

EN

E-001338/2026

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(22.5.2026)

The EU has a principled stance on freedom of navigation, in line with international law. It urges all involved in the conflict to fully ensure a toll-free and safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz. The closure of the strait disrupts international trade and threatens global energy and food security. The EU is engaged in the region through operation European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Aspides<sup>1</sup> ensuring safe passage through the Red Sea. This includes the Strait of Hormuz in its area of operation and can help provide security to merchant vessels once the war ends. On 30 March 2026, the Council extended its mandate<sup>2</sup> until 28 February 2027.

The Commission adopted AccelerateEU<sup>3</sup> to help Member States protect citizens from price shocks, especially the most vulnerable, such as households, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and energy-intensive industry, through timely, targeted and temporary solutions (including price intervention, income support schemes and tax incentives) aligned with the EU's long-term objectives to save energy and encourage fossil fuel reduction. Member States have the tools to act, and the Commission is supporting them, including by facilitating coordination to maximise impact across the EU while minimising disturbances to the internal market.

With regards to the Stability and Growth Pact<sup>4</sup>, the general escape clause can only be activated in the event of a severe economic downturn in the euro area or the EU. While risks to the EU economic outlook have increased significantly over recent weeks, it cannot be concluded, at this stage, that this condition has or will soon be met.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eunavfor-aspiden\\_en?s=410381](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eunavfor-aspiden_en?s=410381).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2026/03/30/maritime-security-council-updates-mandates-of-eu-naval-operations-aspiden-and-atalanta/>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://energy.ec.europa.eu/strategy/accelerateeu-strengthen-eu-energy-resilience\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/strategy/accelerateeu-strengthen-eu-energy-resilience_en).

<sup>4</sup> [https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-governance-framework/stability-and-growth-pact\\_en](https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-governance-framework/stability-and-growth-pact_en).