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Functioning of the EEAS and a stronger EU in the world

European Parliament recommendation of 15 March 2023 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 (2021/2065(INI))

(C/2023/410)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 21(3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which stipulates that the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy must assist the Council and the Commission in ensuring consistency between the different areas of the Union's external action,
- having regard to Article 21(1) TEU, which stipulates that the Union's action on the international scene must be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world,
- having regard to Article 26(2) TEU, which provides that the Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy must ensure the unity, consistency and effectiveness of action by the Union,
- having regard to Article 35 TEU, which states that the diplomatic and consular missions of the Member States and the Union delegations must contribute to the implementation of the right of citizens of the Union to protection in the territory of third countries,
- having regard to Article 36 TEU, which states that the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy must regularly consult Parliament on the main aspects and the basic choices of the common foreign and security policy and the common security and defence policy, inform it of how those policies evolve and ensure that the views of Parliament are duly taken into consideration,
- having regard to Article 42 TEU, which gives the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy powers to make proposals in the field of the common security and defence policy, including the initiation of missions, using both national and Union resources,
- having regard to Article 167(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which states that the Union must encourage cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, support and supplement their action to raise awareness of and disseminate the culture and history of the European peoples, conserve and safeguard cultural heritage of European significance and foster non-commercial cultural exchanges and artistic and literary creation, including in the audio-visuals sector,
- having regard to Article 167(3) TFEU, which states that the Union and the Member States must foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of Europe,
- having regard to the Council Decision of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service⁽¹⁾ ('EEAS Decision'), and in particular Articles 9 and 13(3) thereof, which laid down that the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy had to carry out, by mid-2013, a review of the organisation and functioning of the EEAS, covering, *inter alia*, the implementation of Articles 6(6) and 6(8) of the EEAS Decision with regard to geographical balance, accompanied, if relevant, by a legislative proposal amending the Decision,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on women, peace and security of 14 November 2022,
- having regard to the Declaration on Political Accountability of 20 July 2010 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy⁽²⁾ (VP/HR),

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 201, 3.8.2010, p. 30.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 53, 3.8.2010, p. 1.

- having regard to its recommendation to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, to the Council and to the Commission of 13 June 2013 on the 2013 review of the organisation and the functioning of the EEAS⁽³⁾,
- having regard to the opening address given by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission at the 2022 Annual Conference of EU Ambassadors,
- having regard to having regard to its recommendation of 23 November 2022 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-president of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning the new EU strategy for enlargement⁽⁴⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 January 2023 on the implementation of the common foreign and security policy — annual report 2022⁽⁵⁾ and to its resolution of 18 January 2023 on the implementation of the common security and defence policy — annual report 2022⁽⁶⁾,
- having regard to the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) 2019-2024 of 5 July 2019,
- having regard to the EU Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, adopted on 21 March 2022,
- having regard to Rule 118 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0045/2023),

A. whereas the Treaties clarify that the role of the European External Action Service (EEAS) is to assist the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission and work in cooperation with the diplomatic services of the Member States⁽⁷⁾; whereas the EEAS must be consulted by the Commission on matters related to the external action of the EU in the exercise of its functions;

B. whereas in order to achieve the strategic objective of developing its global leadership role, the EU must continue to take the lead in strengthening multilateral partnerships on global priorities, in particular its partnership with the UN and its comprehensive and open cooperation with NATO, other like-minded countries and international organisations, including by seeking improved, even more comprehensive, coherent and open cooperation with NATO, and in protecting and promoting freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights globally;

C. whereas the time is ripe for reforming EU decision-making, thus making full and more effective use of the EU's hard and soft power instruments, including by introducing without further delay qualified majority voting (QMV) for decision-making in certain EU foreign policy areas such as sanctions, human rights and the protection of international law, with the exception of decisions creating military missions or operations with an executive mandate under the common security and defence policy (CSDP) for which unanimity must still be required, while also ensuring that the EU's external and internal actions are coherently interlinked;

D. whereas 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;

E. whereas it is of utmost importance to strengthen the EU's international cultural relations and cultural diplomacy as bridges for promoting mutual understanding and relations worldwide, as these have become a useful diplomatic tool for the EU and a fundamental part of its soft power;

F. whereas global geopolitical and humanitarian crises demonstrate the need for the EU to obtain credible and first-hand information on existing and possible external threats to the EU, so that it is able to react rapidly and effectively, as well as to better protect its interests abroad;

⁽³⁾ OJ C 65, 19.2.2016, p. 168.

