Recommendation to the Council taking stock of the functioning of the EEAS and for a stronger EU in the world

2021/2065(INI) - 15/03/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 451 votes to 133, with 48 abstentions, a recommendation to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy taking stock of the functioning of the EEAS and for a stronger EU in the world.

Parliament noted that the role of the European External Action Service (EEAS) is at the heart of the implementation of the EU's foreign, security and defence policies and must show the way to a more comprehensive approach. The EU needs to keep moving forward towards its own and autonomous **European diplomacy** in all areas, including public and cultural, economic, climate, digital and cyber diplomacy, among others, led by an EU diplomatic service which is underpinned by a common diplomatic culture based on an EU perspective.

There is a need to **strengthen the Union's external action** and the EEAS by means of own, autonomous and permanent EU instruments and resources for foreign affairs, human rights protection and promotion, and security and defence in order for the Union to be a fully-fledged and credible global player, as well as for it to be able to better pursue and achieve its objectives and defend its values worldwide.

Recommendations

Members recommend that the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy should:

- take effective steps to improve the coordination and integration of EU foreign policy and the external dimension of EU internal policies, in particular migration, trade and energy;

- reinforce the strategic coordination structure composed of all relevant commissioners, the VP/HR and the Commission and EEAS services to ensure coherence, synergy, transparency and accountability of the EU's external action;

- ensure that the EEAS has overall responsibility and the leading institutional role for the conduct of all EU external relations, including on the external dimensions of internal policies;

- increase the leverage and the effectiveness of the EU's foreign policy by ensuring the full use of QMV for certain foreign policy areas, such as human rights and the protection of international law, and for the imposition of sanctions, and with the exception of decisions creating and deploying military missions or operations with an executive mandate under the CSDP, for which unanimity must still be required, as provided for in the Treaty;

- enable the EU and its Member States to speak with one voice in the UN and other multilateral forums;

- submit sound proposals on how to achieve and guarantee an own and permanent seat for the Union in addition to the seats of the Member States in every multilateral forum, including the UN Security Council to strengthen the EU's actorness, coherence and credibility in the world;

- establish a new sanctions regime dedicated to targeting individuals and entities responsible for large-scale corruption;

- integrate fully the ‘more for more’ principle into relations with third countries, whereby the EU will develop stronger partnerships with those that share the CFSP’s and CSDP’s principles and the fundamental values of the Union;

- adapt the structure of the EEAS in order to develop strategic priorities and enable it to lead on EU action, including the new enlargement policy, cyber and hybrid threats and disinformation, the development of defence instruments and other emerging challenges in the light of ongoing fundamental geopolitical developments such as - most notably - Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine.

Strengthening the toolbox

- end the duplication of Commission and EEAS staff, resources and responsibility in EU delegations; convert the EU delegations into genuine EU embassies, with one clear chain of command for their staff;

- endow EU delegations in third countries with the necessary resources and expertise;

- support the EU Crisis Response Centre (CRC) in coordinating the response of EU and Member State embassies and delegations and the services they offer to EU citizens in times of crisis;

- consider the establishment of a system for the flow of intelligence from Member States to the EEAS on foreign and security issues occurring outside the Union;

- consider updating the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy of 2016 taking stock of the EU Strategic Compass and the need to act in an integrated way on CSDP;

- improve the European Union’s preventive diplomacy as a proactive external policy tool to prevent disputes with and between third countries and to limit the consequences when conflicts break out;

- ensure that EU delegations follow up on Parliament’s urgency resolutions;

- develop an EU instrument that embodies the cultural face of the Union worldwide;

- strengthen significantly and urgently the Union's military planning and conduct capability (MPCC).

Increase legitimacy

- provide Parliament with the means to fully play its role in the external action of the Union, including its functions of political control;

- continue efforts to rejuvenate the EEAS staff and develop a permanent, specialised European diplomatic corps;

- provide the EEAS with a proper political mandate that gives it a real and substantial role in shaping and driving policy planning beyond its current primary focus on its Brussels-centred, consensus-seeking and management role;

- allow for full functional autonomy of the EEAS in terms of recruitment and careers within its structure, including for VP/HR office positions;

- fully support and develop the ‘Towards a European Diplomatic Academy’ pilot project, which has been extended by one year to integrate these functions within permanent organisational structures;

- increase Parliament’s access to documents, as a better formal exchange of information will improve cooperation and understanding between the institutions.