

## Spain will organize a meeting between the EU and the Mediterranean countries

### To discuss the jihadist threat

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**USPA NEWS** - Spain will organize a meeting between the EU and the Mediterranean countries of North Africa, to discuss the jihadist threat and propose joint strategies against terrorism. This was announced on Monday the Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia Margallo in Brussels.

After their meeting in Brussels, the foreign ministers of the 28 member countries of the EU was agreed to develop a joint strategy against jihadism and foster collaboration moderate Muslim countries, whose religious beliefs Europe wants to be very respectful. "We must have a global strategy shared by the EU that can be shared with NATO allies and the international community. Because this affects us all. Crimes affecting freedom of expression, which undermine religious tolerance . Against the pillars on which our society is based"[2], said the Spanish minister.

"We will convene a meeting of the so-called 'South Neighbourhood', countries that are part of the southern Mediterranean, including Syria, Jordan, etc. Because without economic development there will be political stability in the long term. It's going to be a meeting in May on 'East Neighbourhood' in Riga. The Commissioner has indicated, and Spain it also believes that it would be good a meeting of ""South Neighbourhood". It is true that the 'East Neighbourhood' is in turmoil, but the fact remains that the South is so much more. Look what is happening in Libya, which is our backyard and could have effects on Spain. We have offered to have a meeting at which it is spoken of economic development"[2], he added.

According Garcia Margallo, "it seems key to control all borders. This is the debate we are having, and Spain has an additional responsibility because we border in Ceuta and Melilla, land border to be controlled. And of course you should check the Turkish border, which also has an essential role in the transit of those people who are well-conflict areas. We are concerned air traffic control, but also the land and sea. We have two borders, Ceuta and Melilla, and we are 13 km from Morocco. The control immigration, the entry of persons who may be involved in this fight terrorist, is capital", Spanish minister insisted.

The Council discussed how foreign policy can complement the fight against terrorism within the EU. The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, said: "For the first time, there was a real awareness that we need to work together to fight a common threat. We took a decision within the Foreign Affairs Council to cooperate in a much more active way than it has been the case so far." Actions should be taken on different levels, from security level ""strengthened exchange of information, not only between the member states, but also with partner countries, and exchanges of best practices will be part of that"" to reinforced cooperation with Arab and Mediterranean countries on countering terrorism.

Mogherini said that EU and the Mediterranean countries of North Africa need redoubling efforts on open conflicts and crises. High Representative Mogherini stated that "we must build an alliance, a dialogue with these countries as we are facing common challenges". The February Foreign Affairs Council will give full recommendations for the meeting of EU heads of state and government on 12 February.

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