⁽⁴⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0406.

⁽⁵⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0009.

⁽⁶⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0010.

⁽⁷⁾ Article 27(1) TEU.

G. whereas it is necessary 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;

H. whereas the role of the 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 including directorates-general of the Commission such as the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) among others; whereas in his speech at the EU Ambassadors Annual Conference 2022 the VP/HR identified shortcomings in the EU diplomatic service and EU external policies as a whole and demanded that they be effectively addressed in order to strengthen its capacity, efficiency and policy effectiveness; whereas the EEAS is facing an expectations-capabilities gap and lacks decision-making powers; whereas the EEAS should be reformed in order to strengthen the EU's role as a more proactive and resilient actor within the international order;

I. whereas, in accordance with Article 9 of the EEAS Decision, the High Representative must ensure overall political coordination and the unity, consistency and effectiveness of the Union's external action, while the EEAS must contribute to the programming and management cycle for the EU's external financing instruments, including on country allocations and national and regional indicative programmes;

J. whereas the unprovoked, unjustified and illegal military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine that began on 24 February 2022 is a blatant violation of international law, the UN Charter and the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, and seriously undermines European and global security and stability; whereas this war of aggression against Ukraine has fundamentally changed the security landscape in Europe, including by increasing instability in the EU's Neighbourhood; whereas this new reality underlines the urgent need to prioritise the effectiveness of the EU's foreign and security policy by increasing its ability to act to protect our values and interests and to promote the principles enshrined in Article 21 TEU; whereas the UN General has adopted several resolutions condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine; whereas fighting impunity among the high-ranking officials in Russia and other actors who have contributed to the war of aggression in Ukraine is vital;

K. whereas the changes in the geopolitical context over recent years, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian aggression in Ukraine, have significantly increased demands on the EU to mobilise partner countries and build regional and global alliances around EU strategic priorities and, at the same time, have highlighted the poor understanding of the EU's perspective in partner countries around the world, as well as the limits of the EU's political influence;

L. whereas the EU, its common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and CSDP are increasingly targeted by disinformation campaigns, requiring a more robust strategic communication policy from the EEAS;

M. whereas Parliament's determination and resolve to protect and defend the Union and the values and principles for which it stands, including the principles of territorial integrity, national sovereignty and the rules-based international order, must be matched by adequate decision-making and institutional structures for external and interinstitutional dialogue and cooperation and by political will;

N. whereas the management of EU external action should be reformed in order to achieve a common EU diplomatic culture, overcome the lack of clarity and increase Member States' trust by using the pragmatic space created by the recent crises; whereas Article 24(3) TEU is crucial for the effectiveness of EU external policy as it obliges the Member States to support the Union's external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity and to back the Union's action in this area; whereas these reforms should allow the EU to adapt to the current geopolitical context, clarify the division of labour between the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, the President of the European Council, the President of the Commission and the other commissioners responsible for external relations, reduce the persistent inter-service rivalries within the Commission, and define the boundaries and competences of the EEAS, the Commission, the Council and the structures of the Member States in a way which adequately reflects the specific role granted to the High Representative in the EU's external action and which avoids duplication in the EU's external action; whereas there is potential for improvement in the cooperative relationship of the VP/HR and their service with the President of the European Council and their office, which might help increase Member States' trust in the role played by the VP/HR, the EEAS and the President of the European Council;

O. whereas the understanding of how societies are shaped and influenced by religions and other forms of belief is instrumental to effectively taking account of religious freedom in the EU's external policies; whereas the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief are an important tool for the EEAS in this regard; whereas EU delegations' knowledge and use of the Guidelines could be improved, especially to take into account country-specific circumstances; whereas a formal evaluation of the Guidelines by the Council Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) is long overdue;

