

Federica Mogherini meets with Talat Xhaferi, President of the Assembly of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Press Release

Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, met this afternoon with Talat Xhaferi, newly-elected President of the Assembly of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as part of his first official visit abroad.

In the discussion, High Representative Mogherini repeated the EU's strong condemnation of last week's violence in the Parliament against MPs and journalists. She welcomed the election of Talat Xhaferi as a President of the Assembly by the majority of MPs, stressing that this is a role that needs to be above party and inter-ethnic politics, with the President of the Assembly working for the benefit of all citizens and communities. The EU is ready to work with him, the parliament and all other institutions to advance the Urgent Reform Priorities as well as the Pržino Agreement implementation.

The High Representative and the Speaker also looked at the way forward. The EU expects all political parties to engage constructively in the political process, including on government formation, and in the work of the new parliament.

Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the press point with Børge Brende, Minister for Foreign

Check against delivery!

I am very glad to host today again together with Foreign Minister [Børge] Brende of Norway the annual meeting of the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee, to take stock as we do regularly of the Palestinian state-building process and to discuss ways to improve and sustain the Palestinian economy. This is

the focus of our meeting today.

We have 28 delegations – including the United Nations, United States, Russia and key countries in the Middle East participating in this important annual meeting. It is a collective effort for us and also the only forum where both Israeli and Palestinian ministers meet together with international partners. As such, it is a very relevant forum focused on the improvement and the support to the Palestinian economy and state-building but also providing us with good opportunities for meetings at the margins, as we just had together with minister Brende and some of the participants today.

The fact that we are hosting this meeting also underlines once again that the Middle East and the process leading to peace between Israel and Palestine remains a top priority for the European Union. The focus of our work more broadly is on how to create the conditions on the ground for a successful resumption of negotiations. Because this is our ultimate objective, an objective we share with our friends in the international community and with the parties, that the parties can re-start negotiations on a two-state solution, which in our view is the only viable way to achieve just and lasting peace.

The path to a political solution remains very clear to us: Israelis and Palestinians need to reverse the negative trends, stop settlements expansion, effectively fight incitement to violence, resolve the Palestinian divisions and urgently improve the critical humanitarian and security situation in Gaza.

Our engagement is based on the assumption that our work as donors – and as you know the European Union is the first donor – contributes to the perspective of the two states, to the political solution. The logic of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee has always been that progress on the ground and economic development cannot and should not substitute political progress, but also that political progress is very hard to achieve without a positive environment on the ground. And so by working on the positive steps on the ground we are also trying to create a positive environment for the political process to restart.

It is no secret that the situation on the ground today is not good. The gaps are wide, not easy to bridge. There is a complexity of the conflict that everybody understands, but there are also new opportunities. I am particularly encouraged by the meeting that took place yesterday in the White House between [Palestinian] President [Mahmoud] Abbas and President [of the United States, Donald] Trump.

The European Union is working very closely with the United States. We discussed this today also bilaterally with Jason Greenblatt [U.S Special Representative for International Negotiations] who is here for the United States, and with all our international partners, particularly with the Quartet, with Norway, with the region, and our partners in the region, in particular with our Arab friends on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative as we discussed, and I personally discussed last month at the Summit of the League of Arab States in Jordan. We are trying to mobilise all our resources,

not only economic but also political resources, in a combined and coordinated effort to help make renewed peace efforts successful.

Q&A

Q. Hamas announced two days before that they are accepting a Palestinian State in the borders of 4 June 1967. I would like to have your comment and also of the minister. And what is the level of ambition of this meeting regarding the budget difficulties and the financial aspect?

FM: On the document that Hamas has made public a few days ago that – if I understand correctly – complements and does not substitute previous positions, we have seen some elements that are interesting ones. We will see what comes next in terms of actual political decisions. We have always insisted a lot, not only as the European Union but also with our partners in the Quartet, on the Palestinian unity and the need to make sure that all Palestinian people, be it in Gaza or in the West Bank, live decent lives and benefit from a better standard of living. So we will see what kind of political practical consequences some of the elements that are in this paper will bring.

In terms maybe of the ambition of today's meeting on financing, I might leave this more to my Norwegian friend that chairs the committee. But I would like to stress one point that he also very rightly made: there is a strong commitment from the European Union and Norway, so from a European side, as it has always been the case and will continue to be the case. But the donors' role or the donors' efforts alone will not solve the crisis, would not solve alone the issue. And the real thing is to feed into a political process that has to restart on the basis of negotiations, direct negotiations between the two parties and in the framework of the two-state solution. And this is also why we have used this day – the convening power that Norway and the European Union can exercise together – to have a conversation bilaterally, but also together with some of the key actors that are present today not only on the financial implications and the donors' work but also on the political horizon, especially in these days when we might see some developments coming.

Link to the
video: <https://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I137727>

COREPER Ambassadors accompanied by Antici visit EASO

On 4 May 2017, a delegation of COREPER Ambassadors accompanied by Antici, visited the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Headquarters in Malta.

The delegation met with EASO's Executive Director, Jose Carreira and the Management Team of the Agency for a briefing on EASO's operational priorities in Italy and Greece, training activities and external dimension. Other topics discussed, were the newly proposed Regulations and Directive related to the Asylum Acquis, in particular the European Union Agency for Asylum.



Any further information on EASO may be obtained by contacting Mr. Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu (follow us live on twitter @EASO).

COREPER Ambassadors accompanied by Antici visit EASO

On 4 May 2017, a delegation of COREPER Ambassadors accompanied by Antici, visited the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Headquarters in Malta.

The delegation met with EASO's Executive Director, Jose Carreira and the Management Team of the Agency for a briefing on EASO's operational priorities in Italy and Greece, training activities and external dimension. Other topics discussed, were the newly proposed Regulations and Directive related to the Asylum Acquis, in particular the European Union Agency for Asylum.



Any further information on EASO may be obtained by contacting Mr. Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu (follow us live on twitter @EASO).

Article – Open day: visit Parliament in Brussels and find out how it works

Parliament opens its doors to the public in Brussels this Saturday from 10.00 to 18.00 CET. It's an opportunity to explore the plenary chamber, join a guided tour and take part in debates. In addition visitors enjoy the chance to be among the first to visit the House of European History, a new museum that is opening its doors on the same day.

Like every year, Parliament opens to the public to celebrate Europe Day, marking the [speech by French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman](#) that led to the foundation of the European Union. It allows people to visit Parliament and the other EU institutions and discover what Europe is and how it works by taking part in different activities.

Throughout the day there are guided tours in English, French, Dutch and German. There will also be three interesting debates:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 11:30-12:30 | Media and education in times of post-truth |
| 12:30-13:15 | Maternity leave |
| 13:15-14:00 | Free rail pass |

As a special treat this year, the [House of European History](#), a new museum next to Parliament, is also launched on Saturday. Visit it to discover a treasure of artifacts and memories linked to Europe's history and the EU.