

European Council Conclusions on external relations (19 March 2015)

European Council

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- Foreign affairs & international relations

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External relations

European Neighbourhood Policy

7. The ongoing review of the European Neighbourhood Policy should ensure the continued deep involvement of the EU with both Eastern and Southern partners. The European Council will have a broader discussion on the Southern Neighbourhood in October. In this context, the European Council welcomed the ministerial meeting to be held in Barcelona on 13 April which will provide a unique opportunity to hear our southern partners' views.

Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga

8. The EU is fully committed to the Eastern Partnership. It will strengthen, in a differentiated way, relations with each of its six partners. Particular efforts should be devoted to advance cooperation in state building, mobility and people-to-people contacts, market opportunities and interconnections. The European Council looks forward to the earliest possible ratification by all Member States of the Association Agreements/Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (AAs/DCFTAs) with Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

Russia/Ukraine

9. The European Council called on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments, and underlined the Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard. The EU stands ready to support the process, notably as regards the OSCE's ability and capacity to monitor and verify the implementation of the Minsk agreements, and will continue efforts in the trilateral processes on energy and EU-Ukraine DCFTA implementation.

10. The European Council agreed that the duration of the restrictive measures against the Russian Federation, adopted on 31 July 2014 and enhanced on 8 September 2014, should be clearly linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements, bearing in mind that this is only foreseen by 31 December 2015. The necessary

decisions will be taken in the coming months. The European Council stands ready to take further measures if necessary.

11. The European Council does not recognize and continues to condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and will remain committed to fully implement its non-recognition policy.

12. The EU will continue to support Ukraine's reform process, together with other donors and in line with IMF conditionality. The European Council called for the third Macro-Financial Assistance package for Ukraine to be adopted as a matter of urgency. It acknowledged the Ukrainian government's reform efforts so far and called on it to further intensify its work.

13. The European Council stressed the need to challenge Russia's ongoing disinformation campaigns and invited the High Representative, in cooperation with Member States and EU institutions, to prepare by June an action plan on strategic communication. The establishment of a communication team is a first step in this regard.

Libya

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