Annual report 2005 on CFSP

2006/2217(INI) - 23/05/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report by Elmar **BROK** (EPP-ED, DE) on the annual report from the Council on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 2005. The report was adopted by 526 votes in favour to 118 against with 14 abstentions. Parliament felt that the effectiveness and credibility of the common foreign policy has been recently undermined by the **veto** exercised by certain Member States on bilateral issues in spite of efforts made by other Member States to find a compromise. Member States should act even-handedly and should refrain from using the right of veto, limiting that procedure to highly sensitive issues of national concern.

Parliament was of the view that, without the **Constitutional Treaty**, which has been ratified by 18 countries, the EU cannot shape a foreign and security policy that can at least partially meet the most important challenges. There is wide public support in all Member States for a bigger role for the Union in the world, since Member States individually can no longer perform that role for citizens. Finalisation of the Constitutional Treaty is one of the main priorities for the present and coming EU Presidencies.

Parliament also considered it necessary that the **office of Minister for Foreign Affairs** be established. It is essential that he or she should be simultaneously a member of the Commission and chair the Foreign Affairs Council, so that the CFSP is given continuity and coherence and Europe can speak with one voice. Members also want an European External Action Service, and an EU Diplomatic Academy.

Parliament made a series of recommendations on improving the efficiency and coherence of CFSP, including procedural and organisational suggestions for Council and Commission. It pointed out that, without the introduction of qualified majority voting in CFSP matters, the **coherence, effectiveness and visibility of the external action of the Union** would be deeply undermined. Political dialogue with third countries needs to be intensified, not least where human rights are concerned. In order to address the current lack of coherence and to fill the present "capability-expectations gap", the Union should exploit all available tools in the field of external action, such as policies covering trade, aid, foreign policy and the ESDP, as well as the external dimension of policies on the environment, research, transport, agriculture, fisheries and home affairs.

With regard to **thematic choices**, Members insisted that priority should be given to targeting a limited number of areas which better connect with the **wishes and concerns of European citizens** and their expectations of the role to be played by the Union in international affairs. These include the consolidation of democracy, human security and the fight against terrorist organisations, migration management, intercultural dialogue, energy security, climate change, arms control and disarmament, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the EU's contribution to poverty reduction and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as social development. Much more should be done from an external action perspective to halt the spread of poverty in the world, to fight against stigmatisation and discrimination and to combat major diseases. The root causes of immigration must be addressed.

Parliament stressed the need to implement the international **nuclear non-proliferation system** and expressed deep concern regarding the announcement by Russian President Vladimir Putin of Russia's unwillingness to continue its participation in the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, saying that this is an inadequate response to the anti-missile system plans. It was concerned too about declarations made by President Putin in reaction to the United States' plans to deploy components of its anti-missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic. The US must redouble its efforts to improve

consultation regarding, and explanation of, its plans for a missile defence system. Parliament also expressed its concern regarding the first test of an anti-satellite weapon carried out by China in January 2007, seeing this as a sign of the escalation of weapons in space.

Parliament emphasised the important foreign policy dimension of **energy security issues**, rejecting any restriction of energy supplies as a political instrument. Every effort should be made to reduce energy dependence. It underlined the need for the Union's external action to be directed towards a common strategy and support for projects geared to the diversification of energy supplies.

China and India, as emerging powers, as well as Russia, must be involved in taking responsibility for the state of global governance and for solutions to global challenges. Parliament stressed the need for the effective implementation of human rights, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism clauses in agreements of all kinds with third countries, avoiding ad hoc modifications in order to ensure coherence and effectiveness.

On **priorities for 2007 in geographical terms**, Parliament recommended that steps be taken to maintain the enlargement of the EU as a key objective of the EU's political agenda in 2007, albeit one which must be consistent with the EU's capacity to integrate new Member States; to reinforce the European Neighbourhood Policy; to pursue efforts to contribute to stabilisation of the Western Balkans including preparations for EU accession; to enhance EU-Mediterranean cooperation; to develop a balanced, wide-ranging partnership with Russia, and to deepen relations with Central Asia. Parliament also called for more EU action in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Kosovo and in strengthening the transatlantic partnership, and relations with Latin America. Furthermore, the negotiation of the Partnership Agreement with China should be driven forward, subject to substantial progress in the field of democracy and human rights, and the strategic partnership with India should be deepened.

On the matter of **Parliamentary scrutiny of the CFSP**, Parliament stated that it expected that the Council's a posteriori approach of merely submitting a descriptive list of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) activities carried out in the previous year instead of consulting Parliament beforehand as provided for in Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union will henceforth be corrected by means of a constructive interpretation of Points 42 and 43 of the new Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management of 17 May 2006. The Council must observe Parliament's right to be consulted annually ex ante on forthcoming aspects and choices of the CFSP. Nothing in the existing Treaties suggests that the term "consultation" has any different meaning in the above-mentioned Article 21 from its usual meaning in EU law. Parliament also wants the authority to appoint, and dismiss, the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and the Directors of SitCen, the EU Satellite Centre (EUSC) and Eurojust. It gave a series of recommended actions on ways in which it could be properly involved in CFSP aspects and choices, as well as kept informed of events.

Parliament regretted that – given the already insufficient amount allocated to the CFSP for the period 2007-2013 – that the specific article within the CFSP budget chapter devoted to EU Special Representatives does not avoid the proliferation of envoys of that kind, who by definition should be nominated only in respect of special cases and should not weaken the role of the Commission's delegations on the ground. It also regretted that the 2006 Interinstitutional Agreement does not explicitly provide for the joint costs of military operations within the framework of the ESDP to be financed from the Community budget, thereby discontinuing the existing practice of having recourse to Member States' subsidiary budgets or start-up funds. Accordingly, Parliament felt it was regrettable that the 2006 Interinstitutional Agreement does not change the existing rules on ESDP operations, such as the principle that "costs lie where they fall" or any other ad hoc arrangements such as the so-called "ATHENA mechanism". Such arrangements perpetuate the financial burden on those Member States which make the biggest contribution on the ground, thus jeopardising future participation in ESDP operations and creating a situation which could easily be avoided by financing such operations from the EU's budget.