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 2008

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Gabriele ALBERTINI (EPP, IT) 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 2008, presented to the European Parliament in application of Part II, Section G, paragraph 43 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006.

Divided into several parts, the report begins by calling on the Vice-President/High Representative (VP /HR) and her services to develop a coherent EU foreign policy strategy based on the objectives and principles established in Article 21 TEU. Such a strategy should clearly identify the common security interests of the EU and thereby serve as a reference framework for policy-making as well as for the formulation, financing, implementation and monitoring of the EU's external action. Members want Parliament's relevant bodies to be fully associated with such an endeavour, and they believe that the concepts of Human Security, and Responsibility to Protect should become two of its guiding principles.

The Council's 2008 annual report on the CFSP: noting the improvements to the 2008 report, Members stresses that the scope of the report should not be limited simply to a description of CFSP activities but should provide the opportunity to establish a dialogue with the European Parliament aimed at developing a more strategic approach to the CFSP. They recommend that the annual CFSP report be turned into a yearly report discussing the implementation of the EU's foreign policy strategy, evaluating its effectiveness and outlining its future direction, with more references to the budgetary needs and financial impact of external actions in such reporting. They reiterate that in order to enhance the democratic legitimacy of the CFSP, Parliament's competent bodies should be more widely consulted.

Implications of the Treaty of Lisbon: the committee welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, which provides the EU with tools for the further enhancement of its role and visibility on the international scene, and also welcome the role to be played by the Vice-President/High Representative in chairing the Foreign Affairs Council. It expects these new functions to consolidate inter-institutional contacts and foster a more stable dialogue between the institutions. It invites the Vice-President/High Representative to increase her appearances in Parliament. The committee is of the view that the merging of the inter-governmental and Community pillars and functions into one single post of the Vice-President /High Representative, who is subject to a collective vote of consent by the European Parliament, can increase the democratic legitimacy of CFSP activities provided a continuous strategic dialogue is established on an equal footing between Parliament, the Council and the Commission at all levels.

Members underline that sufficient funds need to be allocated in the EU budget and regret that the relevant budget continues to be underfunded and they look forward to being fully involved in the procedures for granting rapid access to appropriations in the Union budget for urgent financing of CFSP initiatives. They reiterate their concerns about the lack of transparency as regards the financing of the common costs of EU operations having military or defence implications, since the Athena mechanism clearly does not afford an overview of all the financial implications of missions conducted under the CFSP. The report welcomes, therefore, the setting-up of the start-up fund under the new Treaty and asks to be consulted on its

management, noting also that the setting-up and operation of the EEAS must preserve the European Parliament's rights of democratic and budgetary scrutiny. It stresses, furthermore, the need to establish greater clarity on the criteria for the appointment and evaluation of EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), calling for increased parliamentary scrutiny of, and control over, EUSR appointments and mandates. Members want to see a review and extension of existing inter-institutional agreements so as to ensure the smooth and efficient implementation of the budgetary, consultation and supervision procedures for the CFSP and the CSDP and to improve access to sensitive information. They express their determination to exercise budgetary power and democratic scrutiny with regard to the CFSP in connection with all institutional innovations.

CFSP matters of a thematic nature: Members continue to be concerned about the security of energy supply and repeated gas crises such as the Russian-Ukrainian crisis of January 2009. They underline the need to prevent the energy dependency of the EU on third countries weakening the independence of EU foreign policy, and recall the urgent need implement a common European external energy policy. They want the VP/HR to promote EU cohesion in constructive dialogue with energy suppliers, especially with Russia and transit countries, by developing effective energy diplomacy and more efficient mechanisms for responding to crisis situations and, finally, by promoting the diversification of energy supplies, sustainable energy use and the development of renewable energy sources. Only a common EU approach could prevent any future shortcomings in the oil and gas supplies of the Member States and could increase the energy security of the EU as a whole. The committee believes that significant potential threats and conflicts arise from intensified competition over access to, and control of, natural resources, and consequently that the EU should further develop mitigation, adaptation and energy conservation policies. The EU must strengthen its leadership and further develop a dialogue with other key actors such as the emerging powers (China, Brazil, Russia, India), the United States and developing countries.

Members express support for strengthening the United Nations system and according special importance to consolidating the Human Rights Council and abolishing the death penalty. They reiterate the importance of orderly migration management, the need to avert illegal immigration by promoting local development in the countries of origin and fighting criminal organisations that traffic in human beings.

They go on to stress the importance of an adequate balance between civilian and military planning capabilities in the Council Secretariat and call for adequate staffing of the civilian component . Member States are urged to use the great opportunity provided by the EEAS to pool currently available resources in order to achieve a coherent, effective and efficient crisis management planning capability. Member States are asked to redouble their efforts to deploy sufficient numbers of suitable, qualified and gender-balanced personnel to take part in CSDP civilian and military endeavours and Members call, in this respect, for common training of the personnel of CSDP missions.

The committee emphasises the need to intensify the EU's engagement in multilateral negotiations to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons, and reiterates the need for disarmament and strengthened international guarantees of non-proliferation. It calls the EU and its Member States to enhance their diplomatic efforts in order to achieve a successful revision of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May 2010. It also calls for the systematic inclusion of gender equality and women's empowerment in the EU's political dialogue and policy discussions with partner countries, and for the inclusion of human rights and good governance aspects in the mandates of EUSRs.

