

## Strengthening the European Union as a Global Actor

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Athens, Greece, on 24-26 October 2019:

### Notes that:

- the office of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy dates back to the Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009. The creation of this office was fuelled by the EU Member States' desire to speak with one voice to the outside world. As the "Foreign Minister" of the EU and the head of the European External Action Service (EEAS), the High Representative was to represent the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) externally and lead it internally;
- almost a decade later, the hope that the EEAS would become the central coordination mechanism for the EU's external action has not yet been fulfilled. While there are positive examples, such as the negotiations on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) for the Iranian nuclear programme, where the High Representative and the EEAS were able to make a valuable contribution to the conclusion of the agreement, other international crises, such as the war in Syria, remain examples where the High Representative and the EEAS could not live up to this expectation. Overall, the road to a unified European foreign policy remains long and difficult;
- we live in times of global uncertainty and growing insecurity. The world's centre of gravity is slowly shifting to the East and the unity of the West is increasingly being challenged. Multilateralism and the rules-based international order are in decline. The European project, which has brought unprecedented prosperity, peace and democracy to our continent, is being questioned from the outside as well as from within.

### Believes that:

- this state of affairs calls for proactive, robust, and responsible leadership from the EU on the multilateral scene. The European Union will only be in a position to successfully protect, preserve, and assert its values and interests if it achieves greater unity in its external appearance. A common European foreign policy is more necessary than ever;
- the goal of a strengthened EU as a global actor will remain out of reach without suitable instruments. The Office of the High Representative and the EEAS thus should be institutionally strengthened.

### Resolution:

Strengthening the European Union as a Global Actor

### Year and Congress:

Athens, Greece, 2019

### Category:

Foreign Affairs

### Page:

1

**Calls for the EU and its Member States to launch an initiative at the European level and within the EU member states to strengthen the Office of the High Representative and the European External Action Service by means of the following measures:**

1. Integrating the European Neighbourhood Policy and the EU Special Representatives into the EEAS: The High Representative must be responsible for all essential areas of European foreign policy, including in particular the European Neighbourhood Policy. In addition, the EU Special Representatives and their staff should be integrated into the EEAS in order to increase the coherence of their policies. The Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), which was equally set up under the Lisbon Treaty and already reports to the High Representative, should be fully integrated into the EEAS;
2. Improving coordination within the European Commission: The High Representative is the external representative of the Council of the European Union and Vice-President of the European Commission. He also chairs the Foreign Affairs Council. In order to further improve coordination between the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Commission, the High Representative should also permanently chair the European Commission's Working Party on External Relations;
3. Strengthening the European voice in the United Nations: In order to enhance the EU's capacity to speak with one voice at the international level, it is essential that the High Representative be given full and equal speaking rights in the United Nations General Assembly. In addition, the EEAS should play a stronger role in coordinating the positions of the EU member states, as practiced in other international fora such as the OSCE;
4. Enabling decisions with a qualified majority: The European Union's decision-making on foreign and security policy issues needs to be more effective. The number of decisions within the Common Foreign and Security Policy which can be taken by qualified majority should thus be expanded, as stipulated in Article 31 of the Treaty on European Union, thereby limiting the ability of individual Member States to block important decisions; In order to meet democratic standards, an approval by the European Parliament, as the representative of the Union citizens, is to be considered;
5. Introducing a Civilian Permanent Structured Cooperation: The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in the field of military policy should be accompanied by a civilian counterpart. For years, the EU has had difficulties with finding civilian personnel such as police officers and public prosecutors for EU missions. This could be remedied by introducing a civilian corps of reservists for crisis

**Resolution:**

Strengthening the European Union as a Global Actor

**Year and Congress:**

Athens, Greece, 2019

**Category:**

Foreign Affairs

**Page:**

2

- operations; Ultimately, this must lead towards the creation of a functioning “Defence Union” and a European defence force;
6. Ensuring adequate funding of the CFSP: Against the backdrop of the United Kingdom’s possible withdrawal from the EU, it must be ensured that resources for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) will not be cut. In addition, the financial instruments of the CFSP must be simplified. This would help to set clear priorities, avoid overlapping competences and be able to react more quickly to unforeseen challenges and crises. The EEAS should be given a clear competence to implement political priorities in financial decisions. This should also include a possible redeployment of resources in the case of unforeseen events;
  7. Enhancing cooperation between the EEAS and the external services of the Member States: The close cooperation between the EEAS and the embassies of the Member States should be strengthened and further developed, e.g. through joint reporting and the development of joint initiatives. Intelligence sharing has to be increased with the goal of a common defence intelligence body.

**Resolution:**

Strengthening the European Union as a Global Actor

**Year and Congress:**

Athens, Greece, 2019

**Category:**

Foreign Affairs

**Page:**

3