



Inter-parliamentary Conference for the CFSP/CSDP Zagreb (2-4 March 2020)

CONCLUSIONS

The Inter-Parliamentary Conference:

1. Notes that the Union's external strategic environment has become more complex and more contested; considers that the EU needs to assume a global leadership role and actively defend and promote its values and interests worldwide, notably on multilateralism, international law, democracy and human rights;
2. The current security environment, marked by an increased assertiveness of certain global and regional powers, increasing pressure on multilateral cooperation and institutions and changing dynamics on the global stage, calls for intensified cooperation between EU Member States and institutions;
3. Stresses, therefore, the urgent need for strong political and strategic coordination and more united and proactive external action for the EU to be able to face the multiple challenges that directly or indirectly affect its security, values and strategic interests; emphasises the importance of further improving the effectiveness of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and of the Common Security and Defence Policy;
4. Recalls that, in order to become a more effective actor in its neighbourhood and beyond, the EU needs to be able to team up with strategic like-minded partners around the world who share its values and principles; in this regard, calls for an improvement of its capacities for anticipating and responding to the effects of globalisation, external disinformation campaigns and the new priorities and alliances being set by emerging powers;
5. Supports further discussions on setting up possible inclusive platforms for policy dialogue within the EU in full cooperation with the Member States, in order to agree on the joint European positions on the current issues of EU security architecture, including the efficiency of decision-making processes in the field of security policy and the promotion of common values and interests;
6. Welcomes the Commission President's initiative to launch a Conference on the Future of Europe; emphasises the need to duly address CFSP and CSDP within the Conference, as well

as the importance of including national parliaments in its work; supports the involvement of the Western Balkan countries in the Conference;

7. Underlines the crucial role of parliaments played through parliamentary diplomacy, mediation and conflict prevention, as a pillar of the EU's CFSP; calls for an increased involvement of the national parliaments and of the European Parliament in the scrutiny, oversight and steering of the relevant EU external instruments; reiterates the importance of the national parliaments and of the European Parliament as indispensable actors in the CFSP;

8. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to the accession perspective of the Western Balkans and the reaffirmation of the region's enormous strategic importance to the Union; stresses its commitment to enlargement, which remains the most important pillar of EU policy towards its closest neighbourhood; reiterates that the EU needs an ambitious and credible stance on enlargement;

9. Takes note of the new enlargement methodology; reiterates that the EU should continue guiding the Western Balkan countries towards accession and invites the European Council to continue supporting the European path of the Western Balkans; highlights that enlargement is a merit-based process which depends on adherence to the Copenhagen criteria, the principles of democracy, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, observance of the rule of law and individual achievements in meeting, as well as sustainable implementation of, the relevant criteria; emphasises the importance of maintaining good neighbourly relations and due alignment of the candidate countries with the CFSP;

10. Recalls that the European perspective constitutes a powerful catalyst for reforms, democratic consolidation and enhanced EU scrutiny in both candidate and potential candidate countries; takes note of the Commission's recommendation to open accession negotiations with the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia, based on its positive evaluation of the progress made and of the fulfilment of the criteria identified by the Council; looks forward to the European Council reverting to the issue before the EU – Western Balkans Summit in Zagreb, with a view of providing stronger impetus to the enlargement process;

11. Underlines that the EU should retain its focus on the Western Balkans also in the area of security and defence by providing them with capacity building support in countering climate, hybrid and cyber threats, as well as disinformation, notably through a structured dialogue, exercises and strategic communication, and by the promotion of common values and interests;

12. Recognises that the Union's stability is affected by different challenges and threats stemming from its Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood and encourages the development of closer strategic relations with the Eastern and Southern partners; recalls the EU's transformative

potential for neighbouring regions and countries; reiterates its support for the Eastern partners, and their resilience; stresses, however, that in order to be more successful, the Eastern Partnership needs renewed dynamism and a reinforced approach to achieve further convergence in line with the aspirations of each country in the spirit of the “more for more” principle and in full compliance with political conditionality; in this regards, looks forward to the discussion on the priorities and goals of the Eastern Partnership for the period beyond 2020 at the forthcoming Eastern Partnership Summit;

