

Prospects for the European Union



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The Spanish Presidency
January to June 2010



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Presented to Parliament by the
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
by Command of Her Majesty

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Foreword by the Minister for Europe, Chris Bryant



Spain takes on the Presidency of the European Union (EU) at a time when the economic and financial crisis that hit every major economy in the world seems to be coming to an end. But many economic factors across Europe point to the need for vigilance

in the EU, for us not to be complacent and for Europe's Member States to take continued, coherent action to ensure we lock in strong economic growth. That means the economic shot in the arm provided by governments across Europe needs to be maintained until recovery is fully self-sustaining. There can be no higher priority for the EU at this time. There are four key issues:

1. Unemployment remains unacceptably high across the Union. I strongly welcome the Spanish Presidency's overriding focus on jobs and sustainable growth.
2. All governments across the EU will have to address the reality of strained public finances. So the EU must do more with less.

3. The EU needs to play a more effective role on the world stage. That means ensuring that the new provisions under the Lisbon Treaty bed in smoothly and effectively. The roll call of foreign policy issues facing the EU in 2010 is daunting: advancing the Middle East Peace Process; dealing with Iran's nuclear ambitions; maintaining a strong and uncompromising relationship with Russia; and potential political instability on its eastern borders.
4. On taking forward the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit, we cannot afford not to act decisively. The Spanish Presidency has put European citizens at the heart of its vision. The next year will be crucial, not only for them but for future generations. We owe it to them to ensure that a low-carbon future starts now.

The UK Government fully supports and shares the priorities of the Presidency, and looks forward to working closely with Spain and its other EU partners, as well as the Commission, Parliament and Council.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Bryant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Spanish Presidency's priorities

The Spanish Presidency of the European Union (EU) from 1 January to 30 June 2010 will focus on full and effective application of the **Lisbon Treaty, economic recovery, increasing the EU's presence and influence in the new world order** and **developing the rights and freedoms of Europe's citizens**.

This Command Paper provides an overview of the main policy areas which the Spanish are expected to take forward under their Presidency, as set out by their Work Programme. A copy of the Work Programme formally published in January 2010 is available at www.eu2010.es.

Fast and full enforcement of the Lisbon Treaty

Setting into motion the new European Union institutions

The top priority of the Spanish Presidency will be the continued full and effective implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and the new institutions provided for therein, which came into force on 1 December 2009 following ratification by all 27 Member States. The Government will keep Parliament fully informed of discussions on how the Treaty will be applied in practice.

Launching the European External Action Service

The Government looks forward to the proposal on the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) that the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy will make in due course. It will work with the High Representative, and also with the Spanish Presidency, to ensure as smooth and transparent a transition as possible to the new EEAS structures in Brussels and EU delegations overseas.

The Solidarity Clause

The Government welcomes the Spanish support for the Solidarity Clause, which states that Member States will utilise the instruments within the Union to act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the object of a terrorist attack or a natural or man-made disaster. However, the Government notes that the Solidarity Clause simply describes existing practice and does not require new structures, nor does it oblige the UK to make available resources in response to a disaster.

Economic recovery and job creation. Europe 2020

Exiting the crisis

The Spanish Presidency will place the highest priority on ensuring that both the EU as a whole and all Member States secure a robust exit from the economic and financial crisis.

The UK will continue to argue that all governments should implement co-ordinated exit strategies and seek fiscal consolidation in the medium term. But as the EU takes stock of the crisis, it is vital that the UK uses this opportunity to pursue essential reforms, both within the EU and globally, ensuring that the two are consistent.

The Spanish Presidency will ensure the continued appropriate application of the **Stability and Growth Pact**. The Government remains fully committed to sound public finances in the medium term, and will support the Spanish Presidency in achieving this. The UK will continue to emphasise the need to maintain fiscal support until the economic recovery is secured, as has been agreed by the Economic and Financial Affairs (ECOFIN) Council, in order to ensure that fiscal consolidation does not jeopardise economic recovery.

Towards a sustainable and balanced growth: Europe 2020

The Spanish Presidency has attached high priority to agreeing a successor to the EU's 2000–10 Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, as set out in the Commission's preliminary proposals for a Future EU 2020 Strategy. The Government welcomes this proposal, and agrees that an ambitious EU-wide framework to promote strong, sustainable and balanced growth is of paramount importance.

