European Council

Brussels, 14 December 2017
(OR. en)

EUCO 19/1/17
REV 1

CO EUR 24
CONCL 7

COVER NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	European Council meeting (14 December 2017) – Conclusions

Delegations will find attached the conclusions adopted by the European Council at the above meeting.

I. SECURITY AND DEFENCE

Further to its December 2016 and June 2017 conclusions, the European Council reviewed progress achieved in the field of security and defence, and:

- welcomes the establishment of ambitious and inclusive permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) and stresses the importance of quickly implementing the first projects; calls on participating Member States to deliver on their national implementation plans;
- calls for further work on the European Defence Fund, and in particular the swift adoption in 2018 of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme, in time to finance the first capability projects in 2019;
- expects the Council to complete the comprehensive revision of the Athena mechanism for financing common costs of EU military missions and operations;
- requests that the Council adopt, in spring 2018, a recommendation on a new dedicated instrument covering all requirements for Capacity Building in support of Security and Development after 2020;
- asks for work to proceed on implementing the full set of proposals on EU-NATO cooperation, including the additional ones agreed in December;
- invites the High Representative, the Commission and the Member States to bring work forward on military mobility, both in PESCO and in the context of EU-NATO cooperation;
- invites the High Representative to report in June 2018 on the work undertaken to strengthen civilian CSDP and to produce, in consultation with the Member States and the Commission, a Civilian CSDP Compact in 2018.

The European Council will return to these matters in June 2018.

II. SOCIAL DIMENSION, EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Leaders highlighted the importance of the social, educational and cultural dimension of our policies in bringing Europeans together and building our common future. Under the Treaties, Member States remain primarily responsible for these areas, but much can be achieved by working together, while fully respecting the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

SOCIAL DIMENSION

The Social Summit in Gothenburg recalled the need to put people first, to further develop the social dimension of the Union based on a shared commitment and established competences, and to promote convergence through efforts at all levels, including by social partners. As a first step the following should be taken forward:

- implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights at Union and Member State level, with due regard to their respective competences; the Commission is invited to propose appropriate monitoring;
- facilitating a well-functioning social dialogue at all levels, including the 'new start for social dialogue' at EU level;
- progressing swiftly on pending social files at EU level, and being ready to examine future initiatives announced by the Commission in its Work Programme for 2018;
- following up on the priorities of the EU Action Plan to tackle the gender pay gap;
- delivering further on the new European Skills Agenda, with a particular focus in 2018 on implementing the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways, intended for people with the greatest skills needs.

The European Council will come back to all these matters in March 2018 to ensure appropriate follow-up.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Education and culture are key to building inclusive and cohesive societies, and to sustaining our competitiveness. In Gothenburg we expressed a willingness to do more in these areas, in which the EU plays an important supplementing and supporting role. As a result, the European Council calls on Member States, the Council and the Commission, in line with their respective competences, to take work forward with a view to:

- stepping up mobility and exchanges, including through a substantially strengthened, inclusive and extended Erasmus+ programme;
- strengthening strategic partnerships across the EU between higher education institutions and encouraging the emergence by 2024 of some twenty 'European Universities', consisting in bottom-up networks of universities across the EU which will enable students to obtain a degree by combining studies in several EU countries and contribute to the international competitiveness of European universities;
- enhancing the learning of languages, so that more young people will speak at least two European languages in addition to their mother tongue;
- promoting student mobility and participation in educational and cultural activities, including through a 'European Student Card';
- promoting cooperation of Member States on mutual recognition of higher education and school leaving diplomas at secondary education level in the appropriate framework;
- taking the opportunity of the European Year of Cultural Heritage to increase awareness of the social and economic importance of culture and cultural heritage.

The Commission is invited to present, where relevant, proposals for Council recommendations in spring 2018 with a view to adoption by the Council as soon as possible.

The European Council also asks the Commission, the Council and the Member States to examine possible measures addressing:

- the skills challenges linked to digitalisation, cybersecurity, media literacy and artificial intelligence;
- the need for an inclusive, lifelong-learning-based and innovation-driven approach to education and training;
- the legal and financial framework conditions for the development of cultural and creative industries and the mobility of professionals of the cultural sector.

The issue of budgetary resources for the above activities will be addressed in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

III. CLIMATE CHANGE

The European Council welcomes the outcome of the One Planet Summit in Paris on 12 December 2017 aimed at scaling-up public and private finance in support of climate action, further to the COP 23 held in Bonn on 6-17 November 2017 and on the road to the COP 24 to be held in Katowice, where the Paris Agreement implementation package will be adopted. It strongly reaffirms the commitment of the EU and its Member States to swiftly and fully implement the Paris Agreement and to continue to lead in the fight against climate change, including through the adoption of pending legislative proposals at EU level.

IV. JERUSALEM

The EU reiterates its firm commitment to the two-state solution and, in this context, the EU position on Jerusalem remains unchanged.