



**Inter-parliamentary  
conferences  
Dutch EU Presidency 2016**

Place and date: The Hague, **8th April 2016**  
Re: **Final conclusions** Inter-parliamentary Conference CFSP/CSDP, 6-8 April  
2016

*The Inter-parliamentary Conference,<sup>1</sup>*

*Having regard to the decision of the Conference of Speakers of European Union Parliaments taken in April 2012 in Warsaw regarding the establishment and mandate of this Conference;*

*Having regard to Title II of Protocol I (and Article 9) of the Treaty of Lisbon regarding the promotion of effective and regular inter-parliamentary cooperation within the European Union;*

*Cognizant of the new powers and instruments foreseen by the Treaty of Lisbon for the European Union (EU) institutions in the area of the foreign, security and defence policy; being aware that the new instruments create better opportunities for the EU to wield an international influence commensurate with its political and economic weight;*

*Conscious of the multi-layered decision-making process in the areas of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP); aware that effective implementation of these policies must involve numerous policy actors at both the EU and national levels; conscious of the responsibility to engage in parliamentary scrutiny at the respective levels and enhance inter-parliamentary cooperation in the areas of CFSP and CSDP;*

*Aware that the evolution of the international scenario has strengthened the role of Parliaments as central actors of global decision making, with specific reference to conflicts and crises;*

*Underscoring that the European External Action Service (EEAS), individual Member States and the European Union Special Representative for human rights should use every available political and diplomatic opportunity to uphold the respect of human rights as a priority objective of external relations, in accordance with the 2015-2019 Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy of 20 July 2015 and in keeping with the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law, the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights;*

*Building on the conclusions of the last Inter-parliamentary Conference ('IPC' hereafter), held in Luxembourg on 5-6 September 2015;*

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<sup>1</sup> Notes that these conclusions have been adopted by the Inter-parliamentary Conference with the Danish delegation abstaining.

## **Strategic review of the EU foreign and security policy**

1. Takes note of the state of play regarding the strategic review of the CFSP and CSDP, to be resulted in the EU's new Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy by June 2016 ('Global Strategy' hereafter); welcomes the contributions of parliaments following the last IPC in Luxembourg, through which parliaments take up their role in shaping the Global Strategy; in this regard the IPC commends the HR/VP for her commitment to involve all contributions and comments in the strategic review process;
2. Stresses the need to design a common, comprehensive and consistent Global Strategy that addresses the EU's challenges and opportunities in a changing international environment and in the context of the NATO membership of most EU states; cooperation, commitment and active engagement by all relevant actors, in particular by the EU Member States is requisite for a Global Strategy capable of acting in the best interest of the EU and its Member States; by exploring the effective use of all external action instruments and policies the strategy should clearly identify challenges to the EU, especially in major areas such as migration, anti-terrorism and safety against external aggression including hybrid warfare; the Global Strategy should advance in smooth cooperation with local and regional partners in line with article 21 TEU resulting in the safety of our citizens, our societies and our territory; it should advance our interests notably on rules-based global governance with respect for peace, democratic values and human rights; believes that the comprehensive approach and the consistent and coordinated use of the EU's external and internal policy instruments should be at the core of the new strategy;
3. States that the core strategic interest of the Union is a peaceful multilateral global order based on the rule of law, the respect for human rights and democracy; acknowledges with grave concern that these norms and values have come under increasing pressure in an increasingly unstable world; is of the opinion that implementation of the Minsk agreements is the pre-condition for any substantial change in the EU's stance towards Russia; supports other principles guiding the EU's policy towards Russia as it was agreed by the Foreign Affairs Council on 14 March 2016; reaffirms the strong common position of non-recognition of the annexation of Crimea;
4. Looks forward to the presentation of the Global Strategy in June 2016 and wishes to be kept involved in further discussions, including the follow-up on its implementation and the White Paper on security and defence emanating from the Global Strategy; including a framework for the security and defence research of the EU (as already initiated by a pilot project and an upcoming preparatory action) in addition to the research programmes of the EU Member States;
5. Reminds that EU enlargement has been a successful process for Europe as a whole, helping to overcome the divisions of the Cold War, contributing to peace, stability and prosperity throughout the continent, and providing an impetus to the neighbouring European countries in continuing their reforms as a prerequisite;

## **Strengthening EU defence and rapid response**

6. Stresses that, in light of the fragile situation on and outside the Eastern and Southern borders of the EU, and in light of Article 42.3 of the Treaty on European Union (Member States shall undertake progressively to improve their military capabilities), a strengthening of the EU's resilience and defence capabilities is needed; therefore calls on the EU Member States to put into practice the instruments provided for under the TEU, such as Article 42.6 (Permanent

