



Main results

Russian war of aggression against Ukraine

The Foreign Affairs Council discussed the Russian aggression against Ukraine, after a VTC intervention by Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs **Andrii Sybiha**, who updated his EU counterparts on the latest developments on the ground, and the most pressing Ukrainian needs.

The Council then adopted the **15th package** of individual and economic restrictive measures in response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine.



Today we adopted the 15th sanctions package against Russia. This round targets the shadow fleet and North Korean officials, and for the first time also Chinese firms making drones for Moscow.

Our message is very clear, you cannot fuel a war in Europe and get away with it. At the same time, Ukraine needs our support in the battlefield. The stronger they are on the battlefield, the stronger they are also behind the negotiation table. Not just to hold on, but to tilt the balance to their favour because Putin will not stop, unless he's stopped.

Kaja Kallas, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and President of the Foreign Affairs Council

The Council then discussed the **EU military support** for Ukraine. The High Representative stressed the need to step it up, especially in terms of ammunition, air defences, and more general support for the Ukrainian defence industry. She also reminded EU ministers of the needs linked to winterisation.

Lastly, the Council adopted a first set of listings under the regime on **Russia's destabilising activities**.

- Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine: EU adopts 15th package of restrictive measures
- Russian hybrid threats: EU agrees first listings in response to destabilising activities against the EU, its member states and partners

Georgia

The Foreign Affairs Council exchanged views on recent developments in Georgia, and their impact on the Georgian people and Georgia's European path, following the 28 November announcement by the government of its intention to suspend the country's EU accession process until 2028, the subsequent mass protests, and the increasing acts of violence against protestors, the media, and the political opposition.

The situation is not going in a positive direction for the Georgian people. Democracies do not oppress opposition voices or curtail the freedom of media.

Kaja Kallas, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and President of the Foreign Affairs Council

The High Representative stressed that the EU has downgraded political contacts and cut funding for the Georgian government, and announced that there was an agreement on the need to **halt the visa free regime for diplomatic passport holders**. The Commission will table a proposal on this already this year.

The Council agreed that, going forward, the EU will continue to stand with the Georgian people, and including by redirecting funding from the authorities towards the civil society and independent media.

Situation in the Middle East, including Syria

The Foreign Affairs Council discussed the latest developments in **Syria**.

The High Representative briefed EU ministers on her participation in an international meeting hosted by the Kingdom of Jordan, where she met with the foreign ministers of the Arab countries, as well as Türkiye and the United States, to discuss the basic principles of engagement with the new leadership of Syria. The High Representative also announced that the Head of the EU delegation to Syria -currently stationed in Lebanon- travelled to Damascus with the aim of building contact with the country's new authorities and convey the EU's messages.

The Council discussion highlighted EU agreement on the principles of territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Syria, as well as accountability, inclusiveness, respect of the minorities and women's rights. Ministers confirmed that the transition process need to be Syria-led and Syrian-owned, and reflect the Syrian people in all of its diversity.

Extremism, Russia and Iran should not have a place in Syria's future.

Kaja Kallas, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and President of the Foreign Affairs Council

The High Representative stressed that the European Union remains the biggest humanitarian aid donor to the Syrian people, as shown by the air bridge set up by the EU immediately after the fall of the regime, providing 100 tons of humanitarian aid to support health, education and shelter.

The EU will be organising the ninth Brussels-Syria Conference in 2025 to support the Syrian people during the transition.

The Council then discussed broader developments in the **Middle East and Gaza**.

Ministers reiterated their call for a ceasefire, the release of hostages, and the delivery of sufficient and unimpeded humanitarian aid. They also confirmed their support for a two-state solution.

The High Representative announced that she proposed to hold an Association Council with Israel as soon as possible, which will be followed by first high-level dialogue with the Palestinian Authority.

Current affairs

Under Current Affairs, the Council exchanged views on Belarus ahead of the so-called presidential election scheduled for 26 January 2025.

Belarus: EU lists 26 individuals and 2 entities in view of the situation in the country.

Council conclusions and other decisions

The Council approved conclusions on:

- reinforcing external-internal connections in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism

Fight against terrorism and violent extremism: Council approves conclusions on reinforcing external-internal links

- stepping up Team Europe's support to global food security and nutrition
- the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
- priorities for EU-Council of Europe Cooperation 2025-2026

The Council also concluded its first mid-term review of the European Peace Facility.

Last review: 5 February 2025