P. whereas the role and capacity of the EEAS in defining the strategic orientation and contributing to the implementation of EU external financial instruments should be strengthened;

Q. whereas the size and staff profiles of EU delegations must reflect the EU's overall strategic interests, as well as EU's specific interests in any given partner country;

1. Recommends that the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

- (a) 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; ensure that development cooperation, trade policy and security and defence policy are coherent and consistent with the overall goals of the EU's CFSP and the EU's CSDP, as enshrined in Article 21 TEU and the EU's Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises, as well as the values and principles on which the Union was founded;
- (b) 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, including of its external financing instruments, other relevant policies and programmes and policy coherence for development;
- (c) ascertain the VP/HR's leading role as a bridge-builder between the CFSP and EU external relations with the aim of ensuring the highest level of coordination and coherence in EU external action, including in the VP/HR's close cooperation with the College of Commissioners in order to coordinate the external dimension of the EU internal policies and reinforce coordination of the external action of Member States;
- (d) ensure that all Union external action and policies contribute to the Treaty-based obligation to consolidate and support democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law;
- (e) 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, and that the High Representative has pre-eminence in case of differences within the Commissioners' Group on a Stronger Europe in the World;
- (f) update the EEAS Decision with a view to increasing the leverage of the EEAS, strengthening it, sharpening its tools and increasing its legitimacy; stresses that the abovementioned updating of the EEAS Decision should aim to reinforce its autonomy from an EU perspective, as well as to strengthen the EEAS's structure and increase its resources;
- (g) 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; keep in mind that even under QMV, the aim should be to reach the broadest possible consensus and if possible unanimity; explore other options that could be implemented in the meantime such as introducing an 'obligation of result' requiring Member States to continue discussing a specific issue until a decision is taken;
- (h) enable the EU and its Member States to speak with one voice in the UN and other multilateral forums; reiterates that Parliament takes the view that in order to uphold its objectives and interests the EU should seek to arrive at common positions on issues before the Security Council through coordination within the EU Council and among EU institutions; improve the functioning and the political impact of the EU's representation in international organisations, including by upgrading their institutional anchoring, in particular within UN organs and special agencies;

- (i) 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 in order to strengthen the EU's actorness, coherence and credibility in the world;
- (j) work together with like-minded partners to address the dominance of non-democratic countries in some of the most important bodies in international organisations, including the UN and its agencies; reinforce the diplomatic outreach towards all the states that abstained or did not participate in the vote of the UN General Assembly resolutions of 2 March 2023 and 12 October 2022 in order to explain the seriousness of the Russian aggression and the need for a unanimous response from the international community;
- (k) acknowledge the distinct role and value of parliamentary diplomacy in complementing and reinforcing the visibility and impact of EU external action; ensure that Parliament is effectively incorporated throughout EU external policies and action as an integral player of 'Team Europe';
- (l) consider and initiate reforms with a view to making the CSDP decision-making process more flexible and efficient, either by availing of untapped potential within the Treaties or by proposing — where relevant — changes to the Treaties to be decided upon in a Convention following up on the Conference on the Future of Europe;
- (m) demonstrate flexibility and creativity in order to avoid statements or other forms of action in the field of EU external action being obstructed by one or a small group of Member States;
- (n) sharpen the tools by developing own, autonomous and permanent EU instruments in its external action and aligning all external action with the Treaties, which state that the EU must achieve an ever-increasing degree of convergence of Member States' actions, which requires the EEAS to be given a clearer role and to proactively assert leadership in proposing policy development so that policies conducted, defined and implemented on the basis of mutual political solidarity among the Member States can be formulated;
- (o) make more active use of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime; establish a new sanctions regime dedicated to targeting individuals and entities responsible for large-scale corruption;
- (p) increase legitimacy of the EU's external and security policy by working more closely with Member States to foster their active and unreserved support for the policy, as well as loyal cooperation and mutual solidarity in line with the principles enshrined in Article 24 TEU;
- (q) fully support EU delegations' engagement and active involvement on human rights protection and promotion in third countries; ensure that Member States and their embassies are also fully engaged and prioritise human rights protection and promotion, which should not be conducted only by EU delegations in general;

