Progress in implementing the Common Foreign and Security Policy (Article 21 TEU)

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PURPOSE : to present the annual report from the Council on the main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP in 2000. CONTENT : in accordance with point 40, Section H, of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 6 May 1999 on budgetary discipline, the Council presents to the European Parliament a document comprising of the main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), including their financial implications for the Union's budget. This fourth report follows the same criteria as those used for the previous report, namely: 1) to present a description of the CFSP activities (common strategies, common positions, joint actions and decision concerning their implementation, declarations and policy dialogues and "démarches"); 2) to establish a supplement to the chapter relating to the external relations of the Union in the annual report on the progress of the European Union (see INI/2001/2022); 3) to present the main priorities of the Union concerning the external relations in the year 2000. This report suggests that in 2000, the first priority was to related to the conflict regulation and the stabilisation of the political situation in the Western Balkans. The High Representative for the CFSP, Mr Javier SOLANA, became the EU spokesperson in dealing with the democratic forces in Serbia. In Zagreb, in November 2000, the European Union Heads of State or government and the countries of the Western Balkans agreed to their potential accession to the Union, once the Stabilisation and Association Agreement had been completed. With regard to the EU/Russia relations, the year 2000 was marked by the beginning of a dialogue on the situation in Chechnya and the continuation of the priviledged partnership with this country. A new common strategy was also adopted with Ukraine. In Central and Eastern Europe, the pre-accession process was continued. Furthermore, a specific pre-accesion strategy was defined vis-à-vis Turkey, a new candidate for accession. Amongst the other priorities of the Union, is the Middle East peace process, halted due to the violence in September 2000. Many initiatives have been put in place in this context with mixed success. In the same way, and in consequence to the halting of Israeli-Palestinian spokespersons, the Barcelona process also came to standstill. Therefore, the Commission decided to put in place a new common strategy with regard to Mediterranean Region aiming to reinforce bilateral relations. In Asia, the Union's foreign policy consisted of opening for greater respect to democratic values in certain countries, for instance, Burma, Eastern Timor) and to conclude a trade agreement with China. The year 2001 was also marked by the first EU/India Summit, which provides for a new strategic partnership between the Parties. It was also in 2000 that there was the first Euro-African Summit which gave a new dimension to the cooperation relations between the Parties. In this context, the Union strongly supported the peace process started in the African Great Lakes and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With regard to defence, the Nice European Council decided toestablish within the Council military structures to enable the EU to fully assume its responsibilites for crisis management as a whole. Permanent arrangements were agreed for EU-NATO consultation and cooperation. More specifically, in relation to crisis management, the Helsinki Council set the priorities for the Member States with regard to military capacities (by 2003, Member States should be able to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least one year forces up to corps level (60 000 persons). Other civilian aspects of crisis management were set out at the European Council in Feira (police, reinforcing the rule of law and of civil administration and civil protection). In the field of disarmament, the Union continued its efforts to present its position in a coherent and unified manner in international conferences with regard to the reinforcement of global non-proliferation and disarmament. Other initiatives relate to the elimination anti-personnel mines and small arms and light weapons. With regard to the budget, as with the year previous, this was mainly the Western Balkans which concentrated most of the Community financial efforts with assistance to the Former Republc of Yugoslavia (around EUR 5 million) and Albania (around EUR 2 million). Other main financial priorities were the Peace Process in the Middle-East (EUR 10 million for the period 2000-2003, mainly for the Palestinian side), South-East Europe (appointment of special representative was EUR 2 million), Southern Caucasus (protection between Georgian and the Chechen Republic), the Great Lakes

Region (EUR 0.6 million). With regard to the perspectives for future action, the report clearly states that Western Balkans, the Middle-East and Russia will all dominate the agenda in 2001. Another main priority will be the development of the European Security and Defence Policy. A decision on this issue should be taken no later than the meeting in December 2001 in Laeken (Belgian presidency). Lastly, the report suggests that the new efforts shall be made to increase the contacts between the civil society and the international actors with a view to reinforcing Human Rights.