

Speaking points for the meeting with the Political and Security Committee (PSC), 24 February 2015
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Dear Chair, dear Ambassadors,

- I am very pleased that you give me the opportunity to present Parliament's annual report on the Common Foreign and Security Policy to you today and I **look forward to hear your views** on the document. I believe that the European Parliament has an important role to play in EU foreign policy. It can contribute to a stronger Common Foreign and Security Policy by providing political support for a more effective and ambitious CFSP, by proposing new ideas and increasing the visibility of the CFSP. I strongly feel that this is what our role in the CFSP should be - not only scrutinising and monitoring, but also serving as a pacemaker and as an initiator of debates on the future of the EU's external policies. The CFSP report is an important tool in this and it shows that we take our role very seriously.
- The report was adopted in the Foreign Affairs Committee today. We had a **debate** on a working document for the draft report **with national parliaments** of the EU Member States in early December and some of them have sent written contributions, which were factored into the draft report. There is a visible growing interest on the side of national parliaments to discuss those issues together, and I am very happy to provide opportunities for our colleagues to exchange views on that matter. I think it is crucial to mainstream the debate on CFSP/CSDP matters into foreign policy debates at the national level in order to foster a common understanding of our goals and objectives.
- In terms of the report's contents, the starting point of the report is the assessment that the EU faces a **dramatically changed geopolitical and security environment** today. It is obvious to me that there is a **need for a reappraisal of EU priorities and goals** on the international scene and for a reflection on the areas in which the EU's collective action would have the greatest leverage and added value. The report is an important opportunity for my Committee and me to outline our vision for EU

foreign policy and is meant to contribute to the strategic reflection which the High Representative is carrying out.

- The report is structured around what I see as the **four main priorities** for EU external action:
- The EU needs to **improve its internal working methods and institutional structures** in order to strengthen its capacity to act effectively and coherently on the international stage. External policies and internal policies with a significant external dimension need to be more coherent and consistent. The recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen once again showed that we cannot separate foreign policy from internal policies anymore. Therefore, we need a coherent approach that integrates foreign policy, justice and interior, economic and other policies. Only if we manage to use all the policy tools and levers at our disposal can we have an effective foreign policy. The cluster structure of the new Commission is a promising start in that regard, but increased coordination and coherence must also be reflected in day-to-day practice. Apart from this, the financial rules should be simplified and made more flexible, as they often do not allow the EU to respond promptly and effectively to crises. And finally, the draft report calls on Member States to strengthen their defence capabilities and step up defence cooperation in the framework of the CSDP.
- Another priority is to **preserve and strengthen the European political and legal order** that is based on the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. At a time when these principles are increasingly challenged, the EU needs an overarching political strategy aimed at reinvigorating this order and must act in a unified and consistent way vis-à-vis those who threaten it. Those eastern European neighbours that want to draw closer to the EU should be provided with more political, financial and technical support.
- The EU should contribute actively to **stability and security in its southern Neighbourhood**. Our aim should be to support the building of functioning and inclusive states, capable of delivering security and economic growth and granting fundamental rights and freedoms to their

citizens. Our assistance must be focussed on those countries that are committed to reforming and modernising their political and economic systems. In addition, the report calls on the EU leadership to engage with all major international and regional actors to find ways to end the armed conflicts in the region.

- And finally, our aim must be to **strengthen the rules-based global order** through cooperation with partners - most importantly the USA and NATO - on the most crucial issues. Solving global problems also requires drawing major powers such as China and Russia into responsibility for global peace and stability.
- In addition to these four main themes, the report also includes some other crucial topics such as the external dimension of energy security, cyber security, and defence (on which my colleague Arnaud Danjean is currently preparing a separate report). I have decided to focus more on *issues* of major importance for our European future rather than discussing the EU's bilateral relations with various countries.
- The report comments in some parts on the HRVP's and the EEAS's activities in 2013, which is the base year of the HRVP's report to which my report responds. However, as the new report on the HRVP's activities in 2014 is already in preparation, I have decided to draft a **forward-looking report** focusing mostly on current and future issues, rather than commenting in detail on what has been achieved. I believe that at this moment of crisis in Europe, we can provide more useful input by injecting new ideas into the CFSP debate instead of giving our views on events that happened two years ago.
- Let me finish by saying that Europe faces daunting external challenges today and it is my firm belief that **we can only deal with these challenges effectively if we act together**. I have the impression that this realisation is more and more shared also by Member States. I am therefore optimistic that the Common Foreign and Security Policy will increasingly be the framework in which Europe engages with the outside world. The European Parliament will continue to push for a unified and coherent EU foreign policy.

Background information

<p>The Annual Report from the High Representative to the European Parliament on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) 2014/2219 (INI)</p> <p>Rapporteur: Elmar Brok (EPP)</p>	
Consideration of Working Document	2 December 2014
First Consideration of report	20 January 2015
Deadline for Amendments	26 January, 18.00
Second Consideration of report	23 February
Vote in AFET	24 February am
Vote in Plenary	March I

Shadow rapporteurs:

Shadows:	Political Group
Ioan Mircea PAȘCU	S&D
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