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Subject:	Council Conclusions on taking the UN-EU strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management to the next level: Priorities 2022-2024

Delegations will find attached the Council Conclusions on taking the UN-EU strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management to the next level: Priorities 2022-2024, approved by the Council at its meeting held on 24 January 2022.

Council conclusions on taking the UN-EU strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management to the next level: Priorities 2022-2024

1. The Council reiterates the firm commitment by the EU and its Member States to uphold the multilateral rules-based global order with the United Nations (UN) at its core, in line with the UN Charter. The Council commends the achievements and recognises the mutually beneficial nature of the longstanding UN-EU cooperation on peacekeeping and civilian, police and military crisis management. The changing global context defined by increasingly complex crises and an evolving threat environment, including hybrid threats, requires an ambitious, multifaceted and collective response that places the UN-EU strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management at the core of a reinvigorated networked multilateralism.
2. The Council welcomes the peace and security dimension of the UN Secretary General's report, 'Our Common Agenda', which proposes a 'new agenda for peace' and, among other important recommendations, highlights the need to boost partnerships. The EU will actively engage to bring forward this agenda and its identified core areas of (1) reducing strategic risks, (2) strengthening international foresight, (3) reshaping our responses, (4) investing in prevention and peacebuilding, (5) supporting regional prevention and (6) putting women/girls at the centre of security policy. Partnering with the UN contributes to the EU playing its role as a security provider and a global peace and security actor in support of effective multilateralism. The Council highlights the importance of establishing regular EU-UN Leaders' meetings. The EU provides the UN with political support as well as expertise, financial backing and political leverage to deliver on UN mandates. Close cooperation helps UN and EU missions and operations act more effectively to ensure impact on the ground, has a multiplier effect and enables the EU to deliver on its integrated approach. The Council welcomes the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative on

strengthening the EU's contribution to rules-based multilateralism¹ and in particular its call to support the UN Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative by updating the UN-EU partnership on crisis management and peace operations. The EU values this partnership and will work to demonstrate EU-UN unity in this context, including through high-level joint statements as appropriate. It further reiterates the importance of continuing the close European cooperation in the UN Security Council in line with the UN Charter.

3. The Council stresses the importance of renewing and deepening the UN-EU strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management and endorses the shared UN-EU priorities for 2022-2024². It welcomes the extended scope of the priorities with the aim to respond more effectively to the evolving threat landscape, cross-cutting challenges and crisis multipliers such as climate change and environmental degradation, new and emerging threats, including disruptive technologies and misinformation as well as the global COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences. The Council welcomes that the climate change, peace and security nexus is being mainstreamed across the joint UN-EU priorities.
4. Recognising the key role of political solutions and political frameworks to deliver peace and security in mission settings, the Council recognises the need to further strengthen the political dimension of the UN-EU partnership and to enhance cooperation on conflict prevention in peace operations and on support to political processes by better leveraging the UN and EU toolbox, notably in translating early warning into early action and supporting sustainable peace, including through more joint analyses and joint messaging.

¹ 6312/2021.

² 14196/1/21 REV 1, dated 10 December 2021.

5. The Council reaffirms the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms and welcomes the increased attention to the promotion of human rights and International Humanitarian Law throughout the EU-UN priorities, including the specific focus on strengthening compliance and the fight against impunity. It stresses the need to prevent and combat sexual and gender-based violence as well as sexual exploitation and abuse. It underlines the importance of the protection of civilians in the evolving international peace operations environment. It also recognises the relevance of the protection of the cultural heritage in situations of crisis and conflict.
6. The Council welcomes the inclusion of children and armed conflict as a crosscutting priority, and stresses the need to enhance and coordinate efforts and cooperation at headquarters and operational levels to end and prevent violations against children and contribute to breaking the cycle of violence and promoting and protecting all human rights.
7. The Council welcomes, as a crosscutting priority, the increased attention to the participation of young people in matters related to peace and security and inclusion of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda and calls for increased efforts for its operationalisation.
8. The Council welcomes the commitment to enhance joint UN-EU efforts on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and gender equality as crosscutting priorities and continuous dialogue on WPS and gender equality at all levels, from political to operational. This crosscutting agenda focuses on the essential influence that women have in identifying solutions based on their experiences and situation, and on applying a gender perspective to conflict prevention and response. It calls for an increased effort to accelerate the operationalisation of this political commitment through strengthening cooperation at field level, ensuring systematic gender mainstreaming in all activities as well as an increased participation and enhanced role of women in peace operations, peace and political processes, conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. Special attention should be paid to the protection of women human rights defenders and peacebuilders and to addressing threats, harassment, violence and hate speech against them.

9. The Council underlines the importance of continuing and enhancing systematic operational cooperation at HQ-level and in the field with a view to ensuring complementarity, synergies and increasing the effectiveness and efficiencies of the respective EU and UN missions and operations, including by sharing of assets and providing mission support on the basis of the UN-EU Framework Agreement for the provision of mutual support³. It calls for increased efforts to intensify mutually beneficial partnerships, including *inter alia* in civilian capability development, through the Civilian CSDP Compact, as well as in military capability development. It welcomes the increased emphasis on integrating climate and environment related aspects into analysis and early warning mechanisms as well as into the operational planning, conduct and logistics.
10. The Council welcomes the ongoing joint UN-EU work on transitions and the commitment to advance it further, through identifying how to act in complementarity at country and regional level during the planning and execution of the transition of UN and EU missions and operations, with a view to ensuring the sustainability of their achievements.
11. The Council recognises that further reflections should be dedicated to better cooperation between EU Member States aiming at enhancing the effectiveness and predictability of their support and contribution to UN peace operations and the UN Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping Plus Initiative. In this regard, it welcomes the idea to propose modalities for informal EU rotational systems in support of UN peacekeeping, support for rapid response bridging operations, and transitions, and re-hatting.
12. The Council commends the achievements on policing and welcomes efforts to enhance partnership on Security Sector Reform (SSR) and, where relevant, aspects of Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of former combatants (DDR), as well as weapons and ammunition management (WAM) to tackle the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition.
13. The Council underlines the importance of efforts to enhance performance of peace operations on the ground through strengthened and systematic cooperation on training and capacity building, including exercises, as well as sharing relevant lessons and good practices, and welcomes closer cooperation and capacity-building in this context.

³ Framework Agreement between the European Union and the United Nations for the Provision of Mutual Support in the context of their respective missions and operations in the field. *OJ L 389, 19.11.2020.*

14. The Council welcomes the continued cooperation between EU, UN and African Union, as well as with other regional organisations, specific sub-regional initiatives and relevant partner countries in the context of the overall multilateral system and calls for exploring possible concrete joint initiatives in the trilateral format.

 15. The Council also underlines the importance of ensuring synergies with other relevant organisations operating in the same theatre, in particular regional security organisations and international financial institutions.
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