

Implementation of the common foreign and security policy – annual report 2024

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The European Parliament adopted, by 378 votes to 188, with 105 abstentions, the report on the implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy - Annual Report 2024.

Need for coherent and ambitious action by the Union

Members recalled that the world is experiencing rapid geopolitical shifts and that autocratic powers are actively challenging the rules-based international order and its multilateral institutions, international law, democratic institutions and societies, as well as our alliances. Geopolitical confrontation between democracies and authoritarian and dictatorial regimes is intensifying, conflicts are increasing, and the use of force is increasingly considered a standard tool to pursue political objectives.

The geopolitical context in which the European Union operates has accentuated the need for **more ambitious, credible, decisive, and unified action by the Union and for a fully-fledged European foreign policy** on the international scene. It stressed the need for Member States to demonstrate the necessary political will to rebuild their defence capabilities, while strengthening the Union's transatlantic ties and partnerships with like-minded countries.

Parliament encouraged all parties to resolve disputes through **dialogue**, with mutual respect for international law, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and reaffirmed its dedication to advancing global peace and stability by promoting diplomatic initiatives aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts and fostering international collaboration on key global challenges, such as climate change, human rights, and sustainable economic development.

CFSP objectives in 2025

Four strategic trends have been identified that define the overall orientation of the EU's common foreign and security policy.

(1) Addressing the global consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine

Parliament focused on addressing the global consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Parliament emphasised that the conflict, alongside Russia's revisionist behaviour, destabilises the Eastern Neighbourhood and Western Balkans, **threatening the European security architecture**.

Members believe that the EU and its Member States are now Ukraine's only strategic allies. They therefore called on the EU and its Member States to significantly increase and **accelerate military and economic support, humanitarian aid, and financial assistance** to place Ukraine in a strong position to deter any further Russian aggression following a possible ceasefire agreement. The resolution stressed the urgent need to provide Ukraine with enhanced air defence and surface-to-surface defence capabilities to defend its critical energy infrastructure and called on Member States to immediately lift restrictions on the use of Western weapons systems, such as the long-range Taurus missiles, delivered to Ukraine against legitimate military targets on Russian territory.

Parliament reiterated that any initiative, particularly diplomatic solutions, aimed at ending Russia's war of aggression and establishing a just and lasting peace must be based on the **conditions set by Ukraine**. In

this context, it expressed deep concern about the apparent shift in the US's stance on Russia's war of aggression, stressing that the US administration's current attempt to negotiate a ceasefire and peace agreement without involving European states is counterproductive as it empowers the belligerent Russian state.

Moderately optimistic about the proposed 30-day ceasefire agreement, Members expect Russia to accept and respect it by ceasing all attacks against Ukraine. They also expect Member States to maintain their sanctions against Russia for as long as necessary to ensure a secure and just lasting peace.

Deploing the '**no limits' partnership between Russia and China**, Parliament expressed concern about the surveillance and sabotage of critical maritime infrastructure, such as undersea communications cables and offshore energy production facilities, by Russia and China. He also called on the Union to exercise strict control over Russia's shadow fleet vessels.

(2) Resolving the conflict and supporting peace in the Middle East

Parliament affirmed Israel's right to defend itself in accordance with international law, while reiterating its obligation to protect civilians and that military operations must be proportionate and consistent with international humanitarian law. It expressed concern at the military action of the Israeli Defence Forces in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and Lebanon and called for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and the unconditional release of all hostages.

Members reiterated their unwavering support for a **negotiated two-state solution** and called on the VP /HR to support the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. They welcomed the prospect of a return of the Palestinian Authority to Gaza and affirmed that there can be no prospect of peace, security, stability, and prosperity for Gaza, nor of reconciliation between the Israeli and Palestinian populations, as long as Hamas and other terrorist groups play a role in the Gaza Strip.

Parliament **rejected Trump's proposal for Gaza**, believing that the scale of destruction and human suffering in Gaza requires comprehensive international action in which the United States, along with the European Union, the United Nations, Arab states, and other international partners, would complement each other's efforts to ensure that negotiations resume and are constructive.

Members strongly condemned the destabilising role played by the **Iranian regime** and its network of non-state actors in the region. They believe that hostilities must cease definitively as soon as possible so that a diplomatic solution can be found along the Blue Line. They demanded the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, the only possible way to defuse tensions and sustainably stabilise the Israeli-Lebanese border. Parliament welcomed the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, which had previously been supported by Russia and Iran, whose influence now appears weakened. It welcomed the new beginnings in relations between the EU and Syria but stressed the need to show no leniency towards European nationals who have fought for Islamist groups. It reiterated its unwavering support for Syria's territorial integrity.

(3) Incentivising cooperation with like-minded partners

Members reiterated their call for the Council to gradually switch to **qualified majority voting** for decisions in areas of the CFSP that do not have military or defence implications. In a world that is becoming more multipolar and less multilateral, they emphasised that **multilateral forums**, chief among them the UN and its agencies, should be considered the EU's format of cooperation of choice.

Parliament expressed concern at the growing membership of the **BRICS** group, which currently includes 45 % of the world's population, stressing that such exclusive cooperation gives Russia the means to circumvent measures designed to isolate it politically and allows China to further expand its influence.

They also deplored the speed with which the **new US administration** has overturned established partnerships and diplomatic tradition, as well as recent comments by US Vice President J.D. Vance, which cast doubt on the shared values underlying the transatlantic partnership. Parliament nevertheless believes that the **transatlantic relationship remains essential** to the security of partners on both sides of the Atlantic and deems it essential to continue dialogue with its US counterparts at the federal and state levels. Members called for an India-EU summit to keep bilateral relations a top priority and encouraged the Commission to take steps to prepare for negotiations on an investment agreement with Taiwan. Overall, Parliament stressed the importance of **building new alliances**, particularly with neighbouring countries and in the Global South, to foster genuine, balanced, and equitable partnerships and to conclude political agreements with third countries based on shared European values and fundamental rights.

(4) Foster EU action abroad

Members stressed the need for the EU to foster the visibility and effectiveness of its external action of the VP/HR and its development cooperation efforts. They regretted, nonetheless, that in some cases there is a lack of clarity in the external representation of the EU, hindering the EU's strategic communication abroad. They called for the EEAS - both its headquarters and EU delegations - to be strengthened through the provision of the appropriate financial and human resources so that the EU can be better prepared for current and emerging global challenges. They also reaffirmed that Parliament plays a full role in the CFSP and contributes to it in a specific way, stressing that parliamentary diplomacy has great potential to involve the main political actors and facilitate democratic governance.

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and parliament oversight

Parliament stressed the importance of parliamentary oversight over CFSP and CSDP decisions entailing expenditure, calling on the VP/HR to consult Parliament before proposing such decisions to ensure transparency and accountability. Members regretted the insufficient budget for civilian CSDP missions and called on the Council to increase CFSP funding under a separate heading for civilian CFSP and crisis management.

In the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the Commission is called on to propose resources for EU external action, including support for human rights, democracy, and development in third countries, as well as funding for digital and green diplomacy.