



EU flags at half-mast following deadly terrorist bombings in Brussels on 22 March 2016. Credit : B2

International condemnation after terrorist attacks in Brussels

The United Nations Secretary-General strongly condemned the terrorist bombings at Brussels airport and a Brussels metro station on 22 March during which more than 30 people were killed and many more injured, for which ISIL (also known as Daesh) has claimed responsibility. The Secretary-General expressed hope that those responsible will be swiftly brought to justice and expressed confidence that Belgium's and Europe's commitment to human rights, democracy and peaceful coexistence will continue to be the true and lasting response to the hatred and violence committed. The members of the United Nations Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks. They expressed solidarity with Belgium in the fight against terrorism and stressed the need to intensify regional and international efforts to overcome terrorism and violent extremism, which may be conducive to terrorism. The members of the Security Council referenced the need to take measures to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorism, terrorist organizations and individual terrorists in accordance with resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). A joint statement by EU leaders and EU institutions issued directly after the attacks called for collective resolve to fight against hatred, violent extremism and terrorism, while also pledging solidarity with Belgium and a resolve to defend European values. The NATO Secretary-General said in a statement that the Alliance stands together with Belgium and continues to monitor the situation closely. NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC) condemned the terrorist attacks in the strongest terms, while stressing determination to prevent and defeat terrorism.

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Responding to the refugee and migration crisis: the peace, security and human rights lens

Cooperation between the UN and the EU continues to deepen as Europe faces a growing existential challenge from the record number of refugees and migrants arriving on the continent. In tackling some of the structural causes, HR/VP Federica Mogherini, backed by the 28 EU member states in the Foreign Affairs Council, has voiced consistent support to the mediation efforts led by Staffan de Mistura, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria and to Martin Kobler, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya. The EU institutions have also brought to the table

significant funding, including pledging EUR 1.1 billion for 2016 at the Syria Donor's Conference in London in February coupled with trade concessions to Lebanon and Jordan, and offering more than EUR 100 million for the Government of National Accord in Libya when it is formed. The EU continues to deploy Operation Sophia to thwart the efforts of smugglers on the central Mediterranean route, and is collaborating closely with NATO on the deployment of its anti-trafficking operation in the Aegean Sea. On 18 March, the European Council met with Turkey and struck a deal to stem irregular migration to the EU, built upon a deal reached in principle between the EU and Turkey on 7 March. The EU and Turkey agreed that from 20 March all illegal migrants into Greece will be returned. For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled to the EU. It was agreed that each migrant will be assessed individually and that international law will be respected in all cases. In pursuing the stated priority of "stemming the flow" of migrants, the EU has also strengthened cooperation with Turkey, offering in total EUR 6 billion to support the implementation of the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan, while the accession process will be re-energized, with Chapter 33 to be opened during the ongoing Dutch Presidency of the Council of the European Union. A key tool to address the root causes of migration is the new EUR 1.8 billion EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, which was set up at the Valletta Conference in November 2015. The Trust Fund is largely focused on development, while also including key priorities relating to conflict prevention, enforcing rule of law and preventing and countering radicalization and violent extremism. The European Commission, with the help of the UNHCR, also continues its efforts to implement the European Agenda on Migration, including internal relocation of refugees from frontline states Greece and Italy. Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon has called on all countries to act in a spirit of responsibility-sharing and solidarity, which will be the main theme of the General Assembly's Summit on large movements of refugees and migrants, to be held on 19 September in New York. Meanwhile the HR/VP is developing the EU's Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy, which is expected to be finalized under the Dutch Presidency in June, and will likely mirror in part the new European Neighbourhood Policy adopted at the end of 2015 in putting a strengthened emphasis on addressing migration and refugee issues.



A group of Syrian refugees arrive on the island of Lesbos after traveling in an inflatable raft from Turkey, near Skala Sykaminias, Greece. Credit: UNHCR

EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management

The six monthly meeting of the UN-EU steering committee on crisis management took place in New York on 3 December. Co-chaired by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and European External Action Service (EEAS) Deputy Secretary General for Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and crisis response, Pedro Serrano, the meeting focused on a range of files including Mali, the Central African Republic (CAR), Somalia, Afghanistan and partnership with the African Union.