Increasing leverage

- (r) 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; conversely, apply the 'less for less' principle in relation to third countries which display a manifest disregard for human rights and international law, and adapt the level and intensity of EU engagement accordingly, in particular in terms of development cooperation, trade benefits and access to EU programmes; ensure the full alignment of candidate countries on CFSP policy and EU sanctions and make sure that EU sanctions cannot be circumvented;
- (s) take into account, when establishing financial allocations in the programming of Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation instrument (NDICI)-Global Europe and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III), partner countries' track record in implementing international agreements and commitments, including the 2030 Agenda, international human rights conventions and the Paris Agreement, as well as their respect for any contractual relations with the Union, and to work towards developing stronger partnerships and alliances with countries that share the EU's fundamental values and principles and contribute to rules-based multilateralism;
- (t) 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; allocate resources according to these priorities, while avoiding operating in silos; strengthen the efforts to fight against foreign interference in democratic processes in EU partner countries, including through the spread of manipulative disinformation and expand the resources and expertise in the EEAS and EU delegations on climate diplomacy;

- (u) ensure that the structure and staffing of the EEAS adequately reflects the continued need to build and maintain geographical expertise, including at headquarters, and strong bilateral relations with countries all over the world, as this is the corner stone for fostering effective regional and multilateral alliances and partnerships and turning the EU into an effective global actor; take measures to ensure EEAS actions are appropriately informed and underpinned by both geographical and thematic expertise; ensure that the geographical departments at headquarters are optimally staffed in order to provide quality and timely expertise for tailor-made thematic actions across the globe;
- (v) ensure the EEAS effectively asserts its leadership in the strategic steps for the multiannual programming of external action instruments, including the setting of country and regional allocations and the drafting of their future mid-term review, and that for this purpose the EEAS has the strategic vision, expertise, staff and resources to lead;
- (w) improve the EEAS and EU delegations' operational flexibility and coordination to react to emerging issues and challenges more swiftly and effectively; establish a rapid alert system for the EEAS and Parliament to be duly informed of situations on the ground;
- (x) ensure that the EEAS is able to select and recruit its permanent EU diplomatic staff; develop a system for career development for EU diplomats and officials in the EEAS in order to ensure balance in EEAS management posts;
- (y) assess the challenges created by the temporary secondment to the EEAS of Member State diplomats who later return to their national diplomatic services;
- (z) improve the internal coordination between the geographical and horizontal services of the EEAS;
- (aa) ensure that the financial resources available, staff expertise and recruitment policy, including the stricter qualification requirements for the most important positions, match the level of ambition and support the operative flexibilities needed in order to allow the EEAS to react in real time to emerging geopolitical challenges; guarantee full compliance with Article 9 of the EEAS Decision which stipulates that the VP/HR must ensure the unity, consistency and effectiveness of the EU external action, in particular through external assistance instruments; ensure that the EEAS has adequate human resources to guarantee immediate operational responses in priority situations;
- (ab) revise Article 9 of the EEAS Decision to remove obsolete references and take into account the instruments applicable in the 2021-2027 period, in particular NDICI-Global Europe;
- (ac) strengthen the visibility of EU action and assistance in all multilateral forums and on the ground, for instance through the 'Team Europe' programme that addressed the devastating effects of the COVID-19 crisis in partner countries and regions, particularly in Africa;
- (ad) increase the EU's visibility and disseminate understanding of EU interests, positions and actions; urgently equip the EEAS and, in particular, EU delegations with the tools to increase public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy activities and to develop their strategic communication capabilities, which will enable them to communicate more effectively with both decision-makers and the general public in third countries, and in particular to counter disinformation and propaganda; take into account the increasing need to fight espionage and malicious foreign influence, which are increasingly used to undermine the democratic order in the Union and in countries in the Union's vicinity; step up the participation of EU delegations in social media, TV and debates, including in local languages, in order to engage in the battle of narratives so as to pre-empt disinformation campaigns; clarify the roles of delegations and headquarters in achieving this goal; build capacity to ensure the safety of EU Delegation staff, including their family members, when they are mentioned in propaganda or subjected to harassment and intimidation in the country of posting; improve the flow of information and coordination between EEAS headquarters and EU delegations, as well as between delegations on a regional level;

