European External Action Service (EEAS)

Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini upon arrival at the Foreign Affairs Council

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Today on the agenda there are only a few points, but crucial ones. We will start obviously with an issue that is not on the agenda: the attacks that occurred in Ankara few days ago. It is very clear that the European Union and Turkey share now more than ever a common agenda when it comes to security and stability of the region, but also peace in the region - which is a word that we don't use anymore but we should put on the agenda again very strongly.

On top of that, there is another element that is not going to be on our agenda this time but for sure will come back again - and we discussed a lot about that in New York just few days ago - which is the situation in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza. I had yesterday night phone calls with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas. I will update the ministers of these talks and of the ongoing efforts that the European Union is taking together with the rest of the Quartet to contain the situation, to bring back calm and to restart a political process.

What we have on the agenda today is Libya, Syria and the issue of migration. Three things that are somehow interlinked but different in nature.

On Libya, the common message that I expect we will deliver united, as Europeans today with the ministers, is a strong call for all the Libyan parties to endorse the final plan that is on the table. They have an incredible opportunity to unite the country and bring back some security and stability for the Libyan people that, I believe, deserve it after so many years of difficult situation on the ground. We have already planned all our possible support that will be needed and we are ready to discuss with the new Libyan authorities once the government starts.

On Syria, we will have Council conclusions that I expect to be consensual and unanimous on the united European support to the work that UN is doing in difficult conditions to try to start a political transition in the country. So apart from the humanitarian efforts we are doing - the European Union is the first donor as you know -, apart from the military dimension against Da'esh that is very evident in these days and the military complications around that, and we will discuss that, I think most of all the European contribution can be on the political process that we need to start for finding a real solution to the crisis.

We will also discuss migration as we have already and regularly done in the last six, seven months, while putting together all the things that the European Union is doing on the external side. This will feed into the discussion of the European Council later this week, like the internal side has been prepared by the Interior Ministers last week.

On the Russian intervention in Syria.

I guess it is much more complicated than just saying "positive" or "negative".

It is for sure a game changer. It has some very worrying elements. We will discuss them, in particular when it comes to the violation of the airspace of Turkey.

I have always said, and I believe this is going to be also the outcome of today, interventions against Da'esh have to be clearly against Da'esh and other terrorist groups, as defined by the UN. We have a common ground, I believe, the EU, the US, Russia, all of us we have a common ground, which is the Security Council Resolutions that we have already passed and the UN framework. And it has to be coordinated; otherwise it risks being extremely dangerous, not only from a political point of view, but mainly from a military point of view.

On possibility of restarting a dialogue with Assad.

When we say "support to the UN" - and to the UN process -, we also say that this support goes to a process that has to have all the actors around the table. The UN is doing this effort, this exercise. I am in daily contact with Staffan De Mistura, I also talked to him yesterday and we - everybody that has a say, that has a role in the crisis and in the transition - are going to put our diplomatic efforts in support of his efforts in this direction. The outcome of the transition will be defined together with the international community, the regional players but most of all by the Syrians.

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