USG Ladsous updated EU colleagues on pledges made at the Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping in September 2015, noting that the UK will host a follow-up meeting to the Summit later this year in London. The need for rapid response options to curtail and prevent conflict was also discussed and there was agreement to engage in UN-EU staff level talks to assess and develop a possible menu of rapid response tools and options. With the theme of partnership high on the agenda of the Secretary-General's report on implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/357-S/2015/682), the steering committee outlined a number of ways of deepening UN-EU partnership, including sharing of information, support for the African Peace and Security Architecture and efforts to sustain peace through capacity building. On the geographic files, the UN welcomed steps by the European Union to deploy a training mission in the Central African Republic to train the Forces Armées Centrafricaines (FACA), while on Mali the UN and EU agreed to continue to work together towards the implementation of the peace agreement.

Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, leading the discussion on Afghanistan on behalf of the UN, noted the importance of the upcoming Afghanistan conference to take place in Brussels in October this year. With the High Level Partnership Forum on Somalia taking place in Istanbul in February 2016, the EU and UN emphasized the need to make progress on key legislative, electoral and constitutional processes and to explore fundraising options for AMISOM.



A new European Neighbourhood Policy

The EU finalized the review of its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) at the end of the 2015, adopting a Communication and issuing Council Conclusions to update the EU's diplomatic and programmatic relations with the Middle East and North Africa, Eastern Europe, and the South Caucasus. The Department of Political Affairs provided a contribution to the consultation process, including the need for increased focus on conflict prevention. This was reflected in the new ENP, which will pursue more flexible EU financing to prevent and respond to conflict in 2017 (when EU budgetary instruments undergo a review), as well as an increased focus on security sector reform and migration, and continued emphasis on trade/economic relations and cooperation on infrastructure and energy. Over the course of 2016 the EU will seek diversified and tailored partnership agreements with its neighbourhood. In doing so, the EU will pursue its interests, which include the promotion of universal values. The new ENP will serve as a key element of the Global Strategy on Foreign Policy and Security set to be adopted in June and which is expected to highlight the importance of the partnership between the EU and the United Nations.

Second annual UN-EU Partnership Meeting on Conflict Prevention

As part of ongoing efforts to bolster the UN-EU partnership on prevention and early action, the UN and the EU held the second UN-EU Annual Partnership Meeting on Conflict Prevention on 16-17 February 2016 in New York. While the first meeting in November 2014 served as an important opportunity to exchange information on the respective conflict prevention work and structures, this second partnership meeting sought to reflect on the normative frameworks around prevention and implications for ongoing and emerging challenges, to assess the use of existing and new conflict prevention tools and approaches of both the UN and the EU and discuss how to better leverage them. In addition, the meeting also considered how to strengthen the role and engagement of relevant inter-governmental bodies, including the UN Security Council and the Council of the EU, and to assess the implementation of action points from the first meeting.

The above was discussed using case studies exemplifying common aims, such as early warning, preventing violent extremism, addressing migration and refugee flows, and conflict sensitivity. The meeting also discussed thematic issues such as peacebuilding and mediation, and made links to ongoing areas of partnership, namely the EU-UN insider mediation project and the Joint Programme on Conflict Prevention. The partnership meeting served as a platform to discuss concrete ideas for implementing the prevention-related recommendations emanating from the Secretary-General's Report on the Future of Peace Operations, the Peacebuilding Architecture Review, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other processes, including the new Security Council resolutions 2242 (2015) on Women, Peace and Security and 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security. Participants signed off on a range of action points and agreed to hold the next meeting in Brussels in early 2017, with a strengthened focus on women, peace and security.



The UN and the EU held the second UN-EU Annual Partnership Meeting on Conflict Prevention on 16-17 February 2016 in New York. Credit : DPA

Upcoming EU Training and Advisory Mission for the Central African Republic (CAR)

The EU is planning to deploy a mission to train and advise the army in the Central African Republic (CAR) in mid-2016, subject to approval by EU member states and the new CAR Government authorities. The current mandate of the EU Monitoring and Advising Mission (EUMAM) in CAR will conclude by mid-July this year. The 74-strong EUMAM mission supports the national armed forces (the Forces Armées Centrafricaines - FACA) in building the capacity and quality needed to become a modern, effective and accountable force. In order to continue and accelerate this process, the new larger EU mission will focus on defence sector reform, education of officers and operational training. The EU Council Decision for the new training mission was taken in mid-March 2016, to allow for the deployment of the training mission to follow on from the EUMAM mission ending in July. The EU has been actively engaged in supporting security in the CAR following the outbreak of conflict in 2014. Security Council resolution