- (ae) strengthen cooperation with the Council of Europe, especially with on the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, which, in addition to its cultural and tourism importance for EU Member States, is also an institutional instrument for enhancing cultural relations with third countries and preserving their shared cultural heritage;

Sharpening the tools and strengthening the toolbox

- (af) end the duplication 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, including Commission officials, led by the EU ambassador for the country and under the single responsibility of the EEAS working in close coordination with the Member States' diplomatic representations; strengthen coordination, cooperation and joint political work with EU Special Representatives, CSDP missions or European Investment Bank offices, which should be matched by increased coordination at headquarters and unified instructions to the field; strengthen the authority of heads of delegation over delegation staff, independently of their origin, in order to enable them to redistribute tasks according to EU priorities; ensure delegations have and can use sectoral expertise in the policy areas relevant for the bilateral relations with the respective partner country in their political work; work towards pooling EU institutions' resources and ensure a unified EU presence in each country, gathering together under the same roof the different EU actors present; encourage more joint work and initiatives at country level to increase EU's political influence and visibility in partner countries;
- (ag) strengthen the political, press and information sections of EU Delegation across the world, ensuring they have the sufficient and suitable staff, expertise and financial resources to provide timely and good quality political analysis and reporting to headquarters, engage meaningfully with local actors, build strong alliances, including at regional and multilateral level, and increase understanding of the EU, its visibility and political profile;
- (ah) endow EU delegations in third countries with the necessary resources and expertise to ensure development effectiveness by engaging in equal dialogue with partner countries, including civil society, identifying the specific development priorities of each country and providing direct support accordingly through the implementation of development cooperation;
- (ai) establish the consular function of EU embassies in third countries and strengthen and ensure cooperation and coordination between EU Member State embassies and EU delegations in third countries, in particular in countries where Member States have no consular representation; provide delegations with sufficient means to be able to more effectively assist EU citizens, including in times of crisis, *inter alia* those facing criminal proceedings and those in prison or on death row;
- (aj) ensure that EU delegations provide effective continuation to the work undertaken by EU Election Observation Missions, including follow-up to their recommendations and monitoring local developments relevant to their work during the periods between missions;
- (ak) 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;
- (al) ensure that the EEAS CRC is properly resourced, including financial and human resources, in order to enable it to effectively and efficiently deliver on its objectives, particularly given that the services provided are time-sensitive and require fast responses;
- (am) 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; improve the security protocols of the services working on intelligence and/or with sensitive information;
- (an) maximise the cooperation and coordination with the rotating presidency and Member States' ministers of foreign affairs, including by entrusting them with specific tasks and missions on behalf of the Union in order to ensure appropriate EU political engagement, visibility and unity;