The Government believes the EU and its Member States should establish policies that promote six priorities: fiscal sustainability; job creation and the development of skills; growing the industries

of the future, including low-carbon technologies and sectors; developing the Single Market and helping businesses take better advantage of it; pushing for further opening of global markets for trade and investment; and developing a robust and competitive EU financial services sector.

The Prime Minister has called for a new **EU Compact for Jobs and Growth** to deliver on this ambitious agenda.

Reform of the financial system's supervision

The Spanish Presidency will work to achieve agreement with the European Parliament on legislation to establish the European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB) and three European Supervisory Agencies (ESAs), following the European Council's agreement in December 2009. These institutions should serve to improve the quality and competitiveness of EU financial markets.

The Government welcomes the agreement reached in December, and will work closely with the Spanish Presidency, the European Parliament and the Commission to ensure that the new institutions are as effective as possible, and in line with the common position agreed at the Council.

The Presidency will also seek agreement on other ongoing regulatory reforms, such as regulation of alternative investment fund managers (AIFMs); regulation of banks' capital requirements and remuneration practices; and the simplification of requirements for public share offerings.

The Government supports these negotiations, notably those concerning AIFMs, which provide an opportunity to introduce necessary harmonised regulation of hedge funds, and the amendments to the Capital Requirements Directive which address key weaknesses in the current regime. The UK will continue to work constructively with Member States to improve the text of these proposals.

Research and innovation

Research and innovation are among the Spanish Presidency's top priorities. **Innovation** will be central to delivering an economically sustainable EU as it emerges from the economic downturn. The UK welcomes Spain's intention to launch the first Knowledge and Innovation Communities of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, which will seek to drive European innovation performance. Additionally, the Government looks forward to the adoption of the European Innovation Act, and will work closely with the Presidency to identify EU-level innovation policies that work effectively alongside the policies of Member States.

On **research**, the Government expects the Presidency to achieve restructured and strengthened governance of the European Research Area (ERA) begun under the Swedish Presidency. It expects the Spanish to carry forward work on the various ERA initiatives, in particular in the fields of joint programming and researcher careers and mobility.

Education and skills

The Spanish Presidency has prioritised work on the internationalisation and modernisation of higher education institutions, and on strengthening the social dimension of education. The Government welcomes these aims, and will seek to ensure effective implementation of the EU's post-2010 **Strategic Framework for Education**.

The Government will work with the Presidency to press the Commission and other Member States to reform the governance of the Strategic Framework, to ensure that its objectives are delivered effectively.

Industrial policy

Promoting the competitiveness of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will be a key concern for the Spanish Presidency. The Government will work with the Presidency on improving the EU enterprise environment and encouraging a 'think small first' approach to regulation, in particular through removing unnecessary and disproportionate regulatory burdens, and facilitating SMEs' access to finance and to new market opportunities.

The 2008 Small Business Act agreement established a positive set of principles and measures; implementation is under way and the Government will work with Spain to encourage further action and tangible benefits.

Europe: a global, responsible and supportive player

Under the Lisbon Treaty, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, rather than the rotating Presidency, takes the lead in EU foreign affairs and security matters. However, under the Spanish Presidency there will be some transitional arrangements, for example in terms of the Chairs of Council working groups, before the EEAS is fully set up, and so the Government will continue to work closely with Spanish colleagues alongside the High Representative.

A new period in European foreign, security and co-operation policy

The Spanish Presidency will seek to help the EU to assert itself on the world stage, collaborating closely with the new President of the European Council and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The Presidency will oversee the development of a **Common Security and Defence Policy**, to be backed up by an increase in the EU's civil and military capabilities and a boost to the work of the European Defence Agency (EDA).

The UK welcomes the incoming Spanish Presidency's focus on common security and defence policy. The EDA has an important role to play in helping to facilitate the development of Member States' military capabilities. The UK urges the EDA to focus its attention on the 12 identified capability shortfalls, derived from the Capability Development Plan.

The United Nations **Millennium Development Goals** (MDG) Summit in September will be an important moment to review progress against the MDGs. From this the Government hopes to see an ambitious global action plan. The EU will have a crucial role to play in these international negotiations. Under the Spanish Presidency, the EU's position will be finalised, setting out how the EU will contribute to achieving the MDGs and inspiring other international actors to follow suit.

