

Annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the common foreign and security policy

European Parliament resolution of 24 October 2013 on the Annual Report from the Council to the European Parliament on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (2013/2081(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Annual Report from the Council to the European Parliament on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (14605/1/2012),
- having regard to Article 36 of the Treaty on European Union,
- having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement (IIA) of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management¹, in particular Part II, Section G, paragraph 43 thereof,
- having regard to its resolutions of 12 September 2012², 11 May 2011³ and 10 March 2010⁴ on the 2011, 2010 and 2009 annual reports on the Common Foreign and Security Policy, respectively,
- having regard to the position it adopted on 8 July 2010⁵ on the European External Action Service (EEAS) and to its recommendation of 13 June 2013 to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, to the Council and to the Commission on the 2013 review of the organisation and the functioning of the EEAS⁶,
- having regard to the declaration by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on political accountability⁷,
- having regard to the statement given by the High Representative in the plenary of the European Parliament on 8 July 2010 on the basic organisation of the EEAS central administration⁸,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 24 July 2013 entitled ‘Towards a more competitive and efficient defence and security sector’ (COM(2013)0542),
- having regard to the ongoing negotiations between Parliament and the Council on the

¹ OJ C 139, 14.6.2006, p. 1.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0334.

³ OJ C 377 E, 7.12.2012, p. 35.

⁴ OJ C 349 E, 22.12.2010, p. 51.

⁵ OJ C 351 E, 2.12.2011, p. 454.

⁶ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0278.

⁷ OJ C 351 E, 2.12.2011, p. 470.

⁸ OJ C 351 E, 2.12.2011, p. 472.

Union's new external financing instruments for the multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020,

- having regard to the conclusions of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy held in Vilnius from 4 to 6 September 2013,
- having regard to Rules 48 and 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 (A7-0330/2013),

A. whereas scrutiny of EU foreign policy, exercised by the European Parliament and national parliaments at their respective levels, is essential if European external action is to be understood and supported by EU citizens; whereas parliamentary scrutiny enhances the legitimacy of this action;

A WORLD IN FLUX: BALANCING INTERESTS AND VALUES IN A NEW EU FOREIGN POLICY

1. Considers that the first quarter of the twenty-first century is characterised by a period of prolonged structural change that is transforming the global order; stresses that this demands a fresh approach to shaping a new multi-polar world order that is inclusive and underpinned by the rule of law and a pluralist democratic model as well as universal values, including human rights; notes that many obstacles lie ahead, not least in engaging with emerging powers in reforming the multilateral system, re-balancing the fragile regional distribution of power and addressing multiple threats and challenges from nations, non-state actors, fragile states and regional instability;
2. Stresses that the world financial crisis and the growing assertiveness of new emerging economies pose major political, economic, social, cultural and environmental challenges, including internal problems, for all parties and takes the view that addressing such challenges requires collective and united EU action and the forging of alliances in order to promote and uphold peace, security, social progress, prosperity, cultural diversity democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights; stresses that all EU policies and actions should be in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations;
3. Is of the opinion that the EU must defend its citizens' interests in the world in a determined, unified manner, while always basing its policies on the promotion of the fundamental values on which the Union is founded (democracy, the rule of law and human rights, social justice and the fight against poverty) and on respect for other countries;
4. Underlines the need for EU foreign policy to be flexible in responding to emerging threats and challenges in areas such as health, energy, climate change and access to water, all of which may have an impact upon our political priorities and our economies as well as on international development;
5. Stresses that the EU needs to establish a new and credible foreign policy in response to the current challenges in the world; believes that in order to preserve and promote its values, image and interests and its position on the global stage, the EU needs not only to be

coherent and consistent in its external action, but, first and foremost, to clearly define and implement its strategic objectives, making full use of the opportunities provided by the Lisbon Treaty; considers that both the EU as a whole and the Member States have an interest in developing a common vision which goes beyond the perceptions and historical experience of individual Member States; demands that the instrument of enhanced cooperation be used to secure greater capacity to act, and to overcome the inappropriate use of the veto within the Council;

6. States that only by acting jointly or in unity do we have the strength to pursue our interests and defend our values in this world, and that the Member States must therefore – more than in the past – demonstrate their preparedness and political will for collective, fast and effective action; affirms that the Member States must fulfil their contractual duty of loyalty towards the CFSP in both action and spirit, which is enshrined in the Treaty of Lisbon¹;
7. Stresses that the effectiveness of the EU's external action also depends on the full support of its citizens and on the legitimacy it acquires by being anchored in the EU's fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, and therefore calls for close, regular and timely consultation of the European Parliament in setting clear priorities and objectives for EU foreign policy;
8. Believes that the development of European media is desirable in order to promote solidarity, bring the various national perceptions closer together and raise awareness on the CFSP;

BUILDING A NEW, COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE EU'S FOREIGN POLICY

9. Urges the Member States to play a constructive role in the Union's foreign and security policy by promoting strategic policy coordination at the Union level, in particular through effective cooperation between their capitals and Brussels concerning the positions they adopt in multilateral fora, notably at the United Nations and within NATO; stresses the need, during a period characterised by economic constraints, to improve the Union's effectiveness as a cohesive global actor; notes in particular that the Member States have an important role to play in the development and effective implementation of the CSDP, not only by making available civilian and military capabilities, but also by ensuring the common financing of CSDP operations and strengthening the European industrial and technological base, and expects this role to be reinforced following the discussion on the future of European defence at the December 2013 European Council;
10. Considers, in this regard, it to be of the utmost importance to enhance cooperation, step up coordination and develop synergies with programmes and projects of EU Member States in third countries in order to improve the effectiveness of EU external action and cope with current budgetary restraints;

¹ 'The Member States shall support the Union's external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity and shall comply with the Union's action in this area. [...] They shall refrain from any action which is contrary to the interests of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations. The Council and the High Representative shall ensure compliance with these principles.' (Article 24(3) of the Treaty on European Union).

