Annual report (2007) on the main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own initiative report by Jacek **SARYUSZ-WOLSKI** (EPP-ED, PL) on the annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 2007, reiterating that the CFSP must be underpinned and guided by the values which the European Union and its Member States cherish and must **fight for the common interests of its citizens**, including their right to live in peace and security in a clean environment and to have diversified access to vital resources such as energy.

MEPs strongly believe that the European Union can make an impact only if it speaks with one voice and if it further strengthens its cooperation with the UN, and reiterate that the EU must also establish its democratic legitimacy through informed scrutiny by both the European and national parliaments. In this respect, MEPs believe that members of the committees on foreign affairs and defence of national parliaments should be invited by the European Parliament to scrutinise the main developments in the CFSP.

MEPs also make comments on the other main points of the Common Foreign and Security Policy:

Budgetary aspects: once again, MEPs regret the fact that the CFSP budget is seriously under-funded and recall that, in order to be credible, the CFSP must be adequately financed. MEPs would also welcome more information from the Council on the activities financed by its budget or via the ATHENA mechanism (particularly on how those appropriations complement the funds for CFSP actions under the EU budget), in the interest of **transparency**. In particular, MEPs wish to receive all relevant information on CFSP missions in Georgia (EUMM) and in Kosovo (EULEX).

2007 Annual Report on the CFSP: MEPs consider that, rather than content itself with providing an exhaustive catalogue of the activities carried out, the Council's annual report should provide the opportunity to establish a dialogue with the European Parliament aimed at developing a more strategic approach to the CFSP. MEPs therefore call on the Council to reconsider the general rationale of the report in order to ensure that it includes an in-depth assessment of the Union’s policy towards third countries and the Union’s response to humanitarian and security crises, as well as specific proposals for future action.

CFSP horizontal aspects: MEPs believe that the CFSP should continue to focus on upholding human rights, on promoting peace and security at global level, on support for effective multilateralism, on the fight against terrorism, on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament, and on climate change and energy security. MEPs also ask that better account be taken of Parliament’s views and call on the Council to pursue with determination the recommendations made by Parliament for the development of a **common European external energy policy**. MEPs also believe that the war in Georgia confirms the need for further development of EU preventive diplomacy, matched by adequate crisis-prevention tools.

A new transatlantic agenda: MEPs believe that the coming months will provide a unique opportunity for the EU to work out a new transatlantic agenda with the new US administration, covering strategic issues of common concern, such as the financial crisis, the establishment of a new set of Euro-Atlantic institutions, measures to tackle climate change, energy security, the promotion of a durable peace in the

Middle East, the situation in Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan, the fight against terrorism and organised crime, nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). MEPs also make the following comments on the **main EU security concerns**:

- **Western Balkans**: MEPs reiterate that the EU's objective in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains to ensure a stable, peaceful and multi-ethnic country. They therefore call on political leaders to implement the agreement reached on 8 November 2008 in order to rapidly address the remaining objectives and conditions. In particular, MEPs express their concern at the possible disengagement on the part of the international community from Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- **Eastern Partnership**: MEPs support the approach pursued by the Commission in its communication on an Eastern Partnership, which aims at establishing a free trade area and cooperation in all aspects of security, especially energy security. However, they believe that the partnership should be matched by a doubling of EU financial assistance and by a strong political dimension. MEPs also call on the EU to take effective steps without any further delay in order to facilitate visa procedures for Belarusian citizens;
- **Georgia**: once again, MEPs commend the French Presidency of the Council for ensuring that the European Union has played a key role in bringing an end to the war in Georgia. They now call on the Council to insist on full implementation of the ceasefire agreement. Moreover, MEPs believe that the EU should closely monitor other potential conflicts in this part of the European neighbourhood, in cooperation with Turkey;
- **Russia**: MEPs are convinced that Russia's agreement to allow international observers to monitor the situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia is necessary for the normalisation of EU-Russia relations. They also take the view that no strategic partnership is possible if the values of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law are not fully shared and respected. MEPs therefore call on the Council to place those values at the core of the ongoing negotiations for a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement;
- **The Middle East and broader Middle East**: MEPs regret the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East and the **heavy toll in civilian lives** caused by the armed conflict in the **Gaza Strip**. MEPs believe that the EU should assume a strong and visible political role in the region, commensurate with the financial resources it has made available, in particular to address the dramatic humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. They call on the Council to pursue its efforts to achieve a permanent ceasefire in this region and to consider all means to promote a lasting peace in the region. MEPs welcome the Council's intention to renew the mandate of the EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories and to extend the mandate in Rafah, and believe that this determination should result in concrete initiatives to restore freedom of movement in the Palestinian territories. In terms of the **broader Middle East**, MEPs believe that the EU should strengthen its engagement with **Iraq** and develop a more effective and comprehensive relationship with **Iran** (which, besides dealing with the nuclear issue, should also cover trade and energy cooperation and regional stability). MEPs are also concerned about the deterioration of the security situation in **Afghanistan**. They reiterate the urgent need to improve cooperation between the EU and NATO in this area;
- **Africa**: MEPs call on the Council to widen the agenda with Africa, to cover a broader range of policies than is currently the case. They also call for incentives to strengthen the EU's presence in Darfur, Somalia and the DRC;
- **Latin America**: lastly, MEPs recall their proposal on a global partnership and a common strategy for relations between the European Union and Latin America.