The December European Council reaffirmed the EU's **Official Development Assistance** (ODA) commitments and pledged to revisit the issue at its meeting in June 2010. It is essential that the EU does not forget the needs of the world's poorest countries which stand to suffer most from the global economic downturn. Reaching agreement on how all EU Member States will meet their commitments for ODA to achieve 0.7% of gross national income by 2015 will be a major task for the Spanish Presidency.

Together with other world leaders, including Gordon Brown, Prime Minister Zapatero has signed up to the **1GOAL education campaign**. The Government will work with Spain to promote EU support for 1GOAL during its Presidency.

The Presidency will seek to consolidate further the relationship between the EU and **Africa**, which was renewed at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007.

The UK agrees with the Spanish Presidency that special attention should be paid to the EU–Horn of Africa Partnership and the Gulf of Guinea situation. The Government welcomes the Presidency's plan to work towards a successful outcome of the stabilisation process in Somalia and to focus attention on western Africa. The Presidency is expected to follow up on the political dialogue of Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement and intends to promote EU dialogue with the African Union and regional African bodies. Following the October 2009 Mid-term Review and a Ministerial Troika in April 2010, EU–Africa negotiations will continue on how best to meet the targets of the Joint Africa–European Union Strategy.

The Presidency will promote an increased role for the EU in the **United Nations**, focusing its efforts particularly on working towards consolidation of the Human Rights Council.

The UK welcomes the special focus the Spanish Presidency will give to the **abolition of the death penalty** and ensuring that the EU remains at the forefront of global efforts to abolish capital punishment.

The Government will look to the Spanish Presidency to drive forward progress and ensure that the EU develops a powerful position following the international climate change summit held in Copenhagen in December 2009. The EU's continued leadership on **climate change** will be crucial over the first six months of 2010, when the Presidency in particular will play a key role in progressing the global political agreement reached at Copenhagen towards a legally binding treaty.

In 2008, the EU agreed to the 2020 climate and energy package, which commits the EU to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020. In the context of the agreement reached at Copenhagen, the Government looks forward to working with the Presidency to encourage countries to associate themselves formally with the accord and to put forward ambitious **emissions reduction targets**, as well as to reach consensus on the EU's contribution to international climate finance. The Government will also support efforts made by the Presidency in setting the right direction for a low-carbon EU budget and ensuring that low-carbon initiatives permeate the successor to the Lisbon Strategy.

The Spanish Presidency will seek opportunities for the EU to promote progress towards concluding the **Doha Development Agenda** (DDA). The Government strongly supports this aim: a successful outcome of the DDA would deliver significant benefits to the EU and to developing countries, as well as a much-needed confidence boost to the economy.

A new dimension in relations with the United States and Canada

The Presidency will endeavour to reinforce the EU's transatlantic relationships, including through the Transatlantic Dialogue.

The Government will continue to work closely with EU partners, the High Representative and the Presidency to take forward EU-US engagement on economic, trade, energy, environmental and development issues. The Government will also seek to strengthen even further the co-operation between the EU and US in the global drive for security. To this end, the Government will continue to encourage EU partners, the Presidency and the High Representative to engage more closely with the US on shared objectives in the Middle East and South Asia.

The UK will continue to work with the Commission to encourage good progress in the current negotiations for a comprehensive economic trade agreement with Canada. The UK will also work closely with EU partners, the Presidency and the High Representative to ensure greater co-operation between the EU and Canada in response to global issues, including the global drive for security.

A qualitative leap with Latin America and the Caribbean

Spain is seeking to bolster the EU's relationships within Latin America and the Caribbean during the course of its Presidency. The Government welcomes this aim, and will work with the Spanish Presidency in order to enhance political and economic relations between the regions, including through the EU-Latin America and Caribbean Summit in May.

As part of Spain's overall ambition to give a greater weight to EU relations with Latin

America, the Presidency will also be likely to prioritise the signing of **regional trade agreements** with Central America and several Andean countries, and may look to reactivate negotiations between the EU and Mercosur (Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay). The Presidency will also seek to make progress on other ongoing trade negotiations, including with India. The Government broadly supports these aims, although it emphasises that the DDA must remain the top priority.

Close and balanced neighbourhood relations

The conclusions adopted by the EU Foreign Affairs Council on 8 December 2009 clearly express the EU's position on the **Middle East Peace Process**, and set the scene for the Spanish Presidency. The EU expressed its intention to stand firm behind American efforts to relaunch negotiations. Negotiations are the only way for the Israelis and Palestinians to achieve a comprehensive, just and secure peace.

