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2008 annual report on the CFSP

P7_TA(2010)0060

European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2010 on the annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 2008, presented to the European Parliament in application of Part II, Section G, paragraph 43 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 (2009/2057(INI))

(2010/C 349 E/12)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 2008, presented to the European Parliament in application of Part II, Section G, paragraph 43 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to the Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, in particular Title V of the Treaty on European Union as thus amended, entitled 'General Provisions on the Union's External Action and Specific Provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy',
 - having regard to the European Security Strategy (ESS) adopted by the European Council on 12 December 2003 and the Report on the Implementation of the ESS adopted on 11 December 2008,
 - having regard to the above-mentioned Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management,
 - having regard to its resolutions on the 2006 and 2007 CFSP annual reports, of 5 June 2008 ⁽²⁾ and 19 February 2009 ⁽³⁾ respectively,
 - having regard to its resolution of 22 October 2009 on the institutional aspects of setting up the European External Action Service ⁽⁴⁾,
 - having regard to Rule 119(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (A7-0023/2010),
- A. whereas the role of the European Union as a global player has increased over the last decades, and whereas a new approach and further financial means are needed if the EU is to act collectively and meet global challenges in a democratic, coherent, consistent and efficient manner,
- B. whereas the European Union, in its relations with the wider world, shall further develop its foreign policy objectives, uphold and promote its values and interests, contribute to the protection of its citizens and advance these values worldwide with the aim of contributing to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as the strict observance and development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter, whereas the promotion of human rights, in particular the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, shall be at the centre of the EU's external action and whereas the Charter of Fundamental Rights is now binding on the external activities of the EU,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 139, 14.6.2006, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0254.

⁽³⁾ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2009)0074.

⁽⁴⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2009)0057.

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- C. whereas the Treaty of Lisbon brings a new dimension to the external action of the Union as a whole, including the CFSP, which together with the legal personality of the EU and the relevant institutional innovations, notably the creation of the office of Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy ('the Vice-President/High Representative') and the setting-up of the European External Action Service (EEAS), could be a decisive factor in the coherence, consistency and effectiveness of the Union's external action and could significantly enhance its shaping power in the international arena,
- D. whereas further efforts are needed to improve the timeliness of the response of the EU to political crises and regional conflicts; whereas the present decision-making and funding mechanisms can hamper timely and comprehensive reactions and whereas ways must be found to further limit and overcome the unanimity rule,
- E. whereas it is essential to correctly identify, and act in accordance with, the common European interests in order to attain the objectives of the Union's external actions and in particular those of its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP); whereas it is essential to ensure that all policies decided and actions taken are also in accordance with international law, including the principles laid down in the UN Charter,
- F. whereas the promotion of peace, human rights and the rule of law worldwide are the central goals of the EU's external policies,
- G. whereas the Treaty of Lisbon mandates the Vice-President/High Representative to assist the Council and the Commission in ensuring consistency between the different areas of external action and between these and the Union's other policy areas,
- H. whereas as from the date of entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon the European Union exercises all rights and assumes all obligations of the European Community whilst continuing to exercise existing rights and assume obligations of the EU,
- I. whereas the new security challenges require a stronger emphasis to be placed on strengthening, combining and balancing different civilian and military instruments across the spectrum of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, crisis management and peace-building activities,
- J. whereas some 10 years after the launching of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), during which period some 23 missions have been deployed in crisis areas, there is a need to enhance military and civilian capabilities and consolidate structures so as to adequately reflect the role which the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) plays in supporting the CFSP and in delivering international security,

Principles of European external action

1. Calls on the Vice-President/High Representative and her services to develop – with a view to deepening the Union's collective strategic thinking – a coherent EU foreign policy strategy based on the objectives and principles established in Article 21 TEU; is of the opinion that such a strategy should clearly identify the common security interests of the EU and thereby serve as a reference framework for policy-making as well as for the formulation, financing, implementation and monitoring of the EU's external action; calls on the Vice-President/High Representative to fully associate the European Parliament's relevant bodies in such an endeavour; believes that the concepts of Human Security as defined by the 2007 Madrid Report of the Human Security Study Group, and Responsibility to Protect, as defined by the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, should become two of its guiding principles;

The Council's 2008 annual report on the CFSP

2. Welcomes the Council's ambition to take a more strategic, theme-driven and streamlined approach to CFSP issues when drawing up its 2008 annual report; also commends the introduction by the Council of a more transparent structure, with main chapters on past activities and, in particular, future prospects in the CFSP area; also notes the improvement in the report as regards the elaboration of the regional context of external actions;

