# Role of the EU within the UN - how to better achieve EU foreign policy goals

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Paavo VÄYRYNEN (ADLE, FI) on the role of the EU within the UN - how to better achieve EU foreign policy goals.

Members stressed that the **future of the European Union is linked with global peace, security, development and human rights**. The challenges the EU faces need global solutions, and global issues need European action. The UN system is the main global forum for improving global governance, and as such represents the **best forum in which to promote the EU's values and interests**. The EU and its Member States share the values and principles of the UN Charter as stated in Article 21(1) TEU and have a crucial role in promoting those principles as well as the goals of the UN, through the external action of the Union.

**Increase EU influence**: Members are of the conviction that, in order to better achieve its foreign policy goals, the EU should strive to strengthen global governance inside the UN system and to increase its own and its Member States' influence within that system. Therefore, **the EU should, within the General Assembly, play an enhanced role** that implies sufficient visibility and policy leverage, enabling it to better execute its international obligations.

**Security Council**: Members are convinced that **the Security Council must be reformed in order to better reflect the new world reality** and to more effectively meet present and future security challenges. They recalled, considering the contribution of the EU to peace and security architecture in the world and the Lisbon Treaty's objective of enhancing the European foreign policy, the long-term goal of the **EU having a seat on an enlarged Security Council**. They encouraged countries having the right of veto on the UN Security Council to refrain from exercising their veto in situations of genocide and crimes against humanity.

**Enhance coordination and cooperation**: besides these necessary reforms to be carried out within the UN, a better achievement of the EU's foreign policy goals, including the promotion of fundamental values, presupposes a more effective coordination of the various dimensions of all of its external policy, both bilateral and multilateral. The EU is called upon to more effectively coordinate its work in the field of **humanitarian aid**, e.g. through ECHO, with the respective UN agencies, in order to create optimal efficiency with limited resources and avoid unnecessary overlap.

**Crisis management**: the report encouraged EU Member States to provide more substantial support to peacebuilding and peace-keeping operations, and called on the EU to strengthen its mediation efforts in conflict resolution. Members supported the **reinforcement of EU-UN operational cooperation** in crisis management, also by the EU working together with the UN on both the sharing of analyses and the planning of peace and security operations.

**Prevent atrocities and uphold the rule of law**: bearing in mind the recent atrocities and human rights violations perpetrated by some extremist and terrorist groups, as well as ongoing sexual violence in conflict, the Security Council is urged, **in line with the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine, to define an ambitious set of tools and means** in order to ensure effective prevention of these atrocities and uphold the rule of law and of international humanitarian law. The EU must demonstrate strong and committed support to the **International Criminal Court**, notably by strengthening and expanding its relationship with the UN.

**Economic, social, environmental and development dimension**: Members are convinced that the economic, social, environmental and development dimensions of the UN system must be substantially strengthened by ensuring that the UN bodies take a **more political approach** and improving cooperation between them, and by securing a more effective and transparent use of available resources.

The EU institutions and Member States should consider the possibility of strengthening their role in the Economic and Social Council by developing it into a **Sustainable Development Council**. Members welcomed the creation of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development, which has the role of providing political leadership, guidance and recommendations on development policy related to the three pillars (social, economic and environmental) of sustainable development.

Moreover, the EU and the UN should step up their joint efforts with a view to reaching an ambitious and legally binding agreement at the **UN Climate Change Conference in Paris 2015**.

**Humanitarian crisis**: Members took the view that the challenges presented by the humanitarian crisis linked to **refugees** are issues which need to be managed in a comprehensive fashion, in a spirit of solidarity within the EU and in close cooperation with the UN and its agencies.

**Doha Development round**: Members considered it necessary to bring about the conclusion of the WTO Doha Development round, and believed that the UN can use its unique position to ensure that those talks are a success for developing countries. The UN could work alongside the WTO, as well as providing advice and guidance for developing countries in terms of promoting a strategy for trade and investment, with the EU as a key player.

Lastly, Members are of the opinion that **Parliament must be in a position to address the global challenges** in the same deep and comprehensive way as the Commission, and to organise its work accordingly. They encouraged all committees of Parliament whose remit covers policies having an external and global dimension to forward their opinions on the relevant section of the report of the VP/HR to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which has responsibility for this report.