During the Spanish Presidency, the Government will continue to support EU efforts to build the institutions that are necessary for a viable **Palestinian state**, and will continue efforts to get the crossings into Gaza opened for the flow of humanitarian relief as well as for longer-term reconstruction and economic activity. As during the Swedish Presidency, the Government will continue to work towards the vision of two states living side by side in peace and security, based on 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as a shared capital and a fair settlement for refugees.

Following important progress over the last three EU Presidencies, the **European Neighbourhood Policy** (ENP) will continue to develop along its southern and eastern axes. The ENP is entering an important implementation phase in the Eastern Partnership; the Government will work with the High Representative and Presidency to ensure that projects are defined appropriately,

and to help accelerate partners' reforms and their approximation to EU norms and standards. The Government also expects the Spanish Presidency to work proactively to resolve ongoing issues within the **Union for the Mediterranean**, with the aim of hosting a high-level summit in the spring.

Negotiations on the successor to the EU–**Russia** Partnership and Cooperation Agreement will continue during the Spanish Presidency. The negotiations will seek to make progress on co-operation in the EU–Russia relationship on issues including trade and investment and science and technology. The Government's objective is to achieve constructive and comprehensive engagement between the EU and Russia. At the same time, it will not shy away from raising concerns, for example over human rights or Georgia. The Government will continue to call on Russia to abide by the ceasefire agreements which ended the 2008 conflict in Georgia, including allowing full access for EU monitors to Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The Union's enlargement. European support in the Western Balkans

The Spanish Presidency will continue to take forward accession negotiations and the EU's wider enlargement agenda.

The Council concluded in December 2009 that negotiations with **Croatia** were entering their final phase. At the end of December, Croatia had concluded 17 of the 35 chapters of the accession negotiations and had opened negotiations on a further 11 chapters.

Croatia must increase its efforts to meet the accession criteria if it is to conclude negotiations in 2010 as hoped. In particular, the Government expects Croatia to make progress on strengthening its judiciary, and to demonstrate full co-operation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

The Government strongly supports the Council's call for Croatia to take the necessary steps without further delay.

The Council has invited **Turkey** to increase the pace of its reforms. It looks forward to progress, without further delay, on the opening of ports to trade with Cyprus in line with its obligations. The Government expects further progress during the Spanish Presidency and strongly supports eventual Turkish EU membership.

The Council has invited the Commission to submit its opinion on **Iceland's** application for EU membership. The Government expects the Commission to submit its opinion during the Spanish Presidency.

The Government expects the Spanish Presidency to lead continuing Council working group discussions on the **Western Balkans** region. The Government strongly supports the EU perspective of the whole region.

During the Spanish Presidency, the Council will consider whether to open accession negotiations with **Macedonia**, as recommended by the Commission in October 2009. The Government supports the Commission's recommendation and Macedonia's EU membership.

The Council committed in December 2009 to implement **Serbia's** Interim Agreement with the EU, and also undertook to consider the issue of ratification of Serbia's Stabilisation and Association Agreement in six months' time. The Government welcomes this undertaking and will work with the Presidency to support progress. Serbia applied formally to join the EU on 22 December 2009.

Lack of reform and continued ethnic nationalist rhetoric in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** continues to cause deep concern. During the Spanish

Presidency, the EU will need to consider how to continue encouraging reform progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina during an election year; the Government will support the Presidency in these discussions.

During the Spanish Presidency, the EU should continue to demonstrate its commitment to **Kosovo's** European integration, ensuring that the recommendations in the Commission's October 2009 study on Kosovo's European perspective are taken forward. The Government supports these recommendations. The Council will also need to support EULEX, the EU's rule of law mission, in the effective implementation of its mandate.

Looking at Asia. Strengthening co-operation to address the global agenda

The EU, via a bilateral summit in May 2010, will focus on strengthening its relationship with **Japan**. The Government welcomes this aim and will work with the High Representative and Presidency to ensure that the summit produces some concrete outcomes as well as a review of the EU/Japan Action Plan.

The Government supports the 'Strengthening EU engagement in **Afghanistan**' paper adopted at the European Council in October 2009. The paper has a welcome focus on regional co-operation, rule of law, governance and the need for a greater Afghan lead. The UK will support efforts to implement the recommendations of this paper during the Spanish Presidency. It will also be important to further strengthen the EU Police mission (EUPOL).