11. Welcomes the VP/HR's initiative to develop the concept of a 'Comprehensive Approach' in order to achieve the full potential of the Lisbon Treaty and ensure the overall effectiveness and coherence of the CFSP and the CSDP; calls for the VP/HR to engage in a debate with Parliament on the best way to ensure that this comprehensive approach is consistently implemented, and in particular that our foreign policy priorities are further developed in a manner consistent with our interests and values and are supported by the necessary financial means and by effective and flexible instruments; stresses that military structures and capabilities, including a permanent planning structure and military Operational Headquarters, form an integral part of such an approach, and considers that strengthening the coordination between Heads of Missions, EU Special Representatives and Heads of Delegations will also contribute to delivering consistent and coherent EU foreign and security policies on the ground; calls on the Member States to support the VP/HR in order to achieve the full potential of the comprehensive approach;
12. Regrets the fact that the EU has not yet developed a clear strategy for its relations with the rest of the world and that its activities are defined more by reaction than by action; demands, therefore, a fundamental strategic debate, which should include the Council, the Commission and Parliament; calls, as a contribution to this debate, for the European Council in December to further elaborate on the European Global Strategy initiative;
13. Stresses, therefore, that a comprehensive understanding of the CFSP covers all areas of foreign policy, including the progressive framing of the CSDP, which could lead to a common defence, with an emphasis on pursuing coherence and consistency while respecting the specificity of each component of external action; believes that there should be closer coordination, under the VP/HR's leadership, of EU internal policies and Member States' policy choices in key areas such as connectivity, trade, transport, energy, the environment and communication, where these have clearly transnational implications, in particular with regard to the diversification and security of the EU's energy supply;
14. Calls on the Council and the VP/HR to respond to Parliament's recommendation on the 2013 review of the organisation and the functioning of the EEAS in order to ensure the further development of an appropriate and gender-balanced structure within the EEAS (with the participation of the relevant Commission services), in which geographic and thematic expertise are integrated and drive a comprehensive approach to policy planning, formulation and implementation;

PROVIDING LEADERSHIP AND COHERENCE IN EU FOREIGN POLICY

15. Underlines the political leadership role that the VP/HR is expected to play in ensuring the unity, consistency and effectiveness of Union action; notes that the VP/HR, in her review of the EEAS, has identified areas in which her role should be strengthened and made more effective in initiating, executing and ensuring compliance with CFSP decisions, and has issued recommendations intended to ensure close coordination with the Commission, making full use of her position as Vice-President of the Commission; underlines, with a view to the Hearings of the new Commission in 2014, the fact that the European Parliament should support this trend by strengthening the role of the Vice-President in external relations and thereby reinforcing the coordination between the EEAS and the Commission;
16. Reiterates its support for the VP/HR's leadership, under difficult circumstances, of negotiations with Iran, and congratulates her on her success in bringing the parties together in the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia; considers that these examples of

leadership and priority-setting should be applied further in the EU's candidate and potential candidate countries and in its neighbourhood, and in response to an arc of strategic challenges stretching from Central Asia to the Middle East and from the Horn of Africa across the Sahel; expresses its willingness to support this process;

17. Calls for a review of the infrastructure distribution and staffing of EU delegations in order to ensure that the Union's efficiency, visibility and representation in third countries reflects our political ambitions and expected priorities; calls for such a review to be discussed with Parliament's competent committee, especially where the outcome requires any redistribution of resources or a decision to open or close delegations in third countries; reiterates, notably, its demand for the opening of an EU delegation in Iran;

MATCHING OBJECTIVES WITH APPROPRIATE RESOURCES

18. Questions, in view of the range of challenges and demands for EU engagement in the world, the Council's rationale for cutting the multiannual financial framework, which will reduce the Union's capacity to promote peace, security and sustainable economic development and its credibility in respect of such efforts; cautions that if such cuts are applied in an uncoordinated fashion, they risk undermining the effective pursuit of our interests and values as well as our collective ability to promote peace, democracy, human security and prosperity in our neighbourhood and further afield;
19. Recognises, at the same time, the need for strategic choices to be made, and priorities established, in order to ensure that the Union's resources are used in a focused and effective manner; calls, in this regard, on the Member States to ensure that their national policies are consistent and coordinated with the Union's strategic objectives and commitments;
20. Stresses the importance of ensuring that the new external relations financial instruments under consideration by Parliament and the Council are fully funded, tailored to furthering the Union's strategic interests, and able to be adapted to changing political circumstances;
21. Insists that the revision of the 2006 IIA on budgetary discipline and sound financial management should mark a further step forward in terms of greater transparency in respect of the CFSP; believes that democratic scrutiny requires separate budget lines for each and every CSDP mission or operation, including the work of EU Special Representatives, accompanied by streamlined – yet transparent – procedures for the internal transfer of funds if circumstances so require;

