

# HIGHLIGHTS

from the European Parliament hearing of

## FEDERICA MOGHERINI

High Representative of the Union for Foreign  
Affairs and Security Policy /  
Vice-President of the Commission



Federica Mogherini, the recently-confirmed High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, appeared before the European Parliament on 6 October 2014 to answer MEPs' questions.

In that hearing and in her answers to the questionnaire prepared for the meeting, High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini made a number of statements of interest to the European Parliament.

This document provides a summary of her most salient points<sup>1</sup>.

## **On cooperation with the European Parliament**

### **The European Parliament as an indispensable partner in CFSP**

*"I consider my relationship with the EP an essential and valuable component of my work. As High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission I am and will be accountable to the European Parliament. I acknowledge the invaluable contributions and political support given by the EP to the creation of the post of HRVP and the EEAS from the very first day. It is in our mutual interest, and most of all in the interest of a strong and coherent European foreign and security policy, to build on this and work together as closely as possible".*

### **On obligations towards the European Parliament as the High Representative for CFSP**

*"In my capacity as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and in accordance with Article 36 TEU, I will keep the Parliament regularly informed of the main aspects of my work and consult the Parliament on the fundamental choices of our Common Foreign and Security Policy. In accordance with my obligations under the inter-institutional agreement, I will consult the EP on forward-looking documents setting out the main features and basic choices of the CFSP, including financial implications for the general budget of the Union".*

### **On obligations towards the European Parliament as the Vice President of the Commission**

*"In performing my duties I will fully implement the Framework Agreement between the European Parliament and the European Commission (FA), in particular as regards the follow-up to European Parliament's positions and requests. In my areas of responsibility, I will make sure that the Commission responds to parliamentary resolutions or requests made on the basis of Article 225 TFEU, within 3 months after their adoption."*

### **On fully implementing provisions of the Declaration of Political Accountability (DPA)**

*"The DPA was negotiated with the EP together with the EEAS Decision back in 2010 to adapt the institutional relationship with the EP to the new Treaty. It remains an important achievement and has proven its value, but I am convinced that we can and should improve the concrete implementation of some of its elements. I undertake to find pragmatic solutions with the EP to implement it more fully and systematically, for instance with regard to information on international agreements and exchanges prior to the adoption of new strategies and mandates".*

### **On access to classified information**

*"With respect to the issue of access by the EP to classified information in the area of CFSP, I will support the early resumption of the negotiations on the review of the 2002 CFSP Inter-Institutional Agreement in close cooperation with the Council Presidency so that we can reach a satisfactory agreement as soon as possible."*

### **On reinvigorating the Special Committee**

*"I am also ready to reinvigorate the Inter Institutional Agreement (IIA) 2002 Special Committee with more frequent meetings to share confidential information on CSDP missions and operations as well as on CFSP matters generally in full implementation of points 4 and 8 of the DPA."*

### **On improving a system for deputising contacts with the European Parliament**

*"I believe that, in full openness and transparency, it is in our mutual interest to agree on how to better organise my presence in the EP and the system of deputising. That will benefit the organisation of parliamentary work and will ensure that I am able to respond to different demands in an organised and fully satisfactory way. As part of this general understanding, I agree with your suggestion and undertake that-either I or my representative-will hold meetings with the EP prior to and/or after FAC meetings."*

### **On animating the format on Joint Consultation Meetings on CFSP/CSDP**

*"I would also like to breathe new life into Joint Consultation meetings. It is my intention to keep the Parliament fully informed of the planned mandates of civilian CSDP missions and I will also instruct the services to show flexibility regarding the scope of the Joint Consultation meetings to keep the EP informed on military missions and more broadly on the work and the agendas of the PSC."*

### **On facilitating the European Parliament's role in international agreements**

*"I will instruct the services-and Chief Negotiators in particular-to consistently and proactively offer to the European Parliament (by means of a letter to the AFET Committee as the competent Committee and the focal point) to brief and inform the EP in the appropriate and agreed format. This will apply at the beginning of negotiations (including prior to the start of negotiations), during the conduct of negotiations (after each negotiating round or when significant developments occur) and upon the finalisation of negotiations (whenever negotiations are completed, an agreement is initialled, provisional application is proposed or there is the intention to suspend or modify an agreement. During the implementation phase of an agreement, I will instruct the EEAS competent services to accept the requests from the Parliament to discuss the implementation and the state-of-play of the agreements. (...) I agree that signed agreements should be referred to the EP as soon as possible. I will work closely with the Council and the Commission to ensure that the EP is informed immediately after the adoption of a decision on signature and provisional application if appropriate."*

### **On sharing the EU Delegations' political reporting with the European Parliament**

*"I recognise the value of reporting from EU Delegations for the work of the EP as a precious source of information. I am ready to explore arrangements for the transmission of specific reports originating in the EEAS to specific EP office holders, as necessary for the exercise of Parliament's prerogatives and competences. Such arrangements*

*should respect the existing IIAs and FA to prevent unwarranted disclosure of information".*

## **On the European External Action Service (EEAS)**

### **On streamlining the EEAS decision-making structures**

*"The streamlining of the EEAS decision-making structures will be one of my first priorities. (...) For this, I will build upon the ideas in the 2013 EEAS review. (