



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 5 May 2006

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NOTE

from : Presidency
to : COREPER/Council

Subject : European Council (15 and 16 June 2006)
 – *Annotated draft agenda*

In accordance with Article 2(3) of the Council's Rules of Procedure the General Affairs and External Relations Council, acting on a Presidency proposal, shall draw up an annotated draft agenda at least four weeks before the meeting of the European Council.

The Presidency accordingly submits the following annotated draft agenda, which sets out the main items it expects the European Council to address on 15 and 16 June. Work on many of those issues – as well as on others such as the services and working time directives – is in hand or will begin shortly and the Presidency will draw on the outcome of that work when submitting a further version of the annotated draft agenda.

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The meeting will be preceded by an exposé by Mr Josep Borrell, President of the European Parliament, followed by an exchange of views.

The Presidency intends to focus the agenda on the following items:

I. EUROPE LISTENS

The European Council will focus on issues which demonstrate that the Union is listening to its citizens and is capable of taking concrete decisions to respond to the concerns they express. In particular, it will be invited to take stock of the reflection period conducted since June 2005; to evaluate the main findings of the national debates; and to define a number of concrete projects in order to address these concerns and worries.

In this context, the European Council is expected to call for an increased continuous communication effort at all levels and steps to enhance the Union's visibility.

II. EUROPE AT WORK

(a) Europe protects

Under this section the European Council will be invited to address the European citizens' security in all of its forms:

- *It will discuss internal security issues, including asylum and illegal migration, the external dimension of JHA and counterterrorism, taking into account the expected Commission report on the Hampton Court follow-up to migration and security.*
- *With a view to improving security for EU citizens at home and abroad, the European Council will discuss the development of the Union's capacity to react more swiftly and effectively to crisis situations, on the basis of a Presidency report on reinforcing the EU's emergency and crisis response, including of a closer consular cooperation.*

- *The European Council will adopt conclusions on improving the efficiency and coherence of external policy, between European and national levels as well as between CFSP and Community instruments, taking into account proposals tabled by the Commission.*
- *It will discuss external energy relations on the basis of a contribution from the Commission and the SG/HR.*

(PM: EU Fundamental Rights Agency)

(b) Greater clarity in Europe

European citizens request greater clarity on critical issues. The European Council will therefore discuss how to bring more clarity to the division of responsibilities between the various actors in the work of the Union. It will take stock of concrete steps agreed and is expected to

- *examine practical measures to improve the handling of the subsidiarity principle in the European legislative process;*
- *take stock of negotiations aimed at ensuring a more democratic way of exercising the implementing powers conferred on the Commission (comitology);*
- *agree on a more effective policy on transparency in the Council;*
- *acknowledge the progress achieved in the main pillars of the Better Regulation agenda, including impact assessment, administrative burden and simplification.*

Greater clarity is equally important to citizens with regard to the enlargement process. In this context the European Council is expected to

- define its position on the Commission's Monitoring Report expected to contain a recommendation on the date of Bulgaria's and Romania's accession to the European Union;*
- take stock of the state of accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia;*
- reconfirm the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries, building on the results of the Informal EU-Western Balkans Foreign Ministers' meeting (Salzburg, 11 March 2006) and the Commission's Communication "The Western Balkans on the road to the EU: Consolidating stability and raising prosperity" (January 2006);*
- deepen the discussion on the EU's general policy on enlargement, inter alia by specifying the "absorption capacity", as contained in the 1993 European Council conclusions of Copenhagen.*

(c) Preserving and developing the European way of life

Against the background of demographic trends and challenges in Europe, the European Council is expected to

- underline the importance of sustainable development by adopting a comprehensive renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy, comprising targets, indicators and an effective monitoring procedure;*
- increase the visibility of the social dimension of EU action. In this context, it is expected to address the question of the social impact of European legislation;*

- *take stock of progress in key areas discussed at the last Spring European Council and at Hampton Court, in particular employment and growth. Furthermore, it is expected to take note of the Commission's communication on higher education and of its proposal on further steps concerning a European Institute for Technology.*

III. A WORK PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Under this item the European Council is expected to

- *define a number of subjects the debate will have to focus on in the near future;*
- *decide to explore possibilities for improving the functioning of the Union under the present Treaties (including possibilities for improving the coordination of economic policies, especially inside the Euro-zone);*
- *underline the importance of making sure that the Union's future own resources and budgetary systems keep pace with the challenges to come;*
- *define ways for enhancing the visibility of EU action.*

(PM: Constitutional process)

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The European Council is expected to agree on declarations on a number of foreign policy issues (as of today Iran, Iraq, Middle East peace process, developments in Africa, and the Western Balkans are among the possible subjects).