13. Recalls that the stability, security and prosperity of the Southern Neighbourhood are of crucial importance for the EU; reminds that those countries are currently under migratory pressure caused by conflicts, violence and instability in Syria, Libya, the Sahel and the sub-Saharan region; stresses the importance of complementing efforts in political and security terms with a strategy aiming at delivering security for the Southern Neighbourhood and promoting democratic values and processes; recalls also that Africa, because of its demographic, security and development challenges, should be a priority for the European Union's foreign and security policy; considers peace and the sustainable stabilization of Libya to be a common priority contributing to the stability of the whole Euro-Mediterranean region; stresses its full support to the UN-led efforts for a political solution to the crisis, in line with the Conclusions of the Berlin Conference; underscores also the need to keep the unity of Libya, the constant dialogue between the parties and the support for the launch of a new CSDP operation in the area of the Mediterranean Sea, having as a goal the implementation of the arms embargo and the fight against organised crime; welcomes the statement by the VP/HR that the European Union is fully committed to Middle East Peace Process;

14. Expresses its grave concern about the external threat Greece is experiencing through the present, sudden, massive, foreign-organised and asymmetric concentration of foreign nationals on its land and sea borders with Turkey which constitute the south-eastern borders of the EU;

15. Underlines the contribution of the EU-led civilian and military missions and operations to international peace, security and stability; recognises that the EU is called to act as a global player capable of simultaneously overseeing multiple geographical areas;

16. Deplores the breakdown of effective international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation regimes as well as of de-escalation and confidence-building measures, which are a cornerstone of European and global security; stresses that, in view of ‘emerging technologies’ such as cyber technology and autonomous weapons, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation should become a major focus of EU policy; urges the VP/HR to continue to use all available political and diplomatic means to safeguard the joint comprehensive plan of action (JCPOA) and to launch a coherent and credible strategy for multilateral negotiations on regional de-escalation in the Gulf;

17. Encourages an approach to international relations, both in multilateral fora and in bilateral relations with third countries, focused on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; stresses the importance of human rights protection around the world and in this sense backs the approval of a possible EU global human rights sanctions regime as a tool of the Common Foreign and Security Policy; calls on the Commission and the Member States to combat the impunity of persons complicit in serious human rights violations all around the world;

18. Recognises the efforts of the Member States in the area of security and defence aimed at further enhancing European defence cooperation, among others by the continued implementation, consolidation and coherence of the launched defence initiatives (PESCO, CARD, EDF, military mobility), and by the development of a capability-driven industrial and research dimension of EU defence initiatives; encourages progress in the ongoing debate regarding the proposed European Peace Facility; supports more targeted EU-NATO cooperation as an investment into European security and a contribution to transatlantic relations, while respecting the distinctive role of the two Organisations;

19. Recognises the necessity of future cooperation with the United Kingdom in the CFSP and CSDP; is willing to contribute to a constructive discourse about the frame for the future EU-UK CFSP and CSDP cooperation; supports the Commission's efforts to discuss the topic with the UK; encourages UK Parliamentarians to stress the importance of future cooperation in CFSP and CSDP;

20. Calls for closer and more coherent cooperation between the national parliaments and the European Parliament in the field of security and defence; underlines the need to ensure effective parliamentary scrutiny of initiatives within the Common Security and Defence Policy;

21. Considers the nexus between the common area of freedom and security under Article 67 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the common foreign, defence and security policy of vital importance, within the framework of the consistency between EU policies provided for in Article 7 of the said Treaty; underlines that – within the same respect – security and stability within the EU can be ensured through a common defence policy; highlights that, in this context, participation in investments in the defence sector should be based on the principle of equal access for all Member States;

22. Takes note of the PESCO strategic review and calls on the Member States to fully commit to the ambition of progressively framing a common defence policy in accordance with the provisions of Article 42 TEU, thereby reinforcing the European identity and its independence, with full respect for the essential role of NATO in Europe and the transatlantic region, and for the commitments of EU Member States that are also NATO allies, in order to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world; calls for greater action by EU Member States

on the action plan on military mobility; recommends to the Commission and the VP/HR to share their reflections in this regard in their first-one-hundred-days reporting;

23. Underlines the importance of maintaining an adequate budget allocation to achieve a level of ambition for the EDF and military mobility within the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 - 2027 which will support the achievement of the EU's strategic security and defence objectives; supports a strategic approach to long-term common capability development; underlines the need to include a procurement support strand, thereby operationalising European solidarity and cohesion in defence capacity building and calls on the Commission and the VP/HR to treat this as a priority;

24. Recalls that an inclusive approach to defence, conflict prevention, resolution and mediation is paramount to their long-term viability and recalls the increased success of conflict resolution when gender parity and equality are respected throughout the process and in the capacity building of the EU security architecture; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to provide for the structural engagement of women in all its crisis management related activities; calls on the EU and Member States to actively contribute to the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and its follow-up resolutions;

25. Welcomes the VP/HR's commitment to work closely with the national parliaments and the European Parliament; looks forward to co-operating with the VP/HR on the important matters discussed at this Conference; expresses its wish to assess progress on these matters together with the VP/HR at the next IPC.