

Undivided support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity voiced at EU Foreign Ministers' meeting in Brest

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News



On 13 and 14 January 2022, the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Edgars Rinkēvičs, took part in the informal meeting of the European Union's Foreign Affairs Ministers (Gymnich) in Brest, France. The meeting comprised a joint discussion between the EU Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers on the EU Strategic Compass for security and defence, followed by an exchange of views among the Foreign Ministers on the security situation in Eastern Europe, the EU–China relations, and developments in Mali, where the transitional government is significantly slowing down the development of democratic processes.

As the ministers addressed the security situation in Eastern Europe, they were unanimous that Russia's aggressive policy vis-à-vis Ukraine and demands on the USA and NATO pose a challenge to Euro-Atlantic security and contradict the international principles and norms. The EU must continue strongly supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Edgars Rinkēvičs underlined. The Minister also called for a deeper cooperation with the EU's eastern neighbours and provision of support for the strengthening of resilience of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova.

As the ministers continued an exchange of views on the EU's Strategic Compass, aimed at providing guidelines for the shaping of EU security and defence policy over the coming years, Edgars Rinkēvičs highlighted the importance of close cooperation with NATO, as well as the USA, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The Minister also noted the need for the principle of unanimity and the engagement of all Member States in decision-making, and he called for creating a common understanding on the formation of a European Rapid Reaction Force.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Ministers, together with the President of Senegal and Chairperson of the African Union, Macky Sall, and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, discussed preparations for the EU–African Union Summit scheduled for 17 and 18 February 2022.

The informal meeting referred to as 'Gymnich' is organised every six months by the country holding the Presidency of the Council

of the EU. They are chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. These meetings are marked by an informal atmosphere in which ministers speak on various current topics of EU foreign and security policy, its goals and challenges.

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