2134 authorized the EU to deploy an operation (EUFOR RCA) in the CAR, which was launched on 1 April 2015. The EUFOR mandate concluded on 15 March 2015 and was followed up by the EU's military advisory mission in the Central African Republic (EUMAM). EUFOR RCA played a critical role in supporting MINUSCA (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic), notably in districts 3 and 5 in the capital city, Bangui, and at Bangui's main airport. Lessons learned from the transition from EUFOR RCA to MINUSCA will be captured in a joint UN-EU After Action Review (AAR) due to be finalized by mid-2016. It is hoped that the successful bridging from EUFOR to MINUSCA is a tool that can be utilized in other scenarios in the future.

UNLOPS at the European Parliament



*Briefing of the European Parliament's Sub-Committee for Security and Defence (SEDE) on UN-EU cooperation in crisis management.
Credit: European Parliament*

UNLOPS has intensified its relations with the European Parliament (EP). In November 2015, UNLOPS briefed, for the first time, the EP's Sub-Committee for Security and Defence (SEDE) on UN-EU cooperation in crisis management and, on 18 March, UNLOPS briefed the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on the Responsibility to Protect. Over the past months, UNLOPS furthermore discussed EU-UN cooperation on peace and security with some members of the committee of foreign affairs (AFET) and the SEDE subcommittee bilaterally. The European Parliament, on its side, has shown interest in the work of the United Nations.

Recently, high-ranking UN officials, including the President of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketoft and Special Representative of the Secretary General for Libya, Martin Kobler, have exchanged views with the European Parliament when visiting Brussels. In addition, a joint delegation of the EP's Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET) and Sub-Committee for human rights (DROI) met with the Secretary-General, the Deputy-Secretary General as well as the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and other high-ranking UN officials, at the occasion of its visit to UN Headquarters in New York on 1-3 November to discuss a wide range of issues, including international peace and security matters, migration and human rights. Moreover, the EP has been working on UN-EU policy matters: A resolution on the role of the EU in the UN was adopted on 24 November 2015, and a report on the EU's support to UN peace operations is currently being developed, with the AFET committee in the lead, to be voted on in June.

Launch of Global Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism

With violent extremism posing an increasing challenge, on 15 January 2016, the Secretary-General launched the Global Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The Plan calls for a comprehensive and “all of UN” approach towards addressing the structural and individual causes of violent extremism. In recognizing the importance of regional cooperation in preventing radicalization and violent extremism, the Action Plan calls for regional and national plans of action to be put in place. Following a General Assembly debate in mid-February, Member States will give further consideration to the Plan of Action during the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review in June 2016. Since the Paris attacks in January and November 2015, the EU has enhanced efforts to prevent radicalization, counter radical narratives and fight terrorist financing. EU member states have pledged to make significant advances in sharing information and judicial cooperation in fighting terrorism. The EU has made efforts to link its internal mechanisms and tools to its external action, particularly on the issue of Foreign Terrorist Fighters, and increasingly mainstreams the fight against terrorism in its relations with partner countries and regional organizations. Furthermore, the EU has enhanced its cooperation on terrorism with partner countries, such as Turkey, as well as partner countries in the Western Balkans and the MENA region. France invoked article 42.7 of the Lisbon Treaty (so-called solidarity clause) following the November attacks in Paris, prompting EU member states to support France in Syria and Mali, including by enhancing contributions to MINUSMA.

High-level visits

Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations

Following a visit to Berlin on 1 February to discuss the deployment of 650 German troops to the UN Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in the coming months, USG Ladsous travelled to Brussels to meet EU officials and then to Amsterdam to attend an informal meeting of EU Defence Ministers. In Brussels, Mr. Ladsous discussed EU-UN partnership in peacekeeping with PSC Ambassadors and welcomed enhanced peacekeeping support from EU member states in Mali, while noting that the needs in CAR are also critical. USG Ladsous also informed the PSC about plans for a first ever UN Chiefs of Police Summit (COPS), which will take place in UN Headquarters in early June this year. USG Ladsous thanked EU Defence Ministers in Amsterdam for enhanced support for UN peacekeeping, which enables the UN to fill critical gaps and diversify the base of peacekeeping contributors. On rapid deployment he updated the Ministers on the new UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System and called for continued EU support for UN peacekeeping.

Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs

On 12 January, USG Feltman visited Brussels, where he met with HR/VP Federica Mogherini and senior NATO officials. He also met with Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders. In addition to discussing EU support for UN efforts in Syria and Libya, the implementation of the Iran nuclear deal, the Middle East Peace Process, and the revised European Neighbourhood Policy, discussions focused on a number of African files including Burundi and Burkina Faso. The upcoming Afghanistan conference to be held in October of this year in Brussels was also highlighted. Minister Reynders noted that Belgium’s campaign for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2019-20 has officially commenced.

Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General

On 8-9 December, Special Adviser Benomar visited Brussels for discussions on the political situation in Burundi. USG Benomar held meetings with the EU’s Political and Security Committee (PSC) and with senior EU officials, including EEAS Secretary General, Alain Le Roy.

Mr. Levent Bilman, Director of the Europe Division in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA)

DPA Europe Director, Levent Bilman, visited Brussels on 1-3 February to have meetings with the European External Action Service, the European Commission, and PSC Ambassadors to discuss developments in the Western Balkans, the "Eastern Partnership" countries, and the South Caucasus, as well as the European response to the refugee/migration challenge and EU-UN partnership on conflict prevention and political issues. Mr. Bilman also met with NATO interlocutors to discuss preparations for the Warsaw Summit in July this year.

Mr. El-Ghassim Wane, Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for Operations in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Recently appointed ASG for Operations in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. El-Ghassim Wane, undertook a first trip to Brussels in his new capacity on 22 February and held meetings with EU officials on a range of operational issues.

Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya

SRSG Kobler visited Brussels on 23 February and held meetings with HR/VP Federica Mogherini, the PSC and the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET). SRSG Kobler outlined steps taken to support the implementation of the Political Agreement and also stressed the deteriorating economic and financial crisis in Libya. On 14 March, SRSG Kobler returned to Brussels to brief the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC).

Mr. Michael Møller, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva

On 23-24 February, Mr. Møller visited Brussels to hold high-level meetings with EU interlocutors, including Frans Timmermans, Commission First Vice-President, Kristalina Georgieva, Commission Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources, and Mr. Elmar Brok, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament (AFET). DG Møller also briefed the European Economic and Social Committee, and met with Mr. Dirk Achten, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium. In his meetings, Mr. Møller discussed the Sustainable Development Goals, the global response to the refugee and migration flows to Europe, and underlined the important role Geneva plays in multilateral diplomacy.

Recent visits of the UN Office for Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI)

On 25-26 February, the UN Police Adviser, Mr. Stefan Feller, headed a UN delegation to Brussels, including the UN Police Division and the Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Service (CLJAS). The UN delegation held a series of round-table discussions which focused on UN-EU cooperation in policing and the rule of law in Mali, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya and Somalia. Mr. Feller discussed the upcoming Chiefs of Police Summit (COPS) that is to be held at UN Headquarters in New York on 2-3 June and invited the EU to attend this summit. The UN officials also met with the Brussels offices of Frontex and Europol. On 18-19 November, the Acting Chief of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) Unit in OROLSI visited Brussels to meet with counterparts at the EU and NATO. Discussions with the EU focused on SSR in Libya, Mali and the Central African Republic. The EU has been an active supporter of SSR and is currently developing an EU-wide Strategic Framework to ensure policy coherence and effectiveness in this vital sector. On 21 March, a representative from the OROLSI Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) unit held consultations with EU counterparts in Brussels.

Mr. David Gressly, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in MONUSCO

Mr. David Gressly, the Deputy Special Representative for Operations and the Rule of Law in MONUSCO, visited Brussels on 17-18 March to attend a seminar on the "The New Geopolitics of Peacekeeping Operations - Africa bound", organized by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). While in Brussels, he held bilateral meetings with European External Action Service officials and Belgian Foreign Ministry officials.