In the second part of the report, Members set out their **main priorities in the geographical areas**. They recommend that the EU strengthen the political dialogue with third countries and regions, particularly with strategic partners with whom to coordinate positions in the international organisations and support and promote democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. It calls on the Council, the Member States and the Vice-President/High Representative actively to seek peaceful solutions in international conflicts and to strengthen the EU's conflict prevention mechanisms. Other initiatives suggested include strengthening the role and impact of international organisations with the United Nations as the main

guarantor of international peace and security. The committee considers it essential that the relevant EU delegations at the UN's headquarters in New York and Geneva be adequately equipped with means and staff It takes the view that the EU and NATO should develop a more intense and effective partnership, and recommends a review of the Berlin-Plus arrangements and the development of a more strategic dialogue on shared strategic interests. It urges the facilitation of broader practical cooperation on the ground at military or civilian level, in particular when both organisations operate in the same theatre of missions.

EU foreign policy : committee position by geographical zone: Members conduct an analysis of their position by geographical area, and state as follows :

- **Transatlantic relations**: Members call on the VP/HR to ensure that the EU acts as a coherent, active, equal and yet autonomous partner of the US. They want both partners, the EU and the US, to encourage China, India, Russia, Brazil and other emerging powers to share responsibility for the global order and for the prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts in compliance with international law.
- **Western Balkans**: stressing that the countries of the Western Balkans are part of the enlargement process, the committee considers that stability in the Western Balkans based on the rule of law should remain a top priority in the Union’s external action. It welcomes the fact that the EULEX rule of law mission in Kosovo is working at full operational capacity and encourages the Council to continue its efforts, with the support of the international community, to pursue a dialogue with political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **Eastern Partnership, Black Sea cooperation**: the committee continues to support the development of the Eastern Partnership with the Union's European neighbours, and reiterates its view that the partnership needs to be provided with adequate financial resources. They call on the VP/HR to step up efforts to implement projects under the Black Sea Synergy. Taking note of the outcome of the presidential elections in Ukraine, it calls on all parties to contribute to the necessary political, economic and social stability in the country.
- **Russia**: Members underline the need for a reinvigorated partnership with Russia, based on mutual respect and reciprocity, on the issues of the fight against terrorism, energy security and supply, climate change, disarmament, conflict prevention and nuclear non-proliferation. They look forward to speedy progress in the current negotiations on a new comprehensive agreement that is expected to substantially enhance EU-Russia relations.
- **South Caucuses**: Members urge full implementation of the ceasefire agreement between the Russian Federation and Georgia and urge the Council to ensure that EU monitors are granted full access to all areas affected by the conflict including the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. They call on the HR/VP to intensify the EU's efforts to work towards effective conflict prevention and peaceful settlement under international law of the conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria, and recommend the setting-up of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the South Caucasus, embracing the countries concerned and the relevant regional and global actors, with a view to developing a Stability Pact for the South Caucasus.
- **Middle East:** the committee calls on the EU to assume a stronger political role in the ongoing international efforts to re-launch the Peace Process, commensurate with its financial engagement in supporting a Palestinian economic recovery and addressing the dramatic humanitarian crisis in Gaza. They welcome the Council's decision to extend the mandate of the EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) until December 2010m and take note of the Council's decision to extend the mandate of the EU Border Assistance Mission in Rafah (EUBAM Rafah).
- **The Union for the Mediterranean**: Members considers it important to intensify political dialogue among the members of the Union for the Mediterranean at all levels and hopes that the Union for the Mediterranean may contribute positively to the resolution of the conflicts in the Middle East, rapprochement between Turkey and Cyprus, and the democratic development of the Arab states.
- **Afghanistan/Pakistan**: the committee calls on the Council, the Commission and the Swedish Presidency to make a concerted effort to implement the Action Plan without delay and before the end of 2009. It urges the Council to make more progress towards full deployment of staff in

EUPOL in order to establish sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements capable of enhancing the security environment. Recognising that Pakistan continues to face very serious challenges, it endorses the EU's firm support for a strong, secular and civilian government of Pakistan and reiterates that a stable, democratic and prosperous Pakistan is also central to addressing global issues such as counter-terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, counter-narcotics and human rights.

- **Iran/Iraq**: Members endorses the EU's commitment to supporting democracy in a unified, federal Iraq. They call for increased institutional interaction, particularly on economic issues, with the authorities of the Kurdish Regional Government. They call on the Commission to accelerate the activation of its own premises in Baghdad. On Iran, they express grave concern over the reported massive electoral fraud during the presidential elections of June 2009, as well as continuous stalemate in the negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme. They regret that the visit by the Iran delegation of the European Parliament in January 2010 has been cancelled by the Iranian authorities and condemn Iran's efforts to block freedom of information by jamming foreign broadcasts and the Internet. The committee calls on the Council and Commission to consider sanctions against individual members of the administration and the security services responsible for the widespread human rights violations.
- **China/India**: the committee remains gravely concerned about 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 freedoms. They reaffirms strong support for strengthening the strategic relationship between the EU and India, and for exploring further ways to upgrade the relationship in areas of mutual interest in the economic, political, security and trade sectors. They also want to increase cooperation with ASEAN in several areas.
- **Africa**: noting with satisfaction that EUNAVFOR Atalanta continues to make a successful contribution to maritime security off the coast of Somali, Members welcome the Council's decision to extend the mandate of the operation to 12 December 2010. They stress the need to integrate trained security forces into state and command structures so that, once they return, they will not turn against the government they are supposed to be protecting.
- **Latin America**: the committee recalls once again its proposals for a global partnership and a common strategy for relations between the EU and Latin America with a view to the Vienna and Lima EU-LAC Summits in May 2010. It considers that a prompt signature of the Association Agreement with the Central American countries and of the Multilateral Agreement with the Andean Community countries, as well as the progress of negotiations on the Association Agreement with Mercosur, must be a priority.