



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee

Subject: European Council meeting (18 October 2018)
– Draft guidelines for conclusions

With a view to the forthcoming meeting of the European Council, delegations will find below the state of progress regarding the various topics on its agenda. Where possible, first indications are given on the elements the President of the European Council intends to include in the draft of the conclusions.

Member States are invited to provide their reactions, in order to help guide the preparations for the draft European Council conclusions which will be submitted in one week.

I. MIGRATION

The European Council will reaffirm the importance of pursuing work on all elements of the comprehensive approach to migration.

It will discuss further cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and in particular how to step up the fight against people smuggling and to facilitate efficient returns.

The European Council will call on the Council to examine as a matter of priority the recent additional Commission proposals on the Return directive, the Asylum agency and the European Border and Coast Guard, ensuring the most efficient use of ways and means and with due respect for the responsibility of the Member States.

The Austrian Chancellor will report on the reform of the Common European Asylum System and on the prospect of progress on its various elements.

II. INTERNAL SECURITY *[draft conclusions]*

Building on the real progress made in recent years to strengthen our collective security, further steps should be taken to adapt to a changing and challenging security environment.

The European Council calls for stepping up efforts to:

- protect the Union's democratic systems and combat disinformation, including in the context of the European elections. In this respect, the measures proposed by the Commission on election cooperation networks, online transparency, protection against cybersecurity incidents, unlawful data manipulation and fighting disinformation campaigns and tightening the rules on European political party funding deserve rapid examination and operational follow-up. To complement those measures, the High Representative and the Commission will submit an Action Plan for a coordinated response to disinformation in December;

- improve the interoperability of information systems and databases. Negotiations on the Commission's interoperability proposals should be concluded by the end of the year and all measures should be taken for their entry into force by 2020, in particular the common identity repository;
- combat cyber and cyber-enabled illegal activities and build strong cybersecurity. Negotiations on the Commission's cybersecurity proposals should be concluded before the end of the legislature. The latest Commission proposals to establish a European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and a Network of National Coordination Centres and to prevent the dissemination of terrorist content online should be examined swiftly;
- strengthen the capacity to respond effectively to cross-border terrorist crimes. Solutions should be found to ensure swift and efficient cross-border access to e-evidence in order to effectively fight terrorism and other serious international crime;
- build up resilience to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear-related risks as well as adequate situational awareness of and responsiveness to cyber and hybrid threats;
- provide Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol with adequate resources to face new challenges posed by technological developments;
- strengthen our crisis management capacity and the coherence and effectiveness of the EU and national crisis response mechanisms. Negotiations on the EU civil protection mechanism proposal should be concluded by the end of the year.

III. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

In the light of events, the European Council may address specific foreign policy issues.
