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European Union

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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Draft statement on the situation in Afghanistan

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Delegations will find in annex a draft statement on the situation in Afghanistan in view of the meeting of the JHA Counsellors on 26 August 2021.

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DRAFT STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

1. The EU Ministers of Home Affairs met today, [together with the Ministers of the Schengen Associated Countries,] for an extraordinary Council meeting to discuss developments in Afghanistan, more specifically in relation to potential implications in the areas of migration and security.
2. The seriousness of the situation in Afghanistan requires a strong and concerted response to its many dimensions. Therefore, the EU and its Member States stand determined to act jointly to prevent the recurrence of migration situation faced in 2015. We should do our utmost to ensure that migrants receive protection in the region itself.
3. The EU reiterates its commitment to evacuate those Afghan nationals who have cooperated with the EU over the past years and will continue its efforts to ensure their protection.
4. The need for unified and coordinated external but also internal communication is key. The EU needs to speak with one voice and avoid sending messages that could potentially act as pull factors. This entails not only communication messages but also activities we undertake. Targeted information campaigns should be launched to combat the narratives used by smugglers, which encourage people to embark on dangerous and illegal journeys towards Europe.
5. As an immediate priority, the EU will continue to coordinate with international partners, in particular the UN, on the stabilization of the region and to ensure that humanitarian aid is delivered to vulnerable populations in Afghanistan and in neighbouring countries.

6. The EU will continue to work with the third countries, in particular the neighbouring and other countries, hosting large numbers of migrants, and reinforce their capacities to provide dignified and safe reception conditions. This cooperation should also include capacity building on border management, prevention of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. The mandates of EU agencies should be used to their full extent in this regard. Furthermore, support could be provided in the form of resettlement on a voluntary basis, in particular for vulnerable groups such as women and children.

The Council welcomes the intention of the Commission to reconsider the distribution of financial assistance from different frameworks.

7. The EU and its Member States will do their utmost to ensure that the situation in Afghanistan does not lead to new security threats for EU citizens. The EU will therefore use all its available tools to closely monitor developments on the ground that might impact its security, in particular in the area of terrorism and organised crime. It will encourage uninterrupted exchange of information and intelligence, also with third countries, and regular threat assessments. It is also important to timely perform security checks of persons being evacuated from Afghanistan.
8. The EU and its Member States remain determined to effectively protect the EU's external borders, including through the use of relevant EU databases. Persons crossing external border in an unauthorized manner, should be appropriately screened. At the same time, the Council recognizes the need to support and provide adequate protection to those in need, in line with EU law and our international obligations.
9. It is important to follow the development of migratory situation as well as ensure regular stocktaking in order to improve the EU's crisis management capacity, building upon the tools already developed, including the IPCR and the Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint Network. Coordination of all dimensions of this situation (humanitarian, migration, security, foreign policy) is crucial.