Syria – Brahimi in Brussels – ‘Political solution only. Important EU role’

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The Syrian crisis was among the topics discussed at the EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting in Brussels, whose participants included UN and Arab League Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, which followed close on the heels of the 28 February Conference in Rome. The Syrian situation, “one of the world’s major crises”, cannot but have a political solution, Brahimi stressed after lunching with the foreign ministers. “We discussed at length”, he stated, “what everyone must do to make that possible. The EU has a role to play, along with the other important members of the international community. The foreign ministers intend to do everything possible to play their role and discuss this with their other partners”.

Time needed for a negotiated solution, says Dassù

Under-Secretary Marta Dassù left the meeting underscoring that the “puzzle” of Syria “is still missing the piece that can successfully lead to a negotiated solution” and that “time is still needed” for this to happen. “The common feeling”, Dassù said, “is that the humanitarian tragedy is by now so dramatic that a negotiated solution must in any case be attempted”. EU Special Representative Catherine Ashton urged the greater involvement of Russia in achieving a political solution.

North Korea a very serious tension factor, says Dassù

Discussions also included the situation in North Korea, which Under-Secretary Dassù described as a “very serious tension factor in East Asia, where others already exist”. Also on the Council agenda were preparations for the EU-Japan summit to be held on 25 March in Tokyo. “Discussions in that context”, Dassù said, “included the importance of the EU’s having relations with Asia not only regarding economic and trade questions but that also address questions of security and non-proliferation”.

Iran: strengthened sanctions for human rights violations

The Council extended sanctions against Iran for human rights violations through 13 April 2014. The sanctions also added 9 persons to the list of individuals (now totaling 87) whose assets and travel privileges have been frozen. Organisations responsible for human rights violations have also had their assets frozen.

Ashton: shock over the killings in Nigeria, support for counter-terrorism

Catherine Ashton expressed shock over the news of the killing of seven hostages in Nigeria, which included Italian engineer Silvano Trevisan. Ashton underscored the need for the EUto continue to sustain the government and people of Nigeria in their struggle against episodes of this nature and terrorism.

Source : https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/approfondimenti/2013/03/20130311_siria_brahimi/