



MALTA EU 2017
PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION

Draft Conclusions

Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the
Common Foreign and Security Policy and
the Common Security and Defence Policy

26 - 28 April 2017
MALTA

The Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Having regard to the decision of the Conference of Speakers of European Union Parliaments taken in April 2012 in Warsaw regarding the establishment and mandate of this Conference;

Having regard to Title II of Protocol I (and articles 9 and 10) of the Treaty of Lisbon regarding the promotion of effective and regular interparliamentary cooperation within the Union;

Aware of the new powers and instruments foreseen by the Treaty of Lisbon for the European Union (EU) institutions in the area of foreign, security and defence policy; being aware that the new instruments create better opportunities for the Union to wield an international influence proportionate to its political and economic weight;

Conscious of the multi-layered decision-making process in the areas of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP); aware that effective implementation of these policies must involve numerous policy actors at both the EU and national levels; conscious of the responsibility to engage in parliamentary scrutiny at the respective levels and advance interparliamentary cooperation in the areas of CFSP and CSDP;

Aware that the evolution of the international scenario has strengthened the role of Parliaments as central actors of global decision making, with specific reference to conflicts and crises;

Underscoring that the European External Action Service (EEAS), individual Member States and the European Union Special Representative for human rights should use every available political and diplomatic opportunity to uphold the respect of human rights as a priority objective of external relations, in accordance with the 2015-2019 Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy of 20 July 2015 and in keeping with the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law, the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Priorities and Strategies of the EU in the area of CFSP and CSDP

1. Sixty years after the signature of the Treaty of Rome, the Inter-Parliamentary Conference reaffirms that the European Union is one of the greatest achievements in European history and that it has brought peace, stability and prosperity to its citizens and that these need to be defended and strengthened for the benefit of future generations of Europeans; recalls that European citizens see an effective common foreign and security policy as a priority area of action for the EU and that this is one of the areas where European cooperation could deliver most added value; welcomes in this context the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, which sets out proposals to implement the EU Global Strategy (EUGS) in the area of security and defence and calls on all actors at EU and national level to support an early and full implementation of this Plan;
2. Emphasises that the EU must strengthen its security and defence capabilities, as it can only use its full potential as a global power if it combines its unrivalled soft power with an adequate level of hard power while respecting the will of certain member states to remain neutral; highlights that building resilience should be one of the main goals of the CFSP, which requires a comprehensive approach combining traditional approaches to foreign and security policy with the use of a wide range of diplomatic, security, defence, economic, communication, cyber, trade, development and humanitarian instruments, as well as increasing energy security independence; takes the view that the CFSP should be more assertive and values-based.

State of Play of the European Neighbourhood Policy

3. Believes that it is time to define a more realistic strategy for the EU's relations with Russia, based on a non-compromising upholding of international norms and a credible deterrence. This strategy would also include dialogue in areas of common interest; underlines at the same time the importance of cooperating with and supporting Russian civil society; fully supports the EU's imposition of restrictive measures against individuals and entities in Russia in response to the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula and destabilisation of Ukraine; underlines its commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and Georgia; emphasises the invalidity of elections held in the occupied territories of Crimea;

4. Is of the opinion that the EU should step up its cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries in order to strengthen their democratic institutions, resilience and independence; calls on the EU to play a more active and effective role as regards conflict resolution and peace-building in particular as regards Nagorno-Karabakh; supports the reform agendas in these countries in areas such as the rule of law, the economy, public administration, the fight against corruption and protection of minorities.

European Response to the Instability and Threats in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East

5. Emphasises that ensuring peace and stability on our continent, in our neighbourhood and in Africa must now be at the heart of Europe's action; recognises that sustainable development is the condition for security, stability, social justice and democracy; takes the view that it is necessary to address the root causes leading to instability and forced and irregular migration, namely: poverty, the lack of economic opportunities, armed conflicts, bad governance, climate change, and human rights abuses;
6. Recognises that the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean have been the epicentre of new conflicts as a result of political, demographic, economic change, geographical and climatic challenges in the region; underlines the need to urgently address the root causes fuelling terrorism and radicalisation, which equally affect West Africa, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and Europe at an unprecedented level; urges the EU to undertake concerted diplomatic efforts to convince partners in the region of the need for a common and legally based strategy towards these global challenges;
7. Notes that the deeper regional economic cooperation between the EU's southern neighbouring countries could lead to increased trade among them and subsequently more potential for stability and prosperity, and therefore calls on the establishment of such sub-regional initiatives.

EU's Migration Policy in 2017 and beyond

8. Recalls the 2015 Valletta Action Plan and recognises that the sharp increase in flows of refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants into Europe in recent years entails undue suffering, abuse and exploitation particularly for vulnerable people and the unacceptable loss of life in the desert and sea, and places the most affected countries under severe pressure; recognising the serious humanitarian consequences and security challenges, the first priority in this context should be to save lives and do everything possible to rescue and protect migrants whose lives are at risk;
9. Calls for the establishment of a genuine, human rights-based common European migration policy based on the principle of solidarity with the securing of the EU's external borders and adequate legal channels for safe and orderly migration, as a sustainable long-term policy to promote growth and cohesion within the EU, in order to set a clear framework for EU relations with third countries; emphasises that the link between migration and development policies should be strengthened, without development aid being made conditional on cooperation in migration matters such as border management or readmission agreements; underlines the need to develop a new approach towards Africa, based on universal values and principles, providing better opportunities for trade, investment, access to energy and economic growth and supporting African countries in building democratic, transparent and effective institutions and measures to mitigate the impact of climate change;
10. Acknowledges that further efforts should be made to advance legal migration and mobility possibilities including at bilateral level, by fostering well-managed mobility between and within the continents as well as encouraging policies that promote regular channels for migration; welcomes the Malta Declaration which focuses on measures to stem the flow of irregular migrants from Libya; emphasizes the need to help reduce the pressure on Libya's land border by enhancing Libya's border management capacity and by working with neighbouring countries; welcomes the intention of the Maltese Presidency to present a concrete plan for implementation to the Council at the earliest opportunity, to take work forward and to ensure close monitoring of results.

Fighting Propaganda and Information Warfare

11. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen their capacity to counter the misinformation and propaganda campaigns reaching people in the EU and its neighbours; urges the Council, the Commission and the Member States to make EU values and external action more visible; recognises that information and cyber warfare is a deliberate attempt at state and non-state level to destabilise and discredit political, economic, and social structures; believes that the EU should engage with its partners and step up its assistance for capacity-building in the fields of information warfare, cybersecurity and the fight against cybercrime and cyber terrorism.

European Defence Action Plan

12. Welcomes the publication of the European Defence Action Plan (EDAP); is convinced that the effective implementation of the plan requires strong support and political commitment from the Member States and the EU institutions; is convinced that using EU funds to increase defence cooperation is a clear expression of the EU's solidarity and willingness to stand together on defence; recalls that the European Defence Action Plan should be a strategic tool to foster cooperation in defence at European level; notes the contribution that the EDAP will make to strengthening the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base; urges the Commission to present ambitious proposals to establish the capability window of the fund in the first half of 2017.