Role of broadcasting media in projecting the EU and its values. Recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the EEAS

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the report by Graham WATSON (ADLE, UK) on the role of broadcasting media in projecting the EU and its values.

European media broadcasting internationally can play an important role in communicating the values of democracy, media freedom and human rights throughout the world, in explaining different national perceptions, in communicating EU policies, in shaping a genuine European perspective and in providing audiences with reliable and high-quality information, most significantly by means of a firm and unyielding commitment to journalistic objectivity.

Governments bear the primary responsibility for guaranteeing and protecting freedom of expression and the media. Members considered that there is a need to establish a coherent European media broadcasting strategy in the EU's external relations.

Therefore, this report addressed the following **recommendations** to the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service:

- to understand the importance of **free European media**, and in particular of financially sustainable and independent public service broadcasting, in promoting EU democratic values and informing the public about policies and goals in the sphere of the CFSP, notably by enhancing understanding of the issues that unite and divide Europe and bringing European citizens closer together as regards their understanding of foreign policy;
- to establish a **coherent and robust EU media broadcasting strategy** in the context of the EU's external relations, thereby promoting freedom of expression and media pluralism and upholding and strengthening democracy and human rights in Europe and in third countries;
- to define, as part of this strategy, a **specific approach to European broadcasting media** – notwithstanding the independence of the media and the competence of Member States to confer, define and organise the public service broadcasting remit;
- to consider that **Euronews**, with its broad network of national broadcasters and its wide distribution, has the potential to play an important role in the media landscape and in stimulating the debate on Europe, including in third countries. In order to play such a role Euronews should have the means to continue to operate in various languages, including non-European languages;
- to direct **project-based EU external aid funding** towards those broadcasters that already respect and work in accordance with the highest standards of journalistic independence, accuracy and balance and promote EU values;
- to launch a reflection process at EU level with the aim of establishing a **worldwide European radio service**;
- to work towards the creation of an **enabling media environment in third countries**, along with the development of independent and professional broadcasting media.