- (ao) adapt the scope and mandate of the relevant Council preparatory bodies dealing with foreign policy matters to the tasks of the High Representative and structure of the EEAS; create such a body in particular for the conduct of protocol-related practice; create a dedicated support structure within the EEAS to cover all horizontal issues linked to EU Special Representatives, including the Representative on Human Rights, the EU Special Envoy for the Promotion of Freedom or Religion or Belief, the EU Special Envoy for Arctic Matters and the EU Special Envoy for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and the implementation of their mandate; integrate fully EU Special Representatives and Envoys as EU Ambassadors within the EEAS structure and place them under the single authority of the High Representative;
- (ap) consider repositioning the role of the soon to be appointed EU Special Envoy for the Promotion of Freedom of Religion or Belief under the authority of the EEAS, or, if this is not feasible, provide for an exceptionally close working relationship between the Special Envoy and the EEAS;
- (aq) adequately strengthen the EEAS sanctions enforcement unit by providing the necessary means and staff, given the growing importance of sanctions in the new geopolitical context;
- (ar) invite the EEAS to 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; adopt a work programme with political priorities at the beginning of each mandate, which outlines, in particular, the plans to integrate EU foreign policy and the external dimension of EU internal policies; task the EEAS to carry out a regular strategic review of the document;
- (as) increase the effectiveness of Human Rights Dialogue meetings by ensuring the active participation of civil society, by raising and agreeing on next steps to address prevailing human rights violations, and by conducting a comprehensive assessment of progress on previous commitments;
- (at) 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;
- (au) ensure that EU delegations follow up on Parliament's urgency resolutions, call on the authorities to address the problems highlighted in the resolutions and provide support to civil society and other actors whose rights have been violated; strengthen the capacity of human rights focal points in EU delegations for this purpose;
- (av) enhance EEAS activities on cultural heritage protection and interreligious dialogue through the work of its delegations and in coordination with Member State diplomatic missions and national cultural institutes;
- (aw) develop an EU instrument that embodies the cultural face of the Union worldwide through cultural diplomacy action and international cultural relations based on a framework of cultural cooperation and co-creation, actively involving civil society and cultural sectors in third countries; take account of the fact that this instrument could aim to promote the EU worldwide, provide EU assistance on capacity building, as well as financial, to cultural, creative and innovative sectors of third countries' civil society; ensure that this instrument includes the promotion of intercultural dialogue, mobility of artists and cultural professionals between the EU and third countries and the fight against disinformation; ensure that this toolbox includes close cooperation with the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC), as well as like-minded partners and international organisations such as UNESCO, drawing on their experience;
- (ax) adapt the organisation of the EEAS and the corresponding Commission services to new strategic needs arising from the new geopolitical context without further delay, with special attention to the Arctic, and *inter alia* with regard to the EU Global Gateway strategy, climate and digital diplomacy, Latin America, Central Asia and the Indo-Pacific; allow for flexible mandates so that it is able to promptly respond to existing and new, emerging threats;

- (ay) fully implement the mandate of the High Representative in his capacity of Vice-President of the Commission in order to ensure consistency of the EU's external action and the task of the EEAS to support the High Representative in this role; to this end, reinforce the coordinating role of the EEAS in order to ensure consistency of the EU's external action, including with regard to the Commission's organisational structures, in order to reduce institutional complexity and duplication, increase efficiency and coherence of EU external policy; change the name of the position of VP/HR to Commissioner for Foreign Affairs;
- (az) significantly and urgently strengthen the Union's Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), which should be the preferred command and control structure, including also for executive military operations and in particular for operations of the future rapid deployment capability; reach the MPCC's full operational capability immediately, including a considerable staff increase of up to 250 personnel as well as an upgrade of infrastructure and equipment, in line with the Council conclusions of 19 November 2018, which set 2020 as a deadline for this;
- (ba) ensure that 'Team Europe' is more than a slogan and works on the ground; improve cooperation and coordination between EU delegations and EU CSDP missions in a given third country; consider Parliament missions abroad as fully part of the EU external policy, which must therefore enjoy the full support of the EU delegations abroad;
- (bb) dedicate appropriate resources to sectoral diplomacy areas with important external dimensions, particularly environmental protection and the fight against climate change, gender and equality, digital, youth, culture, science and education, and also economic and monetary governance, democracy and the rule of law;

Increasing legitimacy

- (bc) revise the 2010 Declaration on Political Accountability and thereby provide Parliament with the means to fully play its role in the external action of the Union, including its functions of political control as provided for in Articles 14(1) and 36 TEU;
- (bd) continue efforts to rejuvenate the EEAS staff and develop a permanent, specialised European diplomatic corps from the ground up, through specialised and targeted open competitions focused on recruiting young graduates with appropriate talent, skills and potential;
- (be) 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;
- (bf) promote common training and other concrete measures for the consolidation of a common EU diplomatic culture and higher level of expertise among all EEAS staff who have differing diplomatic, cultural and institutional backgrounds, which should include training on gender equality, women's empowerment and the Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Relations 2020–2025 (GAP III), on WPS, sexual exploitation and abuse, including sexual harassment, at headquarters and EU delegations in order to counter unconscious bias and enhance gender equality, diversity and inclusion; encourage closer cooperation with diplomatic services and national diplomats of EU Member States and the practice of joint training and exchanges of experience and good practice as part of their continuous professional development and to further contribute to a unified image of the EU in external relations;
- (bg) improve the training for staff of the EU delegations on the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief, especially with regard to increasing the focus on understanding specific religious aspects of the country concerned, including also on its structural components such as governance structures, the justice and legal system and the nexus between state and religion or belief;
- (bh) allow for full functional autonomy of the EEAS in terms of recruitment and careers within its structure, including for VP/HR office positions; take steps to ensure that secondment by Member States to the EEAS is an attractive career step;

