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General Affairs Council (GAC): Extracts from the press conference by Erato KOZAKOU-MARKOULLIS, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cyprus and Štefan FÜLE, Member of the EC in charge of Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

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The Council tried to agree on amendments to the statute of the European Court of Justice. The incoming Irish presidency presented its plans for implementation of the 2013 European Semester. The Council prepared the European Council meeting on 13-14 December on the basis of draft conclusions and take note of a draft annotated agenda of the special European Council meeting on 7-8 February. It endorsed its 18 month programme prepared by the future Irish, Lithuanian and Greek presidencies and the High Representative, chair of the Foreign Affairs Council. Furthermore, the Council adopted conclusions on enlargement and stabilisation and association process for the Western Balkans.

Only the original language version is authentic and it prevails in the event of its differing from the translated versions.

TIME	DESCRIPTION	DURATION
00:00:00	Title	00:00:05
00:00:05	Arrival of the speakers	00:00:06
00:00:11	SOUNDBITE by Erato Kozakou-Markoullis, Cyprus Minister for Foreign Affairs (In English) saying that: The Council confirmed the EU accession perspective for Turkey, Island and Montenegro on the basis of agreed principles and recalled the conditions set in that regard. The renewed consensus on enlargement approved by the European Council in December 2006 continues to form the basis for the enlargement process based on fair and regular's conditionality with each country being assessed on its own merits.	00:00:33
00:00:44	Cutaway	00:00:07
00:00:51	SOUNDBITE by Erato Kozakou-Markoullis (In English) saying that: As regards the Western Balkans, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to the European perspective of the Region considering it essential for the stability and reconciliation. The Council take the view that by making solid progress in economic and political reforms and by fulfilling the necessary conditions and requirements, the remaining Western Balkan potential candidates on the	00:00:39

	remaining Western Balkan potential candidates on the basis of their own merits should achieve candidate status with EU membership as an ultimate goal.	
00:01:30	Cutaway of a cameraman	00:00:05
00:01:35	SOUNDBITE by Erato Kozakou-Markoullis (In English) saying that: The Council reaffirmed the importance the EU attaches to relations with Turkey and knows that it is in the interest of both parties that accession negotiations regain momentum. At the same time, the Council recalled that Turkey has not yet implemented in a full and non discriminatory manner the additional protocol, expressed the deep regret for Turkey's stands towards the rotated Presidency of the Council of the EU and noted with growing concern the lack of substantial progress by Turkey towards fully meeting the political criteria.	00:00:42
00:02:17	Cutaway	00:00:07
00:02:24	SOUNDBITE by Erato Kozakou-Markoullis (In English) saying that: On Croatia, the Council took note of the findings of the commission's comprehensive monitoring report, Croatia's preparation for full accession on 1st July 2013 are moving in the right direction. Yet more work is still needed to be done in several fields. The Council encourage Croatia to proceed on the completion of its obligations in various fields for fully complying with the acquit before the day of its accession and to continue addressing all outstanding bilateral and regional issues.	00:00:39
00:03:03	Cutaway of a cameraman	00:00:05
00:03:08	SOUNDBITE by Štefan Füle, Member of the EC in charge of Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy (In English) saying that: This was a dynamic year for enlargement; Croatia on its way to join the EU, Montenegro starting negotiations, Serbia becoming a candidate country. With these conclusions there is a good perspective for the next year to keep the momentum. On one side defining key challenges and reforms the enlargement countries need to address; on the other side showing the willingness of the EU to move them forward on the EU path once they fulfilled the necessary conditions.	00:00:38
00:03:46	Cutaway	00:00:07
00:03:53	SOUNDBITE by Štefan Füle (In English) saying that: Time for symbols is over, now we need substance. The former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, here I particularly welcome the positive Council conclusion, this constitute indeed a significant breakthrough in relations between the EU and the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia.	00:00:24

	Macedonia.	
00:04:17	Speakers leaving the press room	00:00:11
00:04:28	End	00:00:00

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