The Spanish Presidency has indicated its intent to work more closely with **China and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, and will host an **EU-Pakistan** summit. It will also seek to build upon relations with India.

The Government welcomes these intents. It hopes to strengthen EU–China dialogue in the run-up to the May 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, to continue constructive engagement with China on the Iranian nuclear issue and on North Korea, and to further develop the trilateral dialogue between the EU, China and Africa. The successful EU–India Summit of November 2009 provided the opportunity to move forward on important areas of co-operation such as climate change, counter-terrorism and the EU–India Free Trade Agreement. The EU–ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Madrid in May will provide a useful opportunity for the two regions to engage on many issues of common interest, including trade, security and human rights. And a second EU–Pakistan Summit is a positive opportunity to take forward co-operation on trade, governance, development and counter-terrorism.

Iran

The EU will take a close interest in both the Iranian nuclear issue, where it remains committed to a diplomatic resolution to the challenge posed by Iran, and in the human rights situation inside Iran.

The Government will work closely with the High Representative, Presidency and EU partners, in line with the dual-track strategy of engagement and pressure, to complement international efforts to bring Iran to substantive negotiations on its nuclear programme.

G20

The EU Presidency has been represented at G20 Summits in Washington, London and Pittsburgh. The Government supports a strong EU presence at G20 Summits and will work together with the Spanish Presidency to implement the agreements reached at the G20 Summits in London and Pittsburgh and to ensure effective preparation for the Summits in 2010.

Energy security

The Government will work with the Spanish Presidency to take forward work on a new Energy Action Plan (expected from the Commission in early 2010). As well as ensuring that EU energy policies contribute to meeting the EU's 2020 climate change targets, the Government looks forward to development of policy on the EU's longer-term transition to a low-carbon economy by 2050. The Government also looks forward to the Spanish Presidency's taking forward specific work on renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy technologies (in the context of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan).

The Government will seek progress in 2010 on improving the functioning of EU energy markets and Europe's resilience to potential supply disruptions. Implementation of the Third Internal Energy Market Package, including provisions on unbundling and greater transparency of EU energy markets, will be essential to this. In addition, the Government will work closely with the Spanish Presidency in taking forward negotiations on a new Gas Security of Supply Regulation. Improving interconnection within the EU will also be an essential part of this, supported by the Economic Recovery Package.

The Government will continue to emphasise the importance of diversification of sources and routes of gas supply to increasing EU energy security. The Government will urge the Spanish Presidency to continue with work to promote the Southern Corridor for transit of new Central Asian gas via Turkey. Improving electricity and gas interconnection within the EU and with North Africa and proposals for a 'Solar Plan' are likely to be a key Spanish focus which the Government would support. In addition, the Government will work with the Spanish Presidency to continue EU work on mitigating the risks of any gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine and achieving resolutions if necessary.

A Europe of rights and freedoms, a Europe for all citizens

A more democratic Europe with the participation of its citizens – the popular legislative initiative

The Presidency will seek to implement the **Citizens' Initiative** proposal, as now provided for in the Treaties following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. This is a mechanism through which EU citizens can participate in the EU's policy-making process. The Government welcomes this focus on strengthening the role of citizens in the EU legislative process, and by working with the Presidency will seek to ensure that the Initiative is fully implemented to allow it to work in practice.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights, a further guarantee for its citizens

The Spanish Presidency intends to promote initiatives to strengthen and guarantee the exercising of the rights contained in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Government welcomes measures to promote human rights, but it will work closely with the Presidency to ensure that the proposed initiatives take into account that the Charter does not create any new rights but merely restates those that were already recognised in EU law before the Lisbon Treaty came into force. The Government also notes that the Charter does not extend the competences of the EU in any way, and in particular that it does not give the EU any new powers to promote human rights.

Accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The Spanish Presidency will seek to make progress towards the EU's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights. The Government supports this aim.

Reinforcing Europe's social dimension

The Spanish Presidency will approach employment and social policy from an equality

and social inclusion angle. This will be seen as an integral part of delivering its first priority on recovering from the global economic crisis by creating jobs. The Government welcomes this approach, which mirrors its own views in important respects.

This priority has special relevance, as 2010 is the EU's Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The Presidency intends to progress discussion on the **Pregnant Workers** Directive. The Government will work with the Presidency on agreeing measures which will protect new mothers, while recognising the different approaches to supporting working parents taken by Member States. Another priority for the Presidency will be reaching agreement on the directive on **non-discrimination**.

