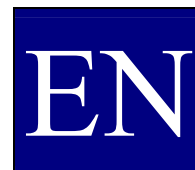




**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on Operation ALTHEA

*2878th GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 16 June 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council reviewed Operation ALTHEA and approved the Secretary General/High Representative's recommendations on the Operation in the light of advice from relevant Council bodies.

The Council reiterated that the EU remained actively committed to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), including through Operation ALTHEA, and that, as part of the EU's overall engagement in the country, the EU-led military presence would remain there for as long as necessary. The Council welcomed recent political developments in BiH, and noted that further developments in the country would need to be reflected in the EU's overall engagement. The Council noted that the security situation remained stable, welcomed the positive contribution of the operation to the safe and secure environment in BiH, and added that the EU-led force (EUFOR) continued to provide reassurance and remained ready to respond to possible security challenges throughout the country.

EUFOR numbers some 2500 troops on the ground, backed up by over-the-horizon reserves. Its operational focus remains the maintenance of a safe and secure environment and the transfer of Joint Military Affairs (JMA) tasks to relevant national authorities. The Council welcomed the successful participation of elements of the European Gendarmerie Force in the Integrated Police Unit of EUFOR since November 2007.

P R E S S

The Council underlined that coherence of overall EU action, including in support of further progress on reforms, in BiH - involving all EU actors, including the Commission and EU Heads of Mission - remained a priority. It noted that the EU Force Commander, the EUSR and the Head of EUPM continued to consult each other regularly prior to taking action. EUFOR has also maintained a close working relationship, including on operational matters, with other international actors. In respect of Operation ALTHEA, co-operation with NATO continues to work smoothly and efficiently."