ASSESSING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE VP/HR AND OF THE COUNCIL IN 2011

22. Welcomes the steps taken by the Council, with the VP/HR's support, in the 2011 Annual Report towards mapping out the Union's foreign policy in a forward-looking and strategic policy document;
23. Notes the efforts made to address the shortcomings outlined in Parliament's last resolution on this topic, in particular by developing new CSDP missions and operations within the framework of the Union's overall approach to a country or region;
24. Believes, however, that the Council's Annual Report still falls short of the ambitions of the Lisbon Treaty in important ways, and therefore calls for the following in future:

- establishing clear priorities and strategic guidelines for the CFSP as an essential part of the process of applying our diplomatic, economic, financial, development and – where necessary – crisis management resources more effectively in pursuit of the Union's foreign and security policy,
 - setting out a framework for assessing existing strategic partners and developing new partnerships, including with international and regional organisations.
 - setting out a roadmap for making progress on important innovations of the Lisbon Treaty, in particular (1) by making operational the assignment of special tasks and missions to a core group of Member States, (2) through the establishment by capable and willing Member States of permanent structured cooperation in defence, and (3) by enhancing the role of, and providing more resources for, the European Defence Agency,
 - addressing acute problems in CSDP decision-making, inter alia in relation to funding procedures and the financing of operations, that result in incomprehensible delays between the taking of political decisions to launch a mission and the actual deployment of that mission on the ground (Libya and Mali being the most recent in a long line of examples), including through a reassessment of the purpose and capability of the EU Battlegroups, thereby improving the overall framework for streamlining CSDP political decision-making;
25. Calls on the Council to request that the VP/HR set out in the next Annual Report her foreign policy objectives for the years 2014 and 2015, along with the timeframe and necessary resources for their implementation; stresses that these priorities should focus on the EU's strategic aims, starting with the transatlantic partnership, the economic and political development of its Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods, and the Middle East Peace Process;
26. Calls on the Council and the VP/HR, when drawing up future Annual Reports on the CFSP, to engage with the Committee on Foreign Affairs at an early stage in order to discuss foreign policy objectives for the coming years and provide EU citizens with a clear statement concerning the evolution, priorities and progress of the Union's foreign policy, thus reassessing and demonstrating the VP/HR's role as a leader in the EU's foreign policy;
27. Welcomes the initiative of holding a European Council Summit in December 2013 on the future of European defence, as an opportunity to review the EU's strategic goals and security interests, concepts that should be further developed in a White Book on European defence; calls for this meeting to deliver a clear roadmap with timelines for achieving key objectives, including, in the first instance, the timely review of the European Security Strategy and the use of a White Book serving as a common template for concurrent national security and defence reviews; stresses the need to develop closer cooperation in order to guarantee military security and achieve savings;

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: CONCENTRIC CIRCLES OF PEACE, SECURITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

28. Welcomes the development of 'strategic partnerships' as a format for the EU's engagement with both established and emerging powers; contends, however, that the concept requires clear and consistent criteria as regards its place in the EU foreign policy architecture; calls for future decisions on strategic partners to be framed in accordance with the foreign policy priorities of the Union and for Parliament to be regularly informed ahead of decisions on

future partnerships, particularly where such partnerships receive financial support from the Union budget or entail a closer contractual relationship with the EU;

USA

29. Underlines the fact that the partnership with the USA is based on strong political, cultural, economic and historical links and on shared values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law; strongly believes that the USA is the EU's most important strategic partner, notwithstanding diverging views on important issues; urges the EU, therefore, to give clear political priority to deepening transatlantic relations at all levels and broadening them to include other transatlantic partners, with the objective of pursuing mutual benefit and reciprocity;
30. Takes the view that the EU and the USA need to cooperate closely with regard to the peaceful resolution of the conflicts and crises arising as a result of Iran's nuclear programme and the transition process in the Arab Spring countries and the Middle East; welcomes President Obama's commitment to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; calls on the EU, following parliamentary debate, to intensify diplomatic activity as part of an agreed comprehensive political strategy for the long-term stability and security of the whole region;
31. Welcomes the announcement concerning the launch of negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), which could give the EU and US economies an important boost, stimulate progress on other international agreements and represent a model to be followed by other regional and global actors; recalls the need to set up a Transatlantic Political Council; notes that, in the meantime, the practice of holding annual EU-US summits provides an opportunity to identify common objectives, coordinate strategies in relation to threats and challenges of global relevance, develop a common approach to emerging powers, ensure multilateralism and exchange best practices; recalls that the annual EU-US summit has not yet been held this year; points out, furthermore, that the eventual conclusion of the TTIP, and of the ongoing EU negotiations with Canada, will create the prospect of a wide economic space that would include North America, the EU, and many Latin American countries and bring economic growth and jobs; suggests exploring further political opportunities for triangular transatlantic cooperation;
32. Considers that in order to build trust it is necessary for the USA to comply with sensible data protection legislation and change its data collection activities directed against the EU and its citizens, and asks for the speedy conclusion of the EU-US umbrella agreement on data protection, which would provide information and legal redress for EU citizens; stresses that the recent disclosures have raised concerns across Europe that may harm EU-US relations; recalls that data protection must be respected by both the EU and its partners, and considers that common standards for the sharing of classified information that protect the freedom of both US and EU citizens are necessary;