Fighting against gender-based violence

The Spanish Presidency intends to promote initiatives to eradicate **gender-based violence**. The UK Government welcomes the special emphasis that the Presidency will place on gender-based violence and plans to advance the creation of a European Observatory.

The Spanish Presidency will give high priority to **gender equality** in the context of the successor to the Lisbon Strategy, building upon the important work on gender undertaken during the Swedish Presidency. The Government strongly supports this, and hopes that the Presidency can send a clear message to Member States to keep gender equality high on their respective agendas.

The Government will work with the Presidency to maintain momentum on follow-up work to other key gender equality agreements. These include the **Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men**, and the monitoring and review of the Beijing Platform for Action at the forthcoming Commission on the Status of Women in March 2010.

The European Union as a common space for freedom, security and justice

The Government welcomes the adoption at the December European Council of the **Stockholm Programme**, which sets out the overall direction for EU co-operation on justice and home affairs for the next five years. A key priority for the Presidency will be to co-ordinate Member States' input to the Commission's Action Plan, which will give details of how and when it intends to take forward and implement the priorities set out in the Programme. The Presidency will also seek agreement on a European Strategy for Home Security.

Promoting European migration and asylum policy

On migration, the Presidency will undertake the first annual assessment of the **European Pact on Immigration and Asylum**, which gained political agreement under the French Presidency. It will oversee work to progress a range of Commission proposals on the Common European Asylum System, and has expressed a wish to move forward on European legal migration initiatives for seasonal workers and intra-corporate transferees. The Government supports new initiatives to tackle asylum shopping, the formal adoption of the proposal to set up a **European Asylum Support Office** in Malta and completion of negotiations on the establishment of a voluntary EU resettlement scheme. However, the Government has some concerns about new directives governing procedures and qualification rights for asylum claims. The Government will continue to exercise its right to opt in to EU legislation on asylum on a case-by-case basis.

The Government welcomes the Presidency's objective of making progress on managing the increasing number of **unaccompanied minors** arriving in Member States, and will also oversee revision of the regulations governing Frontex,

the EU's external border agency. With regard to migration beyond the EU's borders, the Government expects the Presidency to focus on co-operation with Latin America.

Security and public protection

The Government welcomes the Presidency's plans for work on security, including its intention to reach agreement on an **EU Internal Security Strategy** by March 2010. This will be a short and comprehensible document that is intended to explain to EU citizens the challenges that the EU faces on security and set out the principles for tackling them. The UK Government supports the strategy and has been closely involved in its drafting.

The Government supports the Presidency's objective of seeking to strengthen the **EU-US relationship on security-related issues**, including a proposal for a joint political statement on the fight against terrorism. This is part of a wider initiative to deepen transatlantic co-operation, building on the recently adopted EU-US statement in October 2009 on 'Enhancing transatlantic co-operation in the area of justice'. The Presidency also wants to increase co-operation between the EU and the US in the area of data protection.

Annex 1

Timetable of formal councils: January to June 2010

January

11	Agriculture and Fisheries
18	Agriculture and Fisheries
19	Economic and Financial Affairs (ECOFIN)
25	General Affairs Council (GAC) and Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)

February

15	Education, Youth and Culture
16	ECOFIN
22	GAC and FAC
22	Agriculture and Fisheries
25–26	Justice and Home Affairs

March

1–2	Competitiveness
8–9	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs
11–12	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy
15	Environment
16	ECOFIN
22	GAC and FAC
25–26	European Council
29	Agriculture and Fisheries

April

19	Agriculture and Fisheries
22–23	Justice and Home Affairs
26	Foreign Affairs and Defence Council

May

10	Foreign Affairs and Development Council and GAC
10–11	Education, Youth and Culture
17	Agriculture and Fisheries
18	ECOFIN
25–26	Competitiveness
31	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

June

3–4	Justice and Home Affairs
7–8	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs
8	ECOFIN
14	GAC and FAC
17–18	European Council
21	Environment
24	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy
28–29	Agriculture and Fisheries

Annex 2

Future Presidencies of the EU

2010		Belgium
2011	Hungary	Poland
2012	Denmark	Cyprus
2013	Ireland	Lithuania
2014	Greece	Italy
2015	Latvia	Luxembourg
2016	Netherlands	Slovakia
2017	Malta	United Kingdom
2018	Estonia	Bulgaria
2019	Austria	Romania
2020	Finland	



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