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E-002676/2026

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.8.2026)

1. On 23 June 2026, Commission and Sweden, on behalf of interested Member States, co-chaired a technical meeting in Brussels with representatives of the *de facto* authorities of Afghanistan responsible for return and readmission. The meeting followed a letter sent in October 2025 by 20 Ministers from Member States and Schengen associated countries who asked the Commission to coordinate at EU level technical contacts on return and readmission to Afghanistan, with a focus on persons who pose a threat to public order and national security. The discussion contributed to clarifying technical aspects of the different stages of the readmission procedure.
2. There are no concrete plans at this stage for further engagement on this topic with the Afghan *de facto* authorities at EU level.
3. When the Taliban returned to power in August 2021, the EU adopted a policy of principled engagement with them, as ratified by Council conclusions of September 2021¹ and March 2023². The EU maintains diplomatic presence in Kabul and speaks to the Afghan *de facto* authorities in a principled way, without recognising or legitimising them in any manner, on issues pertaining to its key values and interests. The aforementioned technical meeting on returns was within the parameters of the EU's principled engagement policy. It implies no change in the EU's policy of not recognising and not legitimising the Afghan *de facto* authorities.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/09/21/afghanistan-council-conclusions-set-out-the-eu-s-position-and-next-steps/>.

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/03/20/afghanistan-council-approves-conclusions-on-afghanistan/>.