

Press remarks by President Donald Tusk after the meeting of EU heads of state or government with Turkey

Good evening,

We have now concluded a useful summit between the European Union and Turkey.

This summit was about renewing our relationship based on a clear timetable for action. We discussed a range of important areas such as counter-terrorism, energy, trade, as well as geo-strategic issues of common concern.

But obviously migration was the primary reason why we all met today. Let me state clearly that we do not expect anyone to guard our borders for us. That can and should only be done by Europeans. But we expect a major step towards changing the rules of the game when it comes to stemming the migration flow that is coming to the EU via Turkey. Our agreement sets out a clear plan for the timely re-establishment of order at our shared frontier. We will also step up our assistance to Syrian refugees in Turkey through a new Refugee Facility of €3 billion.

Turkey remains a key strategic partner for Europe, but also a candidate country of the EU. We agreed that the accession process need to be re-energized. We welcomed the announcement to hold the Intergovernmental Conference for opening chapter 17 on economic and monetary policy, while preparatory work on opening other chapters is taking place. Let me stress that we are not re-writing the EU enlargement policy. The negotiating framework and the relevant conclusions continue to apply, including its merit-based nature and the respect for European values, also on human rights.

Finally we all look forward to 2016 as a key year for the implementation of the EU-Turkey agreement that was reached today. Thank you.