Russia

33. Reiterates its support for the Union's policy of critical engagement with Russia; considers Russia to be an important strategic neighbour, but takes the view that in order to build a genuine partnership the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law must be respected; welcomes cooperation with Russia on important international issues, especially with regard to the Middle East, Iran, Afghanistan and Syria;

34. Deplores, nevertheless, the fact that Russia uses its veto in the UN Security Council (UNSC) to undermine the international community's efforts to react effectively and promptly to humanitarian crises, such as the tragedy and spiralling violence in Syria; calls, therefore, on the VP/HR to put the EU's diplomatic weight and efforts into further engaging with Russia on such matters; welcomes Russia's mediation with regard to Syria's stockpile of chemical weapons, along with the proposal outlined by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov urging Syria to relinquish control of its chemical arsenal, and Russia's offer to assist in such an operation; regrets the fact that such mediation did not come at an earlier stage, which would have avoided the loss of thousands of lives;
35. Remains concerned about Russia's lack of commitment to the rule of law, pluralist democracy and human rights, as demonstrated by recent legislation that hinders the work of civil society organisations and targets minorities, including LGBT communities, as well as restricting the freedom of expression, the freedom of assembly and the freedom of association; emphasises that strengthening the rule of law in all areas of Russian public life, including the economy, would be a constructive response to the discontent expressed by many Russian citizens, and is essential in order to build a genuine, constructive partnership between the EU and Russia; stresses that a determined effort to tackle corruption is important to enhancing confidence in the EU-Russia economic relationship and that progress on the negotiations on visa facilitation – the preliminary stage of which was positive – should be dependent on progress in areas such as selective justice and free, fair and competitive elections;
36. Underlines the EU's willingness to contribute to the Partnership for Modernisation and to any successor to the current partnership and cooperation agreement, provided that Russia makes progress in areas such as human rights, the rule of law and pluralist democracy (including free, fair and competitive elections); stresses also that the EU remains committed to building mutual trust and furthering political dialogue with Russia, including on matters of global importance such as the fight against terrorism, non-proliferation, organised crime and climate change;
37. Criticises Russia's use, in violation of international norms (e.g. the Helsinki Accords), of the instruments of energy and trade policy to pressure countries in the European neighbourhood so as to compel them to join the Russia-led customs union instead of signing Association Agreements with the EU, thereby hindering their sovereign decisions; believes, furthermore, that the progressive integration of partner countries with the EU can be consistent with their pursuit of good-neighbourly relations with Russia; urges Russia to adopt a constructive position with regard to frozen conflicts; regrets the fact that the EU has not been more firmly involved in the resolution of these conflicts; warns Russia that using unresolved conflicts for political ends may trigger new hostilities and destabilise the whole region;

China

38. Encourages the EU to further develop its comprehensive, strategic partnership with China, promoting both parties' global interests, joint projects based on geostrategic standards, and mutual respect; calls for the EU and its Member States to speak with one voice to the Chinese Government; calls, while welcoming the almost 60 active sectoral dialogues and the proposed negotiations on an investment treaty, for further sectoral dialogues to be developed, and for the speedy resolution of ongoing trade investigations; reiterates the need

for the EU-China human rights dialogue to be strengthened, inter alia through the involvement of civil society and cooperation with the UN;

39. Stresses that cooperation between the EU and China in the multilateral arena is crucial in order to promote stability and address global challenges, inter alia in relation to economic and financial matters, including efforts to curb tax evasion, tax avoidance and tax havens; stresses that cooperation is also necessary in order to address climate change, environmental issues, the use of the planet's limited natural resources, and development cooperation, to uphold peace and respect for international law in conflicts such as the one in Syria, and to respond to the challenges posed by Iran and North Korea in respect of non-proliferation;
40. Expresses its concern at China's continuing violation of human rights and cultural and religious minority rights, namely in Tibet;

Japan

41. Underlines the need to consolidate the Union's relations with Japan as a strategic partner and major international actor that shares the EU's democratic values and is a natural cooperation partner in multilateral fora; looks forward to the negotiation of a comprehensive Framework Agreement and a Free Trade Agreement;

South Korea

42. Calls on the EU to deepen its political cooperation with South Korea, a major democratic Asian actor that has recently intensified trade relations with the EU through an ambitious Free Trade Agreement;

India

43. Calls for the EU and its Member States to strengthen relations with India, based on the promotion of democracy, social inclusion, the rule of law and human rights, and urges both sides to do their utmost to conclude the negotiation of a comprehensive EU-India free trade agreement, which will stimulate European and Indian trade and economic growth;

Turkey

44. Stresses the strategic importance of the EU's dialogue and cooperation with Turkey on stability, democracy and security, with particular reference to the wider Middle East; points out that Turkey is not only a NATO ally but also a candidate to join the EU if and when the accession criteria can be fulfilled and a decision on full membership meets with democratic approval; asks for the opening of crucial chapters, especially in order to trigger the necessary political reforms; notes that Turkey has strongly and repeatedly condemned the Syrian regime's violence against civilians and is providing vital humanitarian assistance to Syrians fleeing violence across the borders; calls for further cooperation between the Member States and Turkey, along with measures at Union level, in view of the growing flow of refugees at the EU's external borders; stresses that Turkey's growing international standing should also be based on its commitment to fundamental rights, a secular state, pluralist democracy and the rule of law at home, and that the most crucial reforms have yet to be achieved; notes the vitality of the democratic demands being made by civil society in Turkey and reiterates its concern about the violent, repressive and often inadequate response by the authorities; asks for Turkey's support against fundamentalist, undemocratic

movements in the region;

