European External Action Service (EEAS)

Doorstep remarks of High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini upon arrival at the Foreign Affairs Council

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Check against delivery!

Good morning.

Let me start with two good news. The first one is that we will receive just now the membership application from Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is something on which the Bosnian authorities together with us have worked very hard and I believe this is a moment that is going to be important for all the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also for the European Union. In the moment where the European Union is questioned from within, it is still very attractive from the outside. This is a sense of energy and a positive sign that we welcome very much.

The second good news comes from Libya where this night the Presidency Council adopted a list of ministers. We met the President of the House of Representatives just two days ago in Munich, discussing modalities and timing of the endorsement of the Government by the House of Representatives. I hope that Libya can have a fully operational government in place very soon.

In the Council today we will have as a point of discussion with the Ministers Syria obviously. We will report back from the International [Syria] Support Group we had in Munich a few days ago. Only a few days ago all the actors around the table, from the region and internationally, adopted decisions on cease-fire, on the cessation of hostilities, on the modalities for doing that. We expect that all parties stick to that commitment and make it possible on the ground to have the cessation of hostilities, starting from Aleppo, and access for humanitarian aid. We will discuss the European Union role in this respect, that is mainly working together with the UN on the ground to deliver humanitarian aid to the population that is in need.

We will host the Foreign Minister of Lebanon to discuss this and other regional and bilateral issues we have in common.

We will also have as points on the agenda Belarus and Moldova - with complicated but important political developments - and a point with Commissioner Cañete on climate diplomacy. This is something we have to follow-up after the Paris success. The climate change conference gives us a big responsibility as Europeans to follow-up and make sure that COP22 is also going to be a success and that decisions are going to be implemented. So a full agenda and I will see you in the afternoon to report to you on the decisions Ministers have made.

Q. On the announcement made by Turkey and Saudi Arabia that they could intervene in Syria.

A. As I said, only a few days ago, all of us, including Turkey, sitting around the table decided on steps to de-escalate and have a cessation of hostilities. We discussed concrete modalities for doing that. Having on the ground trends that go in the opposite direction obviously is not what we expect.

Q. Russia mentioned to be in a new Cold war with the West what does it mean for the EU?

I have not seen a climate of Cold War in these last days.

Link to the video: http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I116455

Q: On Bosnia and Herzegovina

Indeed, today we have good news. Because the fact that we will receive now the membership application is something good. I believe something good for the Bosnian people, something on which the authorities have been working hard. I know something on which the civil society has high expectations. We have as well. It is not the end of the process, on the contrary, it is the beginning of a new phase - which, I have to say, also the European Union has to celebrate. Because in the moment when the European Union is questioned from within, saying that in our immediate neighbourhood there is such energy, willingness to join and to work hard to adapt the country, society, economy, institutions, system to European standards, it is the sense of responsibility we have also towards our European Union citizenship. It is a huge, marvellous project - our European integration - and news like this one of this morning remind us all of how lucky we are that we are living in a continent that is able to bring peace and the ability to live one next to another in peace and cooperation, together.

Q: On the credibility of the application submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Today we will receive it. Obviously, Member States will look at it, also the European Commission. As I said it is a process that starts, but think of where we were one year ago. I remember that in December 2014, just one month after taking office, I visited Sarajevo together with Commissioner Hahn. We were there several times after that and at that time any possibility to get to this morning was completely out of the radar . I believe that a lot of

steps have been made. Again, a lot still needs to be done as we always say. In this case this is true. But if I look at the commitment, the public support that has been there in this year to get to this point, I am confident that also the next steps can be done with the same sense of responsibility and commitment by all in Bosnia and Herzegovina and also in our side.

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