European External Action Service (EEAS)

# Foreign Affairs Council: Press remarks by High Representative Kaja Kallas ahead of the meeting

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Hello,

We have the Foreign Affairs Council today. I have different topics. So first, of course, we are going to discuss Ukraine, and we really welcome the Jeddah talks and then the results of it. Now we need to really see that the ball is in Russia's court and what kind of conditions they are presenting, which is [a] big question whether they want peace.

Then of course, we are going to discuss Middle East and the developments in Gaza. We welcome the Arab reconstruction plan - Gaza reconstruction plan - and try to help as much as we can.

And then on Syria, the violence outbreak is very worrying, and it shows that the hope in Syria is really hanging by a thread. This shows that we need to do more in order to really show that Syria is going [in] the right direction.

We need to work with our regional partners when it comes to Syria. And we also have today the Syria conference where we also discuss what can we do that Syria will be stable and peaceful.

Thank you.

Q&A

Q. Any commentary on the conditions of Russia for ceasefire?

Those conditions that they have presented it shows that they do not really want peace, actually. Because what they are presenting as conditions all their ultimate goals that they want to achieve from the war.

Q. [inaudible]

Of course, it is a very difficult discussion because what we want to see, what we see is really the Syria leadership taking accountability or holding accountable those people who have done these massacres and what it shows is really that we need to continue with the lifting of

sanctions because you know if there is hope for the people then there is also less chaos. And for the hope to [grow] for the people you need also the services to be provided. For example, banking services. We are definitely going to discuss this, but right now we are moving ahead with the lifting of the sanctions.

Q. [inaudible] the new Syria constitution also without the Kurdish. What is your view? Are you concerned about that?

Of course, [on the] new constitution I think the developments are good and what we want to stress is that there is inclusiveness of all the groups that are in Syria. Also, today we will have representatives from the civil sector to really explain what is going on. I think we need to see that these things are going to the right direction and also help them where we can.

Q. On the new package of Ukraine, on which stage is the EU prognosis? Could there be a compromise?

There is a broad political support for that initiative, which is good, but there are a lot of details that need to be worked out, because there are also defence ministers that need to have a say - and we have a meeting of defence ministers. But it is important that the [European] Council said that we need to move swiftly and that is what we are doing.

Q. How do you expect Hungary to react to the proposal?

The proposal already counts in that we have to take those countries who want to work with it.

Q. On US – EU retaliation on tariffs and trade war, are you engaging on some discussion to find a solution?

It is not going to be discussed at Foreign Ministers level because we have the trade Commissioner who is dealing [with] that. But of course, the proposals are there on the table for everybody to discuss. [For] the Member States it is clear that if the trade wars are started against us, we will also react and protect our interests, but it is not something that we want to do.

Q. What about Georgia? Is it today on the table the discussion about the country?

On the ‘any other business’, this will definitely come up. We are very concerned about the detentions, the arrests of the people. We have been putting pressure also on the people who are actually conducting the violence against the peaceful protesters.

Thank you.

Watch the video

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