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

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The European Parliament adopted, by 535 votes to 71 with 51 abstentions a resolution 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.

The resolution reiterates 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.

Parliament strongly believes 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. It also considers that Parliament's structures and organisation should be reviewed in order to pool together and better exploit all expertise in matters relating to CFSP, so as to provide a more effective and coherent contribution to the development of a more strategic and democratic CFSP.

Parliament also makes comments on the other main points of the Common Foreign and Security Policy:

Budgetary aspects: once again, Parliament regrets the fact that the CFSP budget is seriously under-funded and recalls that, in order to be credible, the CFSP must be adequately financed. Parliament 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, Parliament wishes to receive all relevant information on CFSP missions in Georgia (EUMM) and in Kosovo (EULEX).

2007 Annual Report on the CFSP: Parliament considers 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. It therefore calls 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: Parliament believes 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. Parliament also asks 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**. Parliament believes that the war in Georgia confirms the need for further development of EU preventive diplomacy, matched by adequate crisis-prevention tools. In relation to the kidnapping and murder of hostages by Islamic terrorists, Parliament underlines the need for enhanced cooperation and coordination of anti-terrorist policy as between EU Member States, the US and NATO, aiming in particular at improving the effectiveness of rescue operations launched with a view to saving hostages' lives.

A new transatlantic agenda: Parliament believes 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).

Parliament also makes the following comments on the **main EU security concerns**:

- **Western Balkans**: Parliament reiterates that the EU's objective in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains to ensure a stable, peaceful and multi-ethnic country. It therefore calls on political leaders to implement the agreement reached on 8 November 2008 in order to rapidly address the remaining objectives and conditions. In particular, Parliament MEPs expresses its concern at the possible disengagement on the part of the international community from Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- **Eastern Partnership**: Parliament supports 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, it believes that the partnership should be matched by a doubling of EU financial assistance and by a strong political dimension. Parliament also calls on the EU to take effective steps without any further delay in order to facilitate visa procedures for Belarusian citizens;
- **Georgia**: Parliament calls on the Council to insist on full implementation of the ceasefire agreement. Moreover, it believes that the EU should closely monitor other potential conflicts in this part of the European neighbourhood, in cooperation with Turkey;
- **Russia**: Parliament takes 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. These values at the core of the ongoing negotiations for a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement;
- **The Middle East and broader Middle East**: Parliament regrets 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. It believes 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. The Council is called upon 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. The Parliament welcomes 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 believes that this determination should result in concrete initiatives to restore freedom of movement in the Palestinian territories. In terms of the broader Middle East, Parliament believes 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). It is also concerned about the deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan. It reiterates the urgent need to improve cooperation between the EU and NATO in this area;
- **Africa**: Parliament calls on the Council to widen the agenda with Africa, to cover a broader range of policies than is currently the case. It also calls for incentives to strengthen the EU's presence in Darfur, Somalia and the DRC;
- **China**: Parliament remains gravely concerned by the lack of willingness on the part of the Chinese authorities to tackle numerous human rights violations and to ensure that the people enjoy basic rights and freedom. It also deplores the decision of the Chinese authorities to end the talks with the representatives of the Dalai Lama and calls on the Council to appoint a special envoy for Tibetan issues in order to follow the situation closely and to facilitate the resumption of dialogue between the parties;
- **Latin America**: lastly, Parliament recalls their proposal on a global partnership and a common strategy for relations between the European Union and Latin America.