European External Action Service (EEAS)

Remarks by HRVP Federica Mogherini upon arrival at the Foreign Affairs Council

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Good morning.

Today with the ministers we will focus first and foremost on the situation in and around Syria. After the good news we managed to build on Saturday with the Implementation Day of the nuclear deal with Iran, we have to continue our work. We see that the situation on the ground does not necessarily and automatically improve.

We had yesterday terrible news from inside Syria and I believe it is a clear European task to put on the agenda of the international community the need to stop the catastrophe there, to work on the humanitarian access to the cities in Syria, to make sure that - as we work on the political process that is finally hopefully starting - the situation on the ground for Syrians themselves improves inside Syria and outside Syria.

I discussed that with UN Special Envoy on Syria Staffan de Mistura and with the Syrian opposition just a few days ago. I will report to the ministers on my work in this respect. You know that Staffan de Mistura is briefing the Security Council just today in parallel to our Council, so we will focus on this.

We will also discuss regional implications with the Jordanian Foreign Minister who will join us today for a working lunch session. Jordan is in this respect a very strong and relevant partner for the European Union, not only when it comes to the refugees crisis management but also for the political process we are trying to facilitate in the region. We will also focus on the situation in Iraq in the same framework.

And we will have, last but not least, a full point on the agenda on our support to Ukraine. Not only on having an update on the Minsk agreement implementation, but first and foremost on our support to Ukraine itself, to the reform agenda. I just briefly met with Pavlo Klimkin, the Foreign Minister of Ukraine, to discuss this.

This stays a very important topic for us, especially in a moment when the DCFTA has entered into force. It is very important that we put all our efforts in making sure that this delivers for

the Ukrainians.

So it will be a full agenda but again, we have somehow an encouraging note coming from the news on Saturday in Vienna that I hope can encourage us to work with a sense of encouragement also for diplomatic tracks on Syria and other crises we have open in front of us.

Question on Iran and Implementation Day

You know, every time that you have positive steps on security and cooperation there are always some reactions. That is quite normal. We have to absorb them and for sure guarantee that this becomes a step towards cooperation in the region. Nothing is automatic, but I'm sure that what we have done on Saturday in Vienna is a big, important step in the right direction for the region. Not only for the security of the world in terms of nuclear programmes - for the region because we have shown that even the most difficult relations can come to positive results, through dialogue, through diplomacy, through cooperation. This is true also for the actors in the region. We know: peace is not going to come soon and easily as the deal did not come soon and easily. But it came in the end.

Thank you, bye. I see you later.

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