South Africa

45. Reiterates the importance of the EU's strategic partnership with South Africa; contends that South Africa, given its record of a successful and peaceful transition to democracy and its role as a regional power, can be a major force in promoting democracy and good governance, fostering regional economic integration and supporting national reconciliation across Africa, and a key partner for the EU in these efforts; stresses the importance of close cooperation between the EU and South Africa on climate change, sustainable development and the reform of international institutions;

An enlarging EU

46. Emphasises that EU membership provides peace, prosperity, democratic development, stability and security in the swiftly changing international environment, and that belonging to the EU continues to offer the prospect of socioeconomic development; takes the view that enlargement remains an important tool of EU foreign policy and is in the EU's long-term strategic interest, which cannot necessarily be measured in terms of short-term balance sheets; points out, however, that the enlargement policy needs to take into account the EU's own integration capacity and the genuine commitment of the Western Balkan countries and of Turkey to take up their responsibilities and address outstanding concerns; welcomes the agreement on telecommunications and energy reached between Serbia and Kosovo during the 16th round of the negotiations brokered by the VP/HR, and calls for more efforts to overcome all remaining obstacles;

The EU's neighbourhood

47. Stresses that the EU needs to put further effort into, place a higher priority on, and show greater commitment to, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) at a time when this policy is in difficulty and is being challenged by developments in numerous countries; believes, therefore, that for reasons of solidarity and on account of its own interest in peaceful and free development, the EU must strongly focus its instruments, inter alia by strengthening multilateral approaches in the region, and make strong links between its policy, financial instruments and funding in order to achieve its main policy objectives, notably as regards delivering on human rights, democracy, the rule of law and economic reforms; notes that the European perspective remains a key incentive, in particular for European neighbourhood countries, to deliver on ambitious reforms;
48. Emphasises that the modernisation of the whole European neighbourhood rests on the gradual development of liberal democracy in which those who are elected democratically also govern democratically in accordance with constitutional principles, respecting opposition, dissent and non-conformism;
49. Calls for the principles underlying the new ENP approach, as set out by the VP/HR and the Commission in the relevant joint communications¹, in particular the 'more-for-more',

¹ Joint communication of 25 May 2011 entitled 'A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood' (COM(2011)0303); joint communication of 20 March 2013 entitled 'European Neighbourhood Policy: Working towards a Stronger Partnership' (JOIN(2013)0004).

differentiation and mutual accountability principles and the 'partnership with society', to be fully operational and for Union assistance to be fully aligned to this new approach;

50. Emphasises that in order to avoid post-accession social tensions and/or socioeconomic imbalances within the enlarged Union, the Commission must promote pre-accession policies aimed at mitigating structural social inequities and overcoming cultural divisions within acceding states prior to the time of accession; stresses that priority should be given to the national integration of social and cultural minorities, thus preventing their mass displacement towards other Member States following accession;

Eastern Neighbourhood

51. Recalls that the Eastern Neighbourhood is of strategic importance and recalls the European perspective of the countries concerned, which remains a key incentive for these countries to deliver on reforms; emphasises that the EU has real leverage in this area and should fully assert its transformative power; considers that it is high time for intensified efforts, coupled with greater political commitment, to achieve the objectives of the Eastern Partnership, including the need to establish a closer link between the CFSP and the ENP; welcomes the progress made, and further calls on all sides to make the necessary efforts to sign or initial Association Agreements, Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements and the agreements on the liberalisation of the EU visa regime once all the conditions set have been fulfilled, and calls on our Eastern partners to meet the requirements for a successful Vilnius Summit in November 2013; stresses that the summit should mark a clear step forward in bringing closer together the societies of the Member States and of Eastern Partnership countries;
52. Considers it regrettable, nevertheless, that the overall situation with regard to democratic standards and respect for human rights in many of the Eastern Partnership countries has scarcely progressed, if not deteriorated; calls for the EU to play a more active and sustained role in the search for political solutions to the frozen conflicts in the Eastern Neighbourhood, in particular with a view to breaking the deadlock on South Ossetia and Abkhazia and on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and playing a full role in support of any ensuing peace agreement; encourages further progress on the question of Transnistria; stresses, furthermore, that the full development of the Eastern Partnership can only take place once the frozen conflicts have been solved in a peaceful manner, which should be a priority; calls for the EU to make full use of the tools at its disposal to mediate and to ensure that human rights are fully respected; reiterates its view that the development of relations should be conditional on a meaningful commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
53. Recalls that democratic reforms promoted by the EU are in the interest of the partner countries themselves and can contribute to their economic and social development; points out that strong democratic institutions and closer ties with the EU through Association Agreements, DCFTAs and visa facilitation measures will help to strengthen the sovereignty of these countries against the influence of powerful neighbours; is deeply concerned about the mounting pressure being exerted on some partner countries, such as Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia, which is ultimately aimed at slowing down their progress towards further engagement with the EU; calls for the EU to address these issues in a politically coherent manner; reaffirms the EU's readiness to be a reliable and strong partner for these countries on the basis of shared common values and solidarity, and to share with them all the

advantages of the EU *acquis*, along the lines of an Economic Area Plus arrangement;