- (bi) strengthen and enforce the rules on post-public employment of EEAS and EU delegation staff and exercise strict scrutiny to avoid conflict of interest and revolving doors; adopt and implement without any further delay its self-standing implementation provisions on outside activities and assignments, which create a *sui generis* legal basis for heads of delegations to better protect the image and reputation of the EU as a whole; nurture a culture of integrity within the EEAS and EU delegations by fostering staff knowledge and understanding of ethics rules; ensure that such rules also apply to current and former mandate-holders at the helm of positions in EU external affairs;
- (bj) ensure that the appointment of EU special representatives, EU envoys and EU ambassadors can only be confirmed after a positive assessment by Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs;
- (bk) fully support and develop the 'Towards a European Diplomatic Academy' pilot project, which has been extended by one year in order to integrate these functions within permanent organisational structures; ensure the transparency of the recruitment criteria for participants in this programme and that sufficient resources are allocated to this project in order to ensure effective and timely implementation, including also for the work to establish a permanent structure for the European Diplomatic Academy; ensure the establishment of a permanent structure for the European Diplomatic Academy, which should focus on different target groups as future participants; take account of the fact that even if in its initial phase the Academy could focus on the professional specialisation of national diplomats, a future selection system for the selection, recruitment and training of Europeans who are not Member State diplomats and have completed higher education should not be ruled out; determine ways for European Diplomatic Academy graduates to join the EEAS and for them to have the possibility of becoming permanent EEAS staff;
- (bl) ensure that graduates of the Academy acquire common skills and competences to promote and effectively defend the EU's principles and interests in the world through instruction on all issues, including public and cultural, economic, climate, digital and cyber diplomacy, among others, underpinned by a common diplomatic culture and a real *esprit de corps*;
- (bm) provide the VP/HR with the necessary space and support to implement EU external policy in an effective and timely manner in order for this EU policy to be more than just a sum of its parts and for the person holding that office to be the single voice of EU external policy around the globe backed by the weight of the EU institutions and the Member States;
- (bn) increase Parliament's access to documents, as a better formal exchange of information will improve cooperation and understanding between the institutions; update 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 (8); accept Parliament's active involvement in the EU's foreign policy through its specific instruments, the importance and unique nature of Parliament's democratisation programmes, such as the 'Jean Monnet Dialogue' which aims to foster and strengthen the work of parliaments; encourage all EU institutions to participate and work together on activities that aim to counteract global backsliding on democracy, including through election observation, mediation and dialogue activities, conflict prevention, the Sakharov Prize award and network, and parliamentary diplomacy; promote the strengthening of the framework of interinstitutional relations between Parliament and the EEAS, including its delegations, through a framework agreement, which could enhance parliamentary diplomacy and strengthen the EU's toolbox for external action;
- (bo) take serious and sustainable steps to improve gender balance within the EEAS, particularly in senior management and political positions; ensure gender-responsive and gender-balanced leadership that increases the number and percentage of women in senior and middle management positions in EEAS services through gender-responsive recruitment procedures that actively aim to reduce gender bias in recruitment processes and apply gender-based preferential selection when job candidates are equally competent;
- (bp) update the EEAS Gender and Equal Opportunities Strategy 2018-2023 by including concrete, measurable and binding political commitments on the presence of women in management positions in line with the targets and objectives of GAP III and by including diversity targets, especially with regard for race, ability and ethnic background;

(8) OJ C 298, 30.11.2002, p. 1.

(bq) take serious and sustainable steps to improve the geographical balance within the EEAS staff at all levels, particularly in senior management posts and heads of EU delegations; take measures to ensure greater geographical diversity of staff throughout departments and EU delegations and prevent the overrepresentation of some Member States;

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2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.