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3. Stresses once again that the scope of the report should not be limited simply to a description of CFSP activities but should provide the opportunity to establish a dialogue with the European Parliament aimed at developing a more strategic approach to the CFSP; recommends that the annual CFSP report be turned into a yearly report discussing the implementation of the EU's foreign policy strategy, evaluating its effectiveness and outlining its future direction; recommends further that more references be made to the budgetary needs and financial impact of external actions in such reporting;

4. Believes in the added value of a more extensive and comprehensive approach in the context of the CFSP annual reports and specifically their chapters on regional groups and partners and on the interconnections between CFSP/CSDP missions and other instruments promoting the EU's role as a global player; is of the view that such a perspective would, among other things, afford a better overview of the total contribution from the EU budget in a given region;

5. Reiterates its position that, in order to enhance the democratic legitimacy of the CFSP, Parliament's competent bodies should be consulted on the launch of CSDP missions and that decisions should where appropriate take into account, and contain references to, the positions adopted by Parliament; considers that such consultation should include information about the rationale behind the chosen course of action and an explanation as to how the mission relates to relevant EU and international actions, what financial implications it entails and how it interacts with other EU instruments;

Implications of the Treaty of Lisbon

6. Welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, which provides the EU with tools for the further enhancement of its role and visibility on the international scene; stresses, in this respect, the fundamental role that each Member State, the Council and the new Vice-President/High Representative must play in translating the written provisions of the Treaty into actual facts and substantial action by strengthening the EU's relations with its strategic partners and consolidating its leadership in multilateral forums; underlines the importance of the Treaty provision according to which the competence of the Union in matters of the CFSP will now cover all areas of foreign policy and all questions relating to the Union's security, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy that might lead to a common defence;

7. Notes that the President of the European Council will 'at his level and in that capacity, ensure the external representation of the Union on issues concerning its common foreign and security policy'; warns, however, that this must be done without prejudicing the powers of the Vice-President/High Representative, and in full acknowledgment of the key role played by the European Commission, not only in establishing and maintaining the *acquis communautaire* in terms of external relations, but also in ensuring the external representation of the Union, with the exception of the CFSP;

8. Welcomes the role to be played by the Vice-President/High Representative in chairing the Foreign Affairs Council and the fact that her representative is to chair the Political and Security Committee (PSC); expects these new functions to consolidate inter-institutional contacts and foster a more stable dialogue between the institutions; invites the Vice-President/High Representative to build on the experience of the periodic appearances by the outgoing High Representative and External Relations Commissioners before Parliament in plenary and before its Committee on Foreign Affairs, and on the practice of informal meetings, in order to step up and develop regular, systematic and substantive consultations with Parliament and its competent bodies;

9. Is of the view that the merging of the inter-governmental and Community pillars and functions into one single post of the Vice-President/High Representative, who is subject to a collective vote of consent by the European Parliament, can increase the democratic legitimacy of CFSP activities provided a continuous strategic dialogue is established on an equal footing between Parliament, the Council and the Commission at all levels;

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10. Stresses that Member States should work in a spirit of mutual political solidarity for the achievement of an ever-increasing degree of convergence of actions in the field of the CFSP;

11. Reiterates that, in order to allow the EU to play an active role in the world, sufficient funds need to be allocated in the EU budget; regrets that the relevant budget continues to be underfunded and expresses its serious concern over the consequences of under-financing for the Union's ability to conduct a credible and proactive foreign policy; underlines the need to equip the Union with the necessary financial means for a consistent and adequate response to unforeseen global challenges and, in this regard, looks forward to being consulted on, and fully involved in, the procedures for granting rapid access to appropriations in the Union budget for urgent financing of CFSP initiatives; calls on the Vice-President/High Representative to develop at the same time an effective communication strategy to better inform EU citizens of the purposes and the merits of the CFSP and, in this regard, strongly reiterates the importance of the democratic legitimacy and scrutiny of the European Union's foreign and security policy;

12. Reiterates its concerns about the lack of transparency and information as regards the financing of the common costs of EU operations having military or defence implications, since the Athena mechanism clearly does not afford an overview of all the financial implications of missions conducted under the CFSP; welcomes, therefore, the setting-up of the start-up fund under Article 41(3) TEU and asks to be consulted on its management, in line with the EP's general prerogatives in relation to the CFSP and the CDSP as defined in Article 36 TEU; points out that increased participation by Parliament in defining, monitoring and following up the CFSP ensues from both the interconnection between the CFSP and the CDSP, as underlined in Article 42 TEU, and the enhanced parliamentary scrutiny at national and European level enshrined in Protocol No 1 thereto;

13. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President/High Representative to seize the opportunity offered by the setting-up of the EEAS to create a more coherent, consistent and effective foreign policy; expects in this regard that the basic values and objectives of the Union's foreign policy such as respect for and promotion of human rights, as enshrined in the now legally binding Charter of Fundamental Rights, and priorities of the Union's foreign policy such as crisis management and peace building, will be duly mirrored in the structure of the EEAS, including in the human resources; reiterates that the setting-up and operation of the EEAS must preserve the European Parliament's rights of democratic and budgetary scrutiny;

14. Notes that the Treaty of Lisbon has substantial implications for the CFSP by reorganising administrative responsibilities, and therefore calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that the economies of scale in terms of support structures lead to a reduction in administrative costs;

15. Stresses the need to establish greater clarity on the criteria for the appointment and evaluation of EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), bearing in mind also the need for sufficient representation of both genders; recalls that at present Parliament has no means of challenging an EUSR's individual mandate, since appropriations for the exercise of such a mandate are included in Article 19 03 06, which covers all EUSR mandates; calls, therefore, for increased parliamentary scrutiny of, and control over, EUSR appointments and mandates; considers that relevant EUSRs should gradually be phased out and their functions carried out by country-based EU Heads of Delegation while EUSRs with regional responsibilities must coordinate and provide political guidance to EU Heads of Delegation under the authority of the Vice-President/High Representative in the countries concerned in order to ensure coherent and consistent European external action; points out that double-hatting is, in this respect, the first – but not the only – step that needs to be taken in order to create economies of scale and make the CFSP more efficient; calls on the Vice-President/High Representative to take steps with a view to entrusting EUSRs with the task of coordinating and providing political guidance also with regard to CSDP missions within their remit;

16. Requests the Vice-President/High Representative to consult Parliament's relevant committee about appointments she makes to senior posts in the EEAS, including EUSRs; determines to invite certain EUSRs and Heads of Delegation to appear before the committee on their appointment;

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17. Notes that the Treaty of Lisbon includes new financial procedures for the CFSP, strengthens the dialogue between the Council and Parliament on the CFSP by introducing two annual debates to be held with the Vice-President/High Representative, and details the role and responsibilities of Parliament in relation to the CSDP; calls, therefore, for a review and extension of existing inter-institutional agreements, with the involvement of its Committee on Foreign Affairs, so as to ensure the smooth and efficient implementation of the budgetary, consultation and supervision procedures for the CFSP and the CSDP and to improve access to sensitive information; draws particular attention in this regard to the above-mentioned Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 and to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 20 November 2002 between the European Parliament and the Council concerning access by the European Parliament to sensitive information of the Council in the field of security and defence policy⁽¹⁾; expresses its determination to exercise its budgetary power and its democratic scrutiny with regard to the CFSP in connection with all institutional innovations, including the funding arrangements for the EEAS;

18. Notes that the Treaty of Lisbon extends the consent procedure to all agreements related to fields to which the ordinary legislative procedure applies and strengthens the right of Parliament to be duly informed by the Commission of the progress of the negotiation of international agreements as referred to in Article 218 of the TFEU; considers therefore that the negotiation of a new Inter-Institutional Agreement with Parliament should be explored so as to provide Parliament with a substantive definition of its involvement in every stage of the negotiations leading to the conclusion of an international agreement;

19. Urges the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to act by qualified majority vote whenever the new Treaty so provides;

20. Is of the view that Articles 42(2) and (7) TEU together with Article 10 of Protocol No 1 on the role of national parliaments in the European Union renders the residual functions of the Western European Union (WEU) obsolete; therefore calls on the EU Member States concerned to act according to Article XII of the WEU Treaty and to give one year's notice of their intention to denounce the Treaty; recalls that the right of parliamentary scrutiny over CFSP and CSDP activities lies with the European Parliament and the national parliaments of the EU Member States;

CFSP matters of a thematic nature

21. Continues to be concerned about the security of energy supply and repeated gas crises such as the Russian-Ukrainian crisis of January 2009, which highlighted the EU's increasing energy dependency on sources of supply and transit channels; also underlines the need to prevent the energy dependency of the EU on third countries weakening the independence of EU foreign policy; recalls the urgent need to address energy challenges by implementing a common European external energy policy; calls in this regard on the Vice-President/High Representative to pursue with determination Parliament's recommendations for the development of a coherent and coordinated policy, in particular by promoting EU cohesion in constructive dialogue with energy suppliers, especially with Russia and transit countries, by supporting EU energy priorities and defending the common interests of the Member States, by developing effective energy diplomacy and more efficient mechanisms for responding to crisis situations and, finally, by promoting the diversification of energy supplies, sustainable energy use and the development of renewable energy sources; stresses that only a common EU approach could prevent any future shortcomings in the oil and gas supplies of the Member States and could increase the energy security of the EU as a whole;