54. Stress that although the EU-Ukraine agreement has been initialled, it can only be signed and ratified if Ukraine fulfils the necessary requirements as set out in the Council conclusions on Ukraine of 10 December 2012; reiterates its call on the Ukrainian Parliament and Government to address the issue of selective justice, namely by releasing Yulia Tymoshenko, and to implement the reforms set out in the jointly agreed Association Agenda, including judicial reform (i.e. the Office of the General Prosecutor) and reform of the electoral law; calls on Ukraine to amend its penal code by removing criminal sanctions for clearly political acts carried out by state functionaries acting in an official capacity;
55. Supports the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, but believes that tangible progress by the Georgian authorities in the area of the rule of law is necessary; calls, in particular, for all political prisoners, including former Prime Minister Vano Merabishvili, to be released and for European standards to be met in the upcoming presidential elections;

Southern Neighbourhood and Middle East

56. Highlights the EU's longstanding relations with the countries of Europe's Southern Neighbourhood; calls for the principles underlying the new ENP approach, as set out by the VP/HR and the Commission in the aforementioned joint communications, in particular the 'more-for-more', differentiation and mutual accountability principles and the 'partnership with society', to be fully operational and for Union assistance to be fully aligned to this new approach;
57. Recalls its support for the VP/HR's use of new concepts, such as the Task Force for the Southern Mediterranean, as a way to maximise the leverage achieved by financing from the EU and its partners, for the benefit of these countries' citizens; expects tangible outcomes from such innovative approaches in terms of better coordination between EU and Member State contributions, capacity-building assistance for beneficiary countries and the accountability of their administrations;
58. Expresses its deep concern about the situation in Egypt and the excessive violence by all parties, including both state security forces and opposition forces; stresses that the EU should support democracy and human rights, and welcomes the EU foreign ministers' decision of 21 August 2013 to suspend all export licences for equipment which could be used for internal repression; urges all political actors in Egypt to resolve their differences through peaceful dialogue and calls for an inclusive political agreement and for power to be transferred to democratically elected leaders as soon as possible; urges the EU, and in particular the VP/HR, to capitalise on its unique position and its networks of relationships among the key players and to continue its mediation efforts towards a political settlement regarding the basic parameters of a democratic transition;
59. Regrets the fact that the EU gave up its common policy of an arms embargo on Syria, thereby undermining a common approach; condemns the tragic and ongoing bloodshed in Syria, which has already had a devastating and destabilising humanitarian impact, including on neighbouring countries, in particular Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey; calls on the Member States to show solidarity and to provide help to refugees from Syria and displaced persons within Syria; strongly condemns the mass killing of civilians and stresses that the Syrian Government's use of chemical weapons is a gross breach of international norms that may lead to the referral of all those responsible to the International Criminal Court;

welcomes the firm international response and calls for the speedy implementation, under international supervision, of the plan to destroy all such chemical weapons; stresses that the severity of the situation in Syria requires a high level of coherence and solidarity among the EU Member States, working in cooperation with NATO and regional actors, especially Russia, Iran, Israel and Turkey; calls for the EU actively to support efforts to convene the Geneva II talks in order to promote a political solution agreeable to the Syrians and bring an end to the deadly spiral of violence;

60. Reiterates its call for the EU to play a more active role in the resolution of the Western Sahara conflict, which currently represents an insurmountable obstacle to the full development of good-neighbourly relations in the Maghreb;
61. Continues to support the twin-track approach adopted by the EU, the USA, Russia and China with the objective of pursuing non-proliferation; calls on the Iranian President to follow up on recent positive declarations by cooperating fully with the international community in addressing concerns regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme; calls on the EU 3-plus-3 to consider both additional measures and incentives dependent on Iran making concrete progress in taking verifiable steps to address the international community's concerns; stresses that any failure or stalling in the negotiations between the EU 3-plus-3 and Iran on nuclear non-proliferation will pose serious risks to regional and global security;
62. Expresses hope for the Middle East peace negotiations and recalls that resolving the conflict in the Middle East is a fundamental interest of the EU, as well as of the parties themselves and of the wider region; stresses, therefore, that the need for progress is even more urgent on account of the ongoing changes in the Arab world, the Syrian crisis and the particularly volatile situation in the wider Middle East; calls on the Member States to find common ground for more decisive action by the EU in close cooperation with the Arab League and the other members of the Quartet; welcomes the resumption of direct negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians as a basis for achieving a two-state solution; criticises Israeli settlement policy, which is in violation of international law and is undermining the prospects for peace and a negotiated resolution of the conflict; reiterates that a stable and peaceful Middle East is in the EU's interest and calls for more active engagement with a view to achieving this aim; welcomes the publication of the Guidelines on EU funding instruments and calls for their sensitive, non-bureaucratic implementation;
63. Asks both Iran and the United Arab Emirates to engage in an open and frank dialogue making it possible to arrive at a peaceful solution, entirely consistent with international law, to their territorial dispute;

Latin America

64. Welcomes the EU-Latin America political dialogue, including the summits of heads of state and the EUROLAT Parliamentary Assembly;
65. Believes that the EU and the countries of Latin America share a common commitment to socially sustainable economic development and a common attachment to democratic values and the rule of law, but also experience tensions in reconciling those values and goals with conditions of governance;
66. Expresses its support for the process of negotiating an Association Agreement between the

