Implementation of the common foreign and security policy - annual report 2022

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by David McALLISTER (EPP, DE) on the implementation of the common foreign and security policy - annual report 2022.

Context

The report stressed that the return of full-scale war to the European continent, economic instability and the Russia's deliberate instrumentalisation of energy volatility are resulting in immediate geopolitical uncertainty for citizens of the European Union, candidate Member States and prospective candidate Member States, as well as for partners around the world. This overall situation highlights the need for stronger, more ambitious, credible, **strategic and unified EU action** and has galvanised the momentum towards achieving a **geopolitical redefinition of the CFSP** and EU external action in general.

Members pointed out that the EU's swift, unified and sustained response to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and its ability to learn from and address previous geostrategic mistakes is a testament to the effectiveness of the EU's foreign, security and defence policy guided by our shared values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. To be a credible actor, the EU and its Member States need to increase their military, political and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and strengthen their defence in countering Russian threats to European security.

Strategic autonomy

The report considers the need for a swifter implementation of the concept of strategic autonomy, solidarity and for a geopolitical awakening of the EU, based on concrete and credible actions on priority thematic and geographical issues. Enhanced cooperation with like-minded partners and with NATO is stressed. It states that European defence capabilities should be compatible and complementary with NATO, which remains the foremost security guarantor in Europe.

Members consider that Article 21(2) of the TEU should be amended to include the concept of 'strategic autonomy' on the list of CFSP objectives in order for the EU to become an effective diplomatic and security actor by implementing its own foreign and security policy based on strong action through **concrete measures, policies, budgets and commitments**.

The report also underlines the need for a strong communication campaign highlighting the benefits of the Strategic Compass for European security and European citizens.

Reshaping the CFSP

Highlighting that in order to achieve the geopolitical redefinition necessary to respond to the current challenges, the EU should shape its CFSP on the basis of the following four actions:

1. adapting the EU's institutional and decision-making arrangements and generating political will and unity in foreign and security policy by adopting **qualified majority voting** in order to allow early preventive action and rapid responses;

2. operationalising strategic autonomy and solidarity while strengthening its approach to multilateralism and alliances, reducing strategic dependencies on non-democratic regimes and enhancing the Union's resilience;

3. leading the reinforcement of multilateralism, strengthening and consolidating alliances and partnerships and building new strategic partnerships for a better world with like-minded democratic partners, while addressing the assertiveness of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes;

4. enhancing parliamentary diplomacy as a preventive and effective foreign policy tool.

Moreover, Members stress that the EU should remain committed to arms control and disarmament.

Strengthening the EU's institutional and decision-making arrangements in foreign and security policy

Members call for strategic sovereignty, security and resilience of EU and the Member States to be enhanced through more efficient decision-making in CFSP, which could be achieved by:

- switching as soon as possible to qualified majority voting for decisions in all areas of the CFSP, starting with priority areas within a year, such as the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (EU Magnitsky Act) and other foreign policy areas, by using the **passerelle clauses** provided for in the Treaties, except for the creation of military missions or operations with an executive mandate under the CSDP, for which unanimity must still be required;

- striving to achieve a genuine military and defence union that is interoperable and complementary to the NATO Alliance and that can act independently when needed;

- encouraging, pending the full application of qualified majority voting to decisions **without military or defence implications**, the use of constructive abstention in line with Article 31(1) of the TEU;

- providing sufficient funding, institutional capacity and technical support at EU and Member State level to prepare for and respond without delay to current, emerging and future challenges;

- introducing a role for Parliament for decisions on sending military and civilian security missions abroad.

Enhancing parliamentary diplomacy

Lastly, Members highlight Parliament's specific contribution to the EU's foreign and security policy through its parliamentary diplomacy assets. They call for closer parliamentary scrutiny on matters of strategic relevance in European foreign affairs. The Commission and the Member States are called on to enable and strengthen parliamentary oversight of EU external action, including by continuing regular consultations with the VP/HR and the Commission, and by involving Parliament in the proper further implementation and scrutiny of the European Peace Facility and the Strategic Compass.