22. Welcomes the signing of the Nabucco project agreement; calls on the Commission and the Council to strive for the successful implementation of that agreement; emphasises the importance of guaranteeing EU energy security by promoting a southern corridor for the supply of crude oil to Europe, including via the Constanța-Trieste pan-European oil pipeline;

23. Believes that significant potential threats and conflicts arise from intensified competition over access to, and control of, natural and energy resources, and consequently that the EU should further develop mitigation, adaptation and energy conservation policies with a view to addressing the security risks posed by environmental degradation and climate change; stresses in this regard that the EU must strengthen its leadership in global climate governance and further develop a dialogue with other key actors such as the emerging powers (China, Brazil, Russia, India), the United States and developing countries, given that climate change has become a key element of international relations;

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 298, 30.11.2002, p. 1.

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24. Expresses its support for the Union continuing to contribute actively and effectively to the resolution of global issues, not least through a strengthening of the United Nations system and according special importance to consolidating the Human Rights Council and abolishing the death penalty;

25. Comments on the importance of conflict prevention and management, including post-crisis rehabilitation and reconstruction; underlines the need for the EU to further develop preventive strategies, to improve early warning and to enhance cooperation with regional organisations in accordance with the UN Charter;

26. Underlines that the external dimension is crucial for the successful achievement of a European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice; reiterates the importance of orderly migration management; with this in mind, welcomes the adoption of the Stockholm Programme by the European Council of December 2009; considers it essential to secure the cooperation of both the countries of origin and transit, and to encourage an attitude of solid cooperation by applying a policy of positive conditionality; points to the need to avert illegal immigration by promoting local development in the countries of origin and fighting criminal organisations that traffic in human beings; insists that the external dimension of the European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice must be fully taken into account in European foreign policy;

27. Underlines the need to strengthen capacities so as to provide for better monitoring of the Union's civilian and military missions and to enable lessons to be learned from the manner in which they are conducted, so as to improve the planning and management of future missions; in this respect, underlines also the need for a more strategic approach to CSDP missions; suggests that the regular Joint Consultation Meetings also aim to assess the successes and shortfalls of completed missions in order to help develop a forward-looking approach to future needs that encompasses all aspects (finances, implementation, administrative organisation);

28. Calls on the Vice-President/High Representative, the Council and the Member States to ensure an adequate balance between civilian and military planning capabilities in the Council Secretariat and to provide an appropriate number of staff in the fields of justice, civilian administration, customs and mediation so as to ensure that adequate and sufficient expertise can be provided for CSDP missions;

29. Calls in this respect for adequate staffing of the civilian component and urges the Member States to use the great opportunity provided by the EEAS to pool currently available resources in order to achieve a coherent, effective and efficient crisis management planning capability;

30. Calls on the Member States to redouble their efforts to find and deploy sufficient numbers of suitable, qualified and gender-balanced personnel to take part in CSDP civilian and military endeavours throughout the world in a coherent and well coordinated framework, including in specific high-risk areas, since the success of CSDP missions largely depends on the skills and knowledge of well-trained staff; calls, in this respect, for common training of the personnel of CSDP missions; fully supports the efforts already made in terms of developing guidelines and exchanging best practices with a view to improving common training for staff; is convinced that increased coherence and cohesion as regards staff on the ground will enhance the running of missions and also facilitate the secondment of EU nationals, which, from a purely budgetary perspective, is preferable to using international contracted staff;

31. Calls on the European Council and Commission to intensify the EU's engagement in multilateral negotiations to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons;

32. Reiterates the need for disarmament and strengthened international guarantees of non-proliferation; welcomes, in this regard, the Joint Statement of 4 December 2009 by which the President of the United States of America and the President of the Russian Federation committed themselves to continue to work together after the expiry of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), and looks forward to a new pact on strategic arms to be signed and enter into force as soon as possible; calls, at the same time, on the EU and its Member States to enhance their diplomatic efforts in order to achieve a successful revision of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May 2010;

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33. Stresses the importance of gender equality, human rights and good governance objectives being fully integrated in the planning and conduct of all CSDP missions and operations, including fact-finding missions, as gender awareness and sensitivity contribute to operational effectiveness and situational awareness; in this context, welcomes the appointment of a gender adviser to nearly all CSDP missions; regrets that there are no women among the 11 EUSRs; calls on the Vice-President/High Representative to systematically include gender equality and women's empowerment in the EU's political dialogue and policy discussions with partner countries;