EU and Mercosur and notes the commitment of both parties to arriving at an exchange of offers on market access by the end of 2013; welcomes the entry into force of the EU-Central America Association Agreement and of the Multiparty Free Trade Agreement with Colombia and Peru, and looks forward to removing visa requirements with these two countries, as well as to working on further Association Agreements, including with Ecuador; notes that such agreements represent important advances in developing strategic relations between the EU and Latin America;

67. Stresses the need to strengthen contacts and coordination with Latin American partners in multilateral forums; calls for the adoption of a Euro-Latin American Charter for Peace and Security, as requested by the Eurolat Assembly;

Africa

68. Insists that preparations for the Fourth EU-Africa Summit in 2014 afford an opportunity to move beyond institutional capacity-building at continental level and towards the establishment of a political partnership for peace, security, socioeconomic development, efforts to combat illicit financial flows from Africa, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and good governance, at the regional and sub-regional level;
69. Underlines the importance of the respective EU strategies for the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region as a key means of addressing the complexity of the security, governance and development challenges affecting these regions, which span the breadth of Africa;
70. Recalls that longer-term state stability and human security in these two regions require not only the defeating of violent radical extremists and those trafficking in arms, drugs and people, but also the promotion of reconciliation, the strengthening of state and civil society institutions and the provision of alternative economic activities to give people a dignified livelihood, in particular through creating jobs for young people by facilitating the development and implementation of confidence-building measures;

Central Asia

71. Supports the EU's promotion of a regional approach in Central Asia, which is essential in tackling common challenges, in particular as regards stability, security, water and energy, in facilitating dialogue, in developing good-neighbourly relations and in promoting the EU's strategic interests; calls for the EU's engagement in this region to be linked to progress on democratisation, human rights, good governance, sustainable socioeconomic development, the rule of law and the fight against corruption; further emphasises the importance of the EU's presence on the ground in order closely to monitor politically motivated trials, and the necessity of promoting political pluralism;
72. Underlines also the importance of the EU's dialogue with Central Asian countries on regional environmental and security matters, in particular as regards the management of water resources and the situation in Afghanistan after 2014; welcomes the launch of the EU-Central Asia High-Level Security Dialogue on 13 June 2013;
73. Notes that the energy- and natural-resource-rich Central Asian countries are potentially significant for the EU's diversification of sources and supply routes in order to achieve a higher degree of energy security; calls on the EEAS and the Commission to continue to strongly support energy supply diversification projects such as the Southern Corridor and

the trans-Caspian pipeline;

Afghanistan

74. Is deeply concerned about the continued violence, in all forms, in Afghanistan, in particular that directed against women; urges the Afghan Government to prepare for taking over full responsibility after the withdrawal of international forces from 2014; calls for the Member States to gear up to support the military and civilian capacity-building of the Afghan Government and its National Security Forces in order to create stability and security as a prerequisite for development, avoiding the creation of a security and economic vacuum once the country assumes full responsibility for its own security after 2014; highlights the need to continue the EU's support for the fight against corruption; reiterates the need to establish a plan for the elimination of opium production; recalls that Parliament has repeatedly called for the promotion of a five-year plan for the elimination of opium production;
75. Reiterates the EU's long-term commitment to assisting Afghanistan in a peaceful transition and sustainable socioeconomic development; welcomes the fact that the EU and Afghanistan are about to conclude the negotiations on a Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development; calls on both sides to conclude the negotiations swiftly;
76. Emphasises the need for enhanced cooperation within the sub-region of Central Asia and with Russia, Pakistan, India and Iran in order to address the challenges of cross-border trafficking in people and goods and to combat the illegal production and trafficking of drugs; warns against the risk of such problems spilling over to neighbouring countries and to the wider sub-region after 2014; stresses Pakistan's key role in the fight against terrorism;

Asia

77. Calls for the EU to have a greater presence in the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus beyond China, India and Japan; stresses the political and economic potential of the partnerships being established between the EU and Indonesia, a democracy with the world's fourth-largest – mostly Muslim – population, and a G-20 member, and between the EU and the Philippines; underlines the new prospects for EU-ASEAN relations following the democratic changes in Myanmar; regards the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to strengthen the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-EU enhanced partnership as a relevant step; also regards the Treaty of Amity as a chance to deepen cooperation and looks forward to tangible outcomes in this respect;
78. Emphasises the need to conclude the negotiations on partnership and cooperation agreements and political framework agreements with several Southeast and East Asian countries, based on social standards and European corporate social responsibility, in order to consolidate and heighten the EU's relations with the region;
79. Underlines the importance of Asia-Pacific regional security and is concerned about tensions, including territorial disputes around the East and South China Sea, as well as having increasing concerns about North Korea; suggests that the EU could take a more active role and call for all parties concerned to be included in all dialogue and cooperation mechanisms, especially in the multilateral arena, in view of the importance of stability in this area to the EU's maritime security and commercial interests;