Structured Cooperation) and Article 44 (on the implementation of a CSDP task by a group of Member States); underlines the need to strengthen the EU's rapid reaction capacities, in particular by overcoming the obstacles and by defining possible solutions to the EU Battlegroups' deployment as initial-entry force, by reforming the financing system of EU operations towards fairer burden sharing with a view to establishing a permanent EU military operational headquarter within the context of the Berlin Plus arrangements, which coordinates its work more closely with the already existing Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC); and calls on those Member States that are also members of NATO to spend a minimum of 2% of GDP on defence, which refers to the agreements made at the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014; supports the complementary EU-NATO cooperation as the best formula for increasing synergies in order to achieve fast response and avoiding duplications in the process of military development, with full respect for the decision making autonomy of each party and for the possibility of autonomous CSDP action in such cases where NATO declines to act or where an EU operation is more appropriate; considers that the establishment of practical arrangements and guidelines for the future activation of the mutual assistance clause (art. 42.7 TEU) and other provisions regarding CSDP in the Treaty should be a priority;

7. Calls on the European Commission to base the suggested European Defence Action Plan on the EU White Book on security and defence; regrets that so far the Commission has as yet involved neither the European Parliament nor the national parliaments in developing such an additional action plan; calls urgently on the Commission to clarify the intended legal basis for financing defence research and financing defence equipment for third countries and third regional organizations;

### **Strengthening synergy within the EU and with external partners**

8. Believes that in order to gain more credibility as a global security and foreign policy actor, the EU should take greater responsibility and focus on filling the security vacuum in its neighbourhood; calls on the VP/HR and the EU Member States to use the Global Strategy as an instrument for clarifying and strengthening the Union's neighbourhood policy; is convinced that it is in this respect crucial to recreate a sense of solidarity within the Union and to link in a much more direct sense its responses to the East and the South; considering the relationship between external and internal security the IPC emphasizes the need for the EU to address the threats emanating from the instability in the South and in the East through an integrated approach connecting all civilian and military, internal and external security policies and instruments to address both the root causes and the current negative consequences of the conflict in its neighbourhood; is convinced that the EU should be more engaged with de-escalatory diplomacy;
9. Stresses the need to strengthen the forecasting and analytical capacities in EU institutions and Member States by making EU crisis prevention and management instruments more efficient and effective; underlines the increasing security challenges and threats posed by terrorism and stresses the need to improve cooperation and information sharing between European intelligence services, national counter-terrorism experts and other authorities; urges all Member States to comply with their legal obligation to share intelligence with Europol and Eurojust in the fight against terrorism and organised crime; stresses the need for measures to be directed towards the prevention of radicalization; is of the opinion that the EU must be proactive in strengthening cooperation with external partners in unified international efforts in the fight against terrorism; emphasizes the real continuum between internal and external security of the European Union and its Member States; therefore urges the European Parliament to adopt, and

each national parliament to transpose, the Directive on Passenger Name Records (COM(2011)32 of 2/2/2011) as soon as possible, in order to contribute effectively to limiting the freedom of movement of terrorists, a primary condition for improving security, urgently demanded by the citizens of Europe;

10. Encourages, in that context, intensified coordination between the actors and institutions responsible for the external and internal policies in the EU, increased cooperation between the EU, NATO and the UN and more civil-military synergy in relation to maritime, border and cyber security; calls on the EU Member States to coordinate and speak with one voice on these issues in all relevant multilateral fora; encourages the EU to further engage with neighbouring countries in security dialogue and practical cooperation in the field of CSDP; in this context, the EU should also invest in strengthening further its existing partnerships by using each Member State's added value and good relations with particular countries; stresses that to ensure the EU's relevance as a global actor and to defend and promote its own values a strong relationship between diplomacy tools and capabilities to conduct military operations is needed;

### **Foreign policy aspects of migration**

11. Urges the EU Member States to continue working on the implementation of the European Agenda on Migration presented by the European Commission, stressing in particular the need to implement the short and long term priorities in order to manage migration in a sense of shared responsibility between EU Member States and non-EU countries of transit and origin of migrants; urges the EU Member States to continue working to secure the EU's external borders and to prevent further losses of lives, to dismantle smugglers' networks, including by destroying their boats and equipment, to deliver on relocation and resettlement and to implement a common asylum policy based on solidarity and on the arrangements for a fair burden sharing among the Member States; emphasizes the importance of communication both inside and outside the EU on the issue of migration; underlines the importance of cooperation among the EU and the non-EU countries of origin implementing readmission agreements; welcomes the announced revision of the Dublin Regulation; calls on the VP/HR to increase her visibility in addressing foreign policy aspects of migration;
12. Emphasizes the need to address the root causes of migration in the main countries of origin and transit; takes note of the inter-related issues of migration, peace-building, respect for human rights and development, stressing the importance of a global and common approach through regional and bilateral strategies addressing both economic and technical cooperation, including assistance to governance and economic development of countries of origin; welcomes the decision of the EU to strengthen development cooperation with third countries to address the common challenges and encourages, in this respect, EU Member States to offer full support to the 2030 Agenda for Development and to put the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the heart of the Global Strategy;
13. Underlines that the cessation of the conflict in Syria and the stabilisation of Libya as well as the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are crucial for addressing the root causes forcing people to flee and thereby reducing migratory flows into the EU; stresses that a sustainable solution to the Syrian crisis needs to be based on an inclusive, Syrian-led political settlement involving all relevant national and international stakeholders; calls on all sides to maintain the conditions necessary for the continuation of peace talks, as provided for in the roadmap adopted by the International Syria Support Group on 14 November 2015 and in conformity with the UN Security Council resolutions 2268 and 2254;

