaps, and strengthening cooperation with recipients and other donor countries. The EU is supporting concrete progress on adaptation, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation + (REDD+), technology and is committed that such financing should not undermine or jeopardize the fight against poverty and continued progress towards the MDGs.
32. The EU will continue its efforts in the field of **climate change and international security** and strengthen the dialogue with third countries and international organisations, including the UN, and will remain supportive of further initiatives aiming at increasing UN efforts in addressing this very crucial issue. The EU will continue to pay particular attention to a more integrated approach to climate change aspects into relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, taking into account the special needs of least developed countries, small island developing States and African States, especially of the most vulnerable amongst them.

33. Aware that **desertification, land degradation and draught** pose very difficult challenges to many countries, including many developing countries, the EU has supported the initiative to organize a high level meeting on these issues in the margins of the 66th UNGA General Debate. The EU will actively participate in this event, which will be an important contribution to the 10th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, to be held in Republic of Korea, in October 2011.

4. **HUMAN RIGHTS**

34. The EU will actively promote the integration and mainstreaming of Human Rights in all aspects of the work of the United Nations reaffirming the fact that Human Rights are inextricably linked to the UN's other goals on security and development. The EU will continue to support the General Assembly Third Committee as the body with universal membership that can effectively promote the implementation of Human Rights standards. The EU will continue to counter efforts by third parties to undermine the respect for universality of human rights notably with regard to human rights and cultural diversity and defamation of religions.

35. In preparation for UNGA 66, the EU will approach the negotiations of the modalities of the commemoration by the General Assembly of the **10th anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration** and Programme of Action constructively, as long as the decision on the modalities do not prejudice the negotiations on a political declaration_ and consider its engagement in the negotiations of the political declaration. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the **UN Declaration on the Right to Development** and the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the **Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief**.

36. As regards the follow up of the **Human Rights Council (HRC) review**, the EU will be actively engaged in the implementation of its outcome according to its objectives during the negotiation process.

37. The EU remains committed to playing an active role in addressing urgent human rights issues in all fora and in particular in the **Third Committee** addressing country-specific situations. The EU will put forward its traditional resolutions on DPRK and Burma/Myanmar and support the Canadian-led initiative on Iran.
38. The EU will be in the lead this year for preparing the first draft of the joint initiative with GRULAC on the **rights of the child**. The EU will defend the independence of the OHCHR and of Special Procedures, including country specific and thematic mandates, will pay special attention to the respect for the universality of Human Rights, **mainstreaming of gender perspective and empowerment of women** and will promote the participation of civil society. The EU will also support the adoption of the **Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training**. The EU will favour and actively support initiatives to end **female genital mutilation**.
39. Building on the successful negotiation at the 16th session of the HRC of the resolution “*Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence, and violence against persons based on religion or belief*”, the EU will consider how to address the issue of **freedom of religion or belief** at UNGA, as well as – where relevant – freedom of expression. The EU will also consider how to address the resolutions concerning interreligious dialogue.
40. Finally, the EU will assess how to give a follow-up to the **2008 Joint Statement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity** also building on the success of the cross-regional statement on ending violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity at the 16th session of the HRC.

5. REFORM OF THE UN SYSTEM

41. The EU will continue to promote **reform of the UN System** and of its main bodies and organs, including the revitalisation of the **General Assembly** and the comprehensive reform of the **Security Council**, with the aim to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability and representativeness of the system.
42. The EU is committed to ensuring that UN financial resources are managed efficiently and effectively, according to the principles of **budgetary discipline** and coherence, in conformity with the highest international standards. The establishment of a new methodology for **scale of assessments**, reflecting a fairer and more balanced distribution of the financial responsibilities among Member States according to their capacity to pay is a key EU priority.
43. The EU will engage actively in support of the review of the **UN's system of administration of justice**, to be carried out during the 66th session of the General Assembly in the Sixth and Fifth Committees .
44. The EU is determined to continue to support the **System Wide Coherence** Process in an active and constructive manner in order to revitalise the role of the UN system in global development cooperation. On “*Delivering as One*”, the EU welcomes the progress already achieved in the pilot initiative, encourages additional efforts to promote coherence at country level, and calls for a quick start of the independent evaluation. The EU welcomes the establishment of **UN Women** as a tangible result in promoting a coherent UN action on gender equality and will continue its full support for UN Women and its activities.