80. Notes the efforts made towards cooperation between the EU and the USA following the ‘pivot’ to Asia, as demonstrated by the common approach to the lifting of sanctions on Myanmar; calls, therefore, for greater coordination of US and EU policies towards Asia, together with those of key partners such as Australia and New Zealand; urges, to this end, the swift conclusion of the negotiations on framework agreements with Australia and New Zealand, which should reflect the EU’s common approach to the inclusion of clearly worded political clauses on human rights and democracy in all international agreements negotiated by the EU;
81. Recalls the first EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue held in June 2012 and the commitment to constructive discussions on enhancing bilateral cooperation and shared views on regional and international issues of mutual concern, including more proactive engagement in favour of a pluralistic society as an essential element in the fight against terrorism; calls on the VP/HR to update Parliament on follow-up to that strategic dialogue and preparations for the next one, which should take place in Brussels in 2013;
82. Commends Taiwan’s continuous efforts to maintain peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region; recognises the progress made in cross-Strait relations, especially the flourishing economic links, tourism and cultural cooperation; reiterates its firm support for Taiwan’s meaningful participation in relevant international organisations and activities, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; urges the Commission and the Council to facilitate the negotiation of an EU-Taiwan economic cooperation agreement (ECA); encourages closer bilateral cooperation between the EU and Taiwan in areas such as trade, research, culture, education and environmental protection;
83. Remains deeply concerned about the continuing massive human rights violations in North Korea and its continuing tests of increasingly powerful nuclear devices and longer-range missiles, which remain a serious threat to international peace, stability and security and to the country’s economic development;

Multilateral partners

84. Believes that the G-20 could prove a useful and particularly appropriate forum for consensus-building that is inclusive, based on partnership and able to foster convergence, including regulatory convergence; takes the view, however, that the G-20 has yet to prove its value in converting summit conclusions into sustainable policies that address critical challenges;
85. Acknowledges the role of the UNSC as the highest international body responsible for peacekeeping and international security, while noting that recent crises have highlighted its growing inability to act in a timely manner in response to serious threats to international peace and security, on account of its structures and working methods; urges the VP/HR, therefore, to put her efforts into securing a permanent EU seat in the UNSC and steering the reform of the UNSC; calls on those EU Member States that hold a permanent seat to involve the VP/HR in their decision-making;
86. Calls for the EU and its Member States to reconfirm the EU’s commitment to advancing effective multilateralism, with the UN system at its core, by enhancing the representativeness, accountability and effectiveness of the UN, which necessitates the reform of the UNSC, including restrictions on the power of veto; stresses the importance of working with other international partners in order to respond to international challenges;

stresses that an EU seat in an enlarged UNSC remains a central, long-term goal of the EU; calls, furthermore, on the Member States, in order to strengthen the EU's presence within the UN system, to coordinate their efforts in selecting senior officials for high-level posts in the UN and other international institutions;

87. Calls for the EU and its Member States to cooperate with partners in strengthening the role of regional organisations in peacekeeping, conflict prevention, civilian and military crisis management, and conflict resolution; stresses the need to work with partners in ensuring that the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) concept is legally developed and is exercised whenever it is needed, encompassing prevention, protection and post-conflict reconstruction; recalls its recommendation that an interinstitutional EU 'Consensus on R2P' be adopted, and expects the EEAS to start consultations to this end; underlines the need to develop more effective mediation guidelines and capacities, including through collaboration between the EU and the UN;
88. Welcomes the commitments made by the EU and NATO to strengthen their strategic partnership through a complementary approach; notes that the current global and European economic crisis has spurred efforts to seek more cost-effective operational capabilities in both the EU and NATO, which are urgently needed; calls for an urgent political solution to the ongoing stalemate which is hindering proper, close cooperation between the EU and NATO; welcomes initiatives such as additional EU Member States applying for membership of NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) as a first step towards removing the existing obstacles between the EU and NATO;
89. Remains concerned about the problems in starting CSDP missions, such as delays in planning and deployment, staff shortages, financial planning and implementation difficulties, issues regarding the status of CFSP agreements with third countries and start-up difficulties; requests that a follow-up mechanism be created to ensure that such recurring problems are addressed together;
90. Calls on the VP/HR to mainstream cyber security in the EU's external action, to coordinate with the action being taken under the Stockholm Programme and to develop networks of like-minded partners to deal with cyber security threats and challenges; emphasises that efforts should be made to ensure that existing international legal instruments are enforced in the cyber-sphere;
91. Stresses the need to regulate at the EU level the sale, supply, transfer and export to third countries of equipment or software intended primarily for the monitoring or interception of the internet and of telephone communications; stresses the urgent need to prevent EU companies from exporting such dual-use items to non-democratic, authoritarian and repressive regimes;
92. Reiterates its call on the VP/HR to take stock of the effectiveness of the EU's Strategy Against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and its policies for tackling conventional weapons, including arms exports;
93. Welcomes the EU's coordinated approach during the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty, which resulted in a successful outcome; calls on the Member States to ratify the Treaty expeditiously so that it can enter into force, following the consent of Parliament; calls for competence in respect of the rules governing exports of arms and of equipment or software intended primarily for the monitoring or interception of the internet and of telephone

communications on mobile or fixed networks to be fully transferred to the EU;

94. Supports the dialogue on reform of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the launch of the Helsinki 40+ process in December 2012, which provides a strategic road map for strengthening the OSCE; fully supports the activities of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), which carries out invaluable work in the field of promotion and protection of human rights and democratic standards;
95. Acknowledges the increasingly important role of regional organisations, in particular the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Economic Cooperation Organisation, and calls for the EU to strengthen its cooperation, especially on matters relating to transition processes and crisis management in the Southern Neighbourhood; welcomes EU efforts to assist the Arab League in its integration process;

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96. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, 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 Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.