



## REMARKS

# Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the joint press statement with Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State of the United States

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*Check against delivery!*

It is a pleasure to welcome you Rex, Secretary [of State of the United States] Tillerson, to Brussels, the heart of the European Union, after the good visits in spring [2017] of President [of the United States, Donald] Trump and of Vice-President [of the United States, Mike] Pence. It is a pleasure to welcome friends and to work together.

We just had a good exchange of views, and after this press point discussions will continue together with the Foreign Ministers of all the European Union's Member States.

Our meeting today has confirmed the importance that the European Union and the United States attach to their close partnership and cooperation. I believe we can say that it is also an opportunity to collectively renew our commitment to a close cooperation on a number of important files.

During our bilateral meeting, we discussed mainly four main issues.

First of all, the Middle East Peace Process. The European Union supports the resumption

of a meaningful peace process towards a two-state solution. We believe that any action that would undermine these efforts must absolutely be avoided. A way must be found, through negotiations, to resolve the status of Jerusalem as the future capital of both states, so that the aspiration of both parties can be fulfilled.

We will discuss this further with Prime Minister [of Israel, Benjamin] Netanyahu next Monday here in Brussels, and with [Palestinian] President [Mahmoud] Abbas, at the beginning of next year, as we will host both of them separately at our next Foreign Affairs Councils.

We will also continue to engage with our international and regional partners, including within the Quartet [on the Middle East], to support the perspectives of a resumption of negotiations towards the two states.

We also discussed Iran, in particular the implementation of the nuclear deal with Iran [JCPOA]. I have reaffirmed the European Union's view that a continued implementation of the Iran nuclear deal is a key strategic priority for the European security but also for the regional and global security.

We have discussed the fact that there are other issues that we should discuss and tackle together but that are not under the scope of the nuclear agreement and therefore, we are willing to discuss them outside of the agreement itself.

The European Union is willing to work closely with the United States on these issues, on the basis of continued United States' implementation of the nuclear deal. It was decided that the nuclear deal would be purely on nuclear issues back some 14 years ago, so now, dismantling an agreement on nuclear issues that is working – as the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] has confirmed nine times – would not put us in a better position to discuss all the rest, on the contrary.

Third, we discussed the situation in Syria, looking at the wider Middle East. We share the belief that it is urgent to rapidly advance towards a negotiated political transition process in Syria, based on the Geneva peace talks and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254. I have used this opportunity to inform Secretary [Rex] Tillerson about the preparations for the second Ministerial Conference on the future of Syria and the region that we will host here in Brussels in spring next year, that will look at ways to continue supporting the Syrian people and the hosting communities. Not only from a humanitarian point of view, but also guaranteeing political and economic support to the UN-led negotiations in Geneva, offering incentives towards a political solution to be reached under the UN auspices in Geneva.

Last but not least, we discussed the Western Balkans. We have both reaffirmed our commitment to the region, which has a clear European Union perspective and encouraged continued reforms and reconciliation process in the region.

We will now continue this conversation together with our colleagues, EU Member

States' Foreign Ministers. I expect other issues to be addressed - some of them were actually already subject to our conversation -, including the situation in the Korean peninsula, our cooperation in support of peace, stability and territorial integrity in Ukraine and the latest developments in the wider region of the Middle East or in Libya.

I would expect that we will also discuss with the Foreign Ministers of the 28 Member States our cooperation in international fora, as the European Union remains - as you know well - a strong and reliable supporter of multilateralism, the UN system and a rules-based global order.

Thank you again for the visit and for the good exchanges.

Link to the video:

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