reiterates the importance of getting all regional and international powers behind the efforts to reach a political agreement, avoiding concessions that might endanger the very sought objectives and EU values; calls on the EU to use its leverage with all relevant stakeholders in order to build support for a sustainable political settlement;

14. In consideration of the strategic nature of the EU's partnership with Egypt for common security, calls on the Egyptian authorities to ensure full respect of human rights, in order to actively prevent torture and to cooperate in shedding light on the case of the Italian researcher who was abducted, tortured and murdered in Cairo;
15. Recalls that it is crucial to further reinforce the cooperation between the EU and countries of origin and transit, in order to fight smuggling and trafficking networks, ensure capacity building in the fields of asylum systems and border control, provide protection for people in need, focusing on the most vulnerable groups, establish frameworks for safe and legal migration, to seek collective solutions and put into force a humane and effective return policy for irregular migrants in compliance with European and International Law, the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the protection of human rights; supports the agreement on an EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan and international law to contain the migratory flows towards the EU and the assistance to Turkey and other countries in the region to continue hosting refugees; calls on Turkey to implement its commitments under the Joint Action Plan and to step up its efforts to prevent irregular migration into the EU, consistent with the highest standards of democracy, rule of law, and respect for fundamental freedoms including freedom of expression; bears in mind that the refugee crisis is not only a European but also an international challenge, which requires cooperation of the Union with key international partners such as the United Nations; takes note of NATO's surveillance mission in the Aegean Sea; commends the proposal to establish a European Border and Coast Guard Agency, while highlighting the need to adapt the concept of the European Border and Coast Guard to the new state of play in migration management, following the conclusion of the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan;
16. Notes with concern that the irregular migration flow from Libya towards Europe is increasing again and urges EU Member States to engage in a dialogue with the Libyan Government of National Accord on how to reduce the flow of migrants; welcomes in this context, the establishment of the new Libyan Government of National Accord in Tripoli and looks forward to its rapid take-up of duties; reaffirms the territorial integrity of Libya as a precondition for peace and stability in the whole country; reaffirms the need to step up efforts to counter Daesh's expansion in Libya, which represents a primary threat for the security of the entire European Union; emphasizes the key role of the UN Security Council's essential decisions to launch EUNAVFOR MED Operation SOPHIA to a full operational capacity;
17. Welcomes the establishment of the EU Trust Funds and the substantial financial pledges for humanitarian aid made during the London donors' conference on 4 February 2016; looks forward to the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul on 23-24 May 2016; and calls upon the EU and Member States to meet UN development aid targets to help address the migration crisis at source;

### **Arms exports control**

18. Acknowledges the EU Common Position on arms exports (2008/944/CFSP) as the legally binding common framework for national arms exports decisions; urges the

EU Member States to fully respect the eight criteria of the Common Position; deplores the fact that EU Annual Arms Exports Reports are published with ever longer delays and that not all Member States transfer data in line with reporting obligation of the Common Position;

19. Considers that the EU should promote international cooperation on non-proliferation and arms control; underlines the need to ensure compliance and monitoring by Member States of the EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports so that regimes that routinely violate human rights are not supplied with additional tools to suppress dissent;
20. Acknowledging the fact that arms export is related to national security, states that the IPC advocates more transparency and exchange of information and best practices between Member States of the EU regarding arms exports control; endorses the 'no-undercut principle', stating that Member States should respect and adopt each other's decisions related to arms exports licences, within the framework of the UN Arms Trade Treaty and the EU common position concerning arms exports (2008/944/CFSP); takes notes of the Dual-Use Regulation being subject to change, updating and enlarging the list of goods liable to malevolent military use; expresses the view that this Regulation is to be implemented in a strict and uniform manner;
21. Urges the European Commission to focus on the prevention of the proliferation of cyber-weapons that could be used against the EU's security; stresses the need to significantly increase the Member States' cyber defence capabilities; considers that the European Defence Agency may improve the coordination with the Member States in the cyber defence field;

### **The role of parliaments**

22. Stresses the need - in a time when external and internal security are intertwined as never before - to further strengthen the cooperation between the European Parliament and EU national parliaments in the field of CFSP/CSDP and asks the Troika to come up with concrete and practical proposals for the next IPC in Slovakia in September 2016 to that purpose.