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Subject: Council Conclusions on Bosnia and Herzegovina
– Council conclusions (12 October 2015)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council Conclusions on Bosnia and Herzegovina, adopted by the Council at its 3416th meeting held on 12 October 2015.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Foreign Affairs Council, 12 October 2015

1. The Council reiterates its unequivocal commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU perspective as a single, united and sovereign country. In this context, the Council welcomes the adoption in July 2015 of the Reform Agenda by Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities, which marks an important step for the credible implementation of the commitments undertaken by Bosnia and Herzegovina's leadership. The Council calls on Bosnia and Herzegovina's leadership to maintain positive momentum in implementing the reforms, in line with citizens' demands and in cooperation with civil society. Meaningful progress on the implementation of the agenda for reforms will be necessary for a membership application to be considered by the EU, in line with previous Council Conclusions.
2. Following the entry into force of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), Bosnia and Herzegovina should fully uphold its commitments and obligations under this Agreement, including those relating to the adaptation of the SAA.
3. The Council expresses its serious concern about the preparations for holding an entity-level referendum on the state-level judiciary in Republika Srpska. The holding of such a referendum would challenge the cohesion, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It would also risk undermining the efforts to improve the socio-economic situation of all Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens and to make further progress in EU integration. The outstanding shortcomings of Bosnia and Herzegovina judiciary should be addressed in the structured dialogue on justice.
4. The EU will continue using all available instruments to support Bosnia and Herzegovina in moving forward in reforms and on its EU path.

5. The Council welcomes the continued presence of Operation Althea, which retains the capability to contribute to the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities' deterrence capacity if the situation so requires while focusing on capacity building and training. In this context, as part of the overall EU strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council confirms the EU's readiness to continue at this stage an executive military role to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's authorities to maintain the safe and secure environment, under a renewed UN mandate.

6. It reiterates its agreement to keep the operation under regular review, with a view to assessing progress on the conditions conducive to the delivery of its mandate. In this context, furthering the efforts of Operation Althea in the field of capacity building and training could be considered.

7. The EU at the same time encourages the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the international community, to accelerate their efforts to address the disposal of excess ammunition and other outstanding issues.