Updates from NATO

Ministers of Defence of the 28 NATO member countries convened in Brussels on 11-12 February 2016 and agreed that NATO will provide support to assist in tackling the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe. NATO agreed to monitor illegal crossings from Turkey to Greece, gather information and provide reconnaissance on human traffickers and smuggling networks in the Aegean Sea. The Ministers also took measures to step-up support for the international coalition to counter ISIL and they decided that NATO will enhance a forward presence in Eastern Europe. A final decision on the exact location and composition of this forward presence can be expected at the upcoming NATO Summit on 8-9

July in Warsaw. The NATO Warsaw Summit will likely focus on addressing challenges from NATO's eastern and southern flanks, as well as on how best to take forward deterrence and dialogue in different settings. In December 2015, NATO Foreign Ministers invited Montenegro to start Accession Talks, which commenced on 15 February 2016. The Warsaw Summit is likely to see the announcement of the conclusion of the Montenegro Accession Talks, however a final decision on Montenegro joining NATO can only be made following the ratification by the national parliaments of all 28 Allies. On 28 January 2016, NATO released its Annual Report providing an overview of its activities in 2015. The report emphasized the need for deepened cooperation with partners across a range of areas in order to build capacity, to enhance operability and to generate a better understanding of shared security challenges. Meanwhile, on 10 - 11 March, the annual UN-NATO staff level talks took place at UN Headquarters in New York. Topics on the agenda included, for example, women, peace and security, protection issues and training.



NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, Ambassador Thrasyvoulos Stamatopoulos (right) with the Montenegrin Delegation at the start of the Montenegro Accession Talks on 15 February 2016. Credit: NATO

Sample of UNLOPS representational activities

- UNLOPS continues to regularly present the work of the UN on peace and security at **pre-deployment training courses organized by the European Security and Defence College** for staff to be deployed in EU CSDP missions, including in Kosovo, Libya, Somalia, Mali and Niger (picture right). In early March, Rory Keane presented the work of the UN at the high level **European Security and Defense College course in Finland**. While in Finland, Mr. Keane also held meetings with Finnish Foreign and Defense Ministry officials.



Mr. Kamiel Mesie, UNLOPS, briefing staff to be deployed in EU CSDP missions. Credit: UNLOPS

- In early February 2016, UNLOPS gave a presentation and responded to questions from civil society representatives at the **Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting on the 2015 UN Reviews**. The objective of this consultation meeting was to enable civil society to discuss the common elements in the three UN reviews of 2015: the UN Peace Operations Review, the review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, and the Global Study on 1325. The consultation will feed into the preparations for a high-level General Assembly thematic debate (to be held on 10 and 11 May 2016) to advance the synergies between the three reviews.

- On 23 February 2016, UNLOPS took part in a **roundtable on humanitarian and political dialogue for mass atrocity prevention organized jointly by the European Institute of Peace and the US Institute of Peace**. The importance of sharing conflict analysis and aligning international mediation efforts was underlined.
- In December 2015, UNLOPS participated in an event on the **role of women in (de-)radicalization, co-organized by the Spanish Permanent Representation to the EU and the European Institute for Peace**. Rory Keane presented the UN's activities in this area, including elements of Security Council Resolution 2242 and the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.
- UNLOPS participated at the 4th Informal **NATO Community of Interest (COI) workshop** on the Comprehensive Approach, which took place on 9-10 December 2015.
- Also in December, UNLOPS briefed the **United Nations Working Party (CONUN)** regarding the 2015 UN review processes: the review of UN peace operations, the review of the peacebuilding architecture as well as the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 on women peace and security and the adoption of the follow-up resolution 2242. UNLOPS also informed about the UN's work in the area of preventing violent extremism.
- On 27 November, the German Permanent Representation to the EU and ZIF hosted a **roundtable with EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) Ambassadors and EEAS officials focused on the Global Strategy and links to UN-EU partnership**. Rory Keane provided the gathering with an overview of the Secretary-General's report on implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, with an emphasis on the partnership dimension.
- Rory Keane participated at the **Blue Helmet Forum in Austria** on 21-23 October and briefed the meeting on the results of the UN peace operations review and the UN Leaders' Summit on peacekeeping. UN Colleagues from MINUSMA also participated and briefed on the work of the mission. While in Austria, Mr. Keane held meetings with Austrian Foreign and Defense Ministry officials.
- On 25 October, UNLOPS participated in the yearly **UN Day on the Grand-Place of Brussels** (pictures right). It was a good occasion to brief passer-bys about the work of UNLOPS.



Credit: UNLOPS

- We are pleased to announce that **UNLOPS' new website** is soon to be launched!



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