34. Commends the important role played by human rights defenders worldwide; warmly welcomes the fact that the Foreign Affairs Council, at its meeting of 8 December 2009, expressed its commitment to supporting human rights defenders, through public meetings with them and by giving visibility to their activities;

35. Calls on the Council to include human rights and good governance aspects in the mandates of EUSRs and to appoint human rights and good governance advisers to positions on the staff of EUSRs;

Main priorities in the geographical areas

36. Recommends that the EU strengthen the political dialogue with third countries and regions, particularly with strategic partners with whom to coordinate positions in the international organisations and support and promote democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights; reiterates in this regard the important role that parliamentary diplomacy plays as a supplementary tool in the Union's relations with third countries and regions; is therefore of the view that the Vice-President/High Representative and her services including the EUSRs should engage with Parliament in devising common strategies towards partner countries and regions and should be available to assist Parliament orally and in writing with regard to specific issues and visits;

37. Calls on the Council, the Member States and the Vice-President/High Representative actively to seek peaceful solutions in international conflicts and to strengthen the EU's conflict prevention mechanisms;

International organisations

38. Highlights the United Nations as the main guarantor of international peace and security and the most comprehensive framework for multilateral cooperation; takes the view that the strengthening of global governance, international institutions and respect for international law is of paramount importance for effective multilateralism, and that it must therefore be an overriding strategic priority for the Union; considers that the EU institutions and the Member States should continue their efforts in deepening cooperation and coordination with strategic partners exerting global influence, in particular within the United Nations; in this light, stresses the urgency of addressing global issues of common concern for the EU and world stability, such as terrorism, organised crime, energy security, climate change, the achievement of the MDGs and the eradication of poverty, crisis management, conflict prevention and conflict resolution, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament, migration management and promotion of human rights and civil liberties;

39. Considers it essential that the relevant EU delegations at the UN's headquarters in New York and Geneva be adequately equipped with means and staff in order to be able credibly and effectively to deliver in practice the new institutional arrangements under the Treaty of Lisbon; notes with concern, therefore, that an approach of budget neutrality runs counter to this urgent need quickly and efficiently to establish the EU's presence at the UN during the initial phase of implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon;

40. Believes that the OSCE provides an important framework for restoring trust and enhancing cooperation between the countries of Europe, Central Asia and North America on a number of issues, including non-proliferation, disarmament, economic cooperation and protection and promotion of human rights and the rule of law; supports, therefore, the strengthening of the OSCE also in terms of opening a discussion on the idea of granting it a legal personality;

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41. Without prejudice to the international obligations of the EU under the UN Charter, takes the view that the EU and NATO should develop a more intense and effective partnership, taking into account the progressive development of the EU's foreign, security and defence policies while respecting the decision-making autonomy of the two organisations; to that end, recommends a review of the so-called Berlin-Plus arrangements and the development of a more strategic dialogue on shared strategic interests and contingency planning; urges the facilitation of broader practical cooperation on the ground at military or civilian level, in particular when both organisations operate in the same theatre of missions; deplores in this respect the continuing clash between Turkey and Cyprus which increasingly undermines the effectiveness and credibility of both the EU and NATO;

Transatlantic relations

42. Reiterates its commitment to the transatlantic partnership as an important element and one of the main pillars of the EU's external action; urges the Vice-President/High Representative to ensure that the EU acts as a coherent, active, equal and yet autonomous partner of the US in strengthening global security and stability, promoting peace and respect for human rights and the achievement of the MDGs, as well as adopting a united approach to global challenges such as nuclear proliferation, terrorism, climate change and energy security; is of the view that the Treaty of Lisbon opens up a propitious opportunity for improving and renewing the framework of EU-US relations; encourages the Vice-President/High Representative to work towards strengthening EU-US institutional mechanisms in line with Parliament's resolutions; underlines that the work of the Transatlantic Economic Council needs to be strengthened in pursuit of the goal of a genuine, integrated transatlantic market, and that such a market should provide the basis for a reinforced transatlantic partnership; strongly supports the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue in its broad effort to create effective legislator-to-legislator relationships between Parliament and the US Congress;

43. Calls on both partners, the EU and the US, to encourage China, India, Russia, Brazil and other emerging powers to share responsibility for the global order and for the prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts in compliance with international law; insists that, while the EU and US should offer full support to the economic and social development of these countries on a basis of fair cooperation, these countries should also accept their global responsibilities especially for the fight against climate change and for sustainable development;

Western Balkans

44. Stresses that the countries of the Western Balkans are part of the enlargement process; considers that stability in the Western Balkans based on the rule of law should remain a top priority in the Union's external action, and therefore attaches the utmost importance to the efforts to bring the countries of that region closer to the EU, with the shared goal of European integration, *inter alia* by promoting reforms and enhancing regional cooperation and inter-ethnic reconciliation in order to meet the Copenhagen criteria and prepare for accession; recommends that an international conference on the future of the Western Balkans should be convened, bringing together the countries in the region and the relevant regional and global actors, in order to identify and address the current challenges facing the region;

45. Notes with satisfaction the increasingly peaceful and stable situation in Kosovo and the efforts to build a multi-ethnic society, as demonstrated by the calm and orderly local elections held on 15 November 2009; is aware that not all Member States have recognised the independence of Kosovo; welcomes the fact that the EULEX rule of law mission in Kosovo, which is the largest civilian CSDP mission launched so far by the EU, is working at full operational capacity on the basis of the United Nations' status-neutral approach; underlines the mission's importance in promoting inter-ethnic reconciliation, the rule of law, public order and security throughout the whole of Kosovo, by assisting the Kosovo institutions, judicial authorities and law enforcement agencies in their progress towards sustainability and accountability; in this respect, welcomes the decision to open a new EU office in the north; however, notes the need to increase the number of prosecutors working in EULEX, and calls on the Member States to provide additional personnel;

46. Encourages the Council to continue its efforts, with the support of the international community, to pursue a dialogue with political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in order to help that country and its peoples to remain on the path to European integration; takes note of the joint diplomatic efforts by the EU Presidency, the European Commission and the US administration, and recommends further negotiations taking into account previous arrangements concluded between politicians in BiH; recalls the need to involve parliamentarians and civil society more closely in sustaining a viable country;

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Eastern Partnership, Black Sea cooperation

47. Continues to support the development of the Eastern Partnership with the Union's European neighbours, integrating them economically into the internal market and intensifying political, economic and cultural cooperation; underlines the importance of providing this partnership with credible projects and of tangible medium- and long-term incentives for reform, which would strengthen the commitment of societies in the partner countries to the process of modernisation and integration with the EU; in particular, points out the need – while maintaining security for all EU citizens – to progressively remove all obstacles to the free movement of persons (including, eventually, visa-free travel) and to enhance cooperation in all aspects of security, especially energy security; reiterates its view that the partnership needs to be provided with adequate financial resources; emphasises the need to ensure the Partnership's complementarity with regional initiatives, in particular the Black Sea Synergy;

48. Reaffirms the importance for the EU of more effective regional cooperation in the Eastern Neighbourhood, in which spirit the EU will support the implementation of result-oriented projects under both the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy, in full complementarity;

49. Calls on the Vice-President/High Representative to step up efforts to implement projects under the Black Sea Synergy; also urges the Vice-President/High Representative to develop new ideas for an effective Black Sea Cooperation Strategy;

50. Welcomes the pro-European stance of the new government of the Republic of Moldova and expresses its hope of an acceleration of the country's internal reforms, in such a way as to achieve economic integration, political association and institutional approximation between the Republic of Moldova and the EU; encourages the Vice-President/High Representative to identify multilateral solutions for unblocking the situation in Transnistria;

51. Takes note of the conduct and outcome of the presidential elections in Ukraine; calls on all parties to contribute to the necessary political, economic and social stability in Ukraine by strengthening reform efforts; encourages the country to achieve greater interoperability with the European Union, thus consolidating its European perspective;

Russia

52. Calls on the Vice-President/High Representative to ensure that the EU's approach towards Russia, including in the negotiations on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, is coherent and driven by a commitment to the values of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, including international law; underlines at the same time the need for a reinvigorated partnership with Russia, based on mutual respect and reciprocity, on the issues of the fight against terrorism, energy security and supply, climate change, disarmament, conflict prevention and nuclear non-proliferation as well as with regard to Iran, Afghanistan and the Middle East, pursuing the goal of strengthening global security and stability; takes the view that cooperation on such issues should form the basis for the new EU-Russia agreement, and therefore looks forward to speedy progress in the current negotiations on a new comprehensive agreement that is expected to substantially enhance EU-Russia relations; urges the Vice-President/High Representative to coordinate actions, facilitate consultation and improve communication between the Member States with regard to bilateral issues with the Russian Federation of common concern; stresses the need for Member States to coordinate their relations with the Russian Federation on the basis of the Union's general interests and in such a way as to reflect and promote those interests adequately and consistently;

South Caucasus

53. Urges the Council to insist on full implementation of the ceasefire agreement between the Russian Federation and Georgia and calls on the EU to uphold the principle of Georgia's territorial integrity and respect for minorities; welcomes the renewal of the mandate of the EU Monitoring Mission and urges the Council to ensure that EU monitors are granted full access to all areas affected by the conflict including the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and, to that end, to use the financial instruments of the EU to assist the populations in the whole conflict area; calls on the EU, with reference to the report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, to draw the lessons of the past in order to develop effective conflict-prevention mechanisms including the promotion of people-to-people contacts;

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54. Urges the Vice-President/High Representative to intensify the EU's efforts to work towards effective conflict prevention and peaceful settlement under international law of the conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria and, above all, that between Russia and Georgia and its breakaway regions South Ossetia and Abkhazia by giving fresh impetus to the Geneva talks; stresses the dangerous potential for a spillover of frozen conflicts in the region; in this context, recommends the setting-up of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the South Caucasus, embracing the countries concerned and the relevant regional and global actors, with a view to developing a Stability Pact for the South Caucasus; welcomes the recent rapprochement between the governments of Turkey and Armenia, and urges ratification of the accords by their respective parliaments;

The Middle East

55. Stresses the need for the Peace Process negotiations to be conducted within a limited time-frame and in a climate of mutual trust; considers that they should aim at the creation of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, living side by side with the State of Israel in peace and security within internationally recognised frontiers in compliance with all relevant United Nations resolutions;

56. Calls on the EU, in line with the Council Conclusions of 12 December 2009, to assume a stronger political role in the ongoing international efforts to re-launch the Peace Process, commensurate with its financial engagement in supporting a Palestinian economic recovery and addressing the dramatic humanitarian crisis in Gaza; calls on the Vice-President/High Representative to consider all means to promote a lasting peace in the region;

57. Welcomes the Council's decision to extend the mandate of the EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS) until December 2010; believes that more robust support for the development of the rule of law and policing capacities is required and calls for intensified efforts in this regard; takes note of the Council's decision to extend the mandate of the EU Border Assistance Mission in Rafah (EUBAM Rafah) and its determination and readiness to reactivate the mission; believes that this determination should result in concrete initiatives to restore freedom of movement in the Palestinian Territories and to reactivate the Agreement on Access and Movement, negotiated in 2005, to which the parties subscribed;

The Union for the Mediterranean

58. Considers it important to intensify political dialogue among the members of the Union for the Mediterranean at all levels in order to overcome tensions that have delayed the setting-up of the Barcelona-based Secretariat and the promotion of concrete projects of mutual social, economic and ecological interest; hopes that the Union for the Mediterranean may contribute positively to the resolution of the conflicts in the Middle East, rapprochement between Turkey and Cyprus, and the democratic development of the Arab states;

59. Believes that the Union for the Mediterranean could contribute to the easing of tensions in the Middle East by promoting concrete cooperation projects for the whole region; at the same time, stresses that trust-building measures between Palestinians and Israelis in order to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East are of the utmost importance to facilitate the appropriate functioning of this new institution;

60. Underlines that, from an EU perspective, the co-presidency must be compatible with the external representation of the EU in accordance with the Treaty of Lisbon; recalls that the Treaty of Lisbon provides an opportunity for the EU to ensure consistency, coherence and continuity in its representation in the new institutions of the Union for the Mediterranean;

Asia

61. Notes that post-election Afghanistan is now entering a decisive and critical period, with the formation of a new government in Kabul providing the opportunity to frame a new agenda and a new contract with the Afghan people;

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62. Welcomes the Council's Action Plan for strengthened EU action in Afghanistan and Pakistan, adopted at the October 2009 General Affairs and External Relations Council, and its declaration of its renewed readiness to assist in meeting the challenges of the region, in cooperation with the countries concerned and the international partners, but stresses that the Plan will remain just that unless there is a clear commitment from the EU Member States to contribute to its implementation; calls on the Council, the Commission and the Presidency to make a concerted effort to implement the Plan without delay; urges the Council to make more progress towards full deployment of staff in EUPOL in order to establish sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements capable of enhancing the security environment;

63. Recognises that Pakistan continues to face very serious challenges and endorses the EU's firm support for a strong, secular and civilian government of Pakistan; stresses Pakistan's key role in the region and reiterates that a stable, democratic and prosperous Pakistan is also central to addressing global issues such as counter-terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, counter-narcotics and human rights, and strongly encourages it to adopt a comprehensive strategy to fight terrorism and address its root causes;

64. Endorses the EU's commitment to supporting democracy in a unified, federal Iraq; stresses its support for the EU's strong and continuing commitment to the development of the rule of law in Iraq, and welcomes the extension of the mandate of EUJUST LEX for one year and its pilot activities on Iraqi territory; looks forward to the further work planned in this context, as promised by the Council; calls for increased institutional interaction, particularly on economic issues, with the authorities of the Kurdish Regional Government; calls on the Commission to accelerate the activation of its own premises in Baghdad;

65. Expresses its grave concern over the political developments in Iran and the reported massive electoral fraud during the presidential elections of June 2009, which has ignited the biggest protest movement in the 30-year history of the Islamic Republic, with demonstrations and violent repression by the security forces still ongoing; is very concerned not only about the arrests, torture and murder of political opponents but also about the continuous stalemate in the negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme, and calls on the Iranian Government to enter into serious negotiations on the nuclear issue; regrets that the visit by the Iran delegation of the European Parliament in January 2010 has been cancelled by the Iranian authorities and expresses its solidarity with those Iranians who, risking their lives, continue to publicly demand respect for human rights and greater democratic freedoms in Iran; condemns Iran's efforts to block freedom of information by jamming foreign broadcasts and the Internet; calls on the Council and Commission to consider sanctions against individual members of the administration and the security services responsible for the widespread human rights violations and to devise measures in support of those participants in the 'Green movement' who suffer persecution and/or exile in their plight;

66. Takes note of the fact that EU-China economic relations have experienced steady growth and that people-to-people contacts have grown in scope and scale; at the same time, remains gravely concerned about the lack of willingness on the part of the Chinese authorities to tackle numerous human rights violations and to ensure that the people enjoy basic rights and freedoms;

67. Expresses the expectation that a strategic relationship between the EU and China will be developed, and states its desire to explore ways of strengthening the relationship on issues of mutual interest going beyond the economic and trade sectors;

68. Welcomes the efforts undertaken by both Taipei and Beijing to improve cross-strait relations, which help to reinforce stability and security in East Asia, and encourages both sides to further enhance dialogue, practical cooperation and confidence-building; commends the Council's declaration of 8 May 2009, which reiterates its support for Taiwan's participation in the WHO; strongly supports Taiwan's participation as an observer in relevant international organisations and activities, such as ICAO and UNFCCC, where Taiwan's participation is important to the EU and global interests;

69. Reaffirms its strong support for strengthening the strategic relationship between the EU and India, and for exploring further ways to upgrade the relationship in areas of mutual interest in the economic, political, security and trade sectors;

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70. Recognises ASEAN's growing role as a force for regional stability and prosperity; believes that the Union and ASEAN, which both have a commitment to regional integration, have great potential for cooperation; notes that measures to step up economic and trade relations between the Union and ASEAN are needed in order to help to consolidate overall relations between the two regions and encourage further progress regarding political cooperation and security, the advancement of democracy and human rights and further progress in the field of energy and the environment, in the socio-cultural field and in the area of cooperation and development;

Africa

71. Notes with satisfaction that EUNAVFOR Atalanta continues to make a successful contribution to maritime security off the coast of Somalia by protecting vessels chartered by the World Food Programme delivering aid to Somalia, vessels supplying critical shipments to the African Union peace support operation in Somalia and other vulnerable vessels; welcomes the Council's decision to extend the mandate of the operation to 12 December 2010; expresses its support for launching a crisis management operation to contribute to the training of the National Security Forces of the Somali Transitional Federal Government; stresses the need to integrate trained security forces into state and command structures so that, once they return, they will not turn against the government they are supposed to be protecting;

Latin America

72. Recalls once again the proposal made in its resolution of 15 November 2001 on a global partnership and a common strategy for relations between the EU and Latin America ⁽¹⁾ – subsequently repeated in its resolutions of 27 April 2006 ⁽²⁾ and 24 April 2008 ⁽³⁾ respectively adopted with a view to the Vienna and Lima EU-LAC Summits – to draw up a Euro-Latin American Charter for Peace and Security which, on the basis of the UN Charter, would allow for joint political, strategic and security-related actions and initiatives; calls on the Council and the Commission to take active steps to realise this ambitious goal and to support this proposal at the next EU-LAC Summit, which will take place in May 2010 in Madrid;

73. Considers that negotiations on the Association Agreement with the Central American countries as well as progress towards renewed negotiations on the Association Agreement with MERCOSUR are matters of priority; notes that the negotiations on the Multilateral Agreement with the Andean Community countries have been concluded; will endeavour to carry out with due accuracy the parliamentary ratification procedure on these agreements in order to ensure that they have a positive impact on all aspects of mutual concern;

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74. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary General of NATO, the President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the Chairman-in-office of the OSCE, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the President of the WEU Parliamentary Assembly, the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 140 E, 13.6.2002, p. 569.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 296 E, 6.12.2006, p. 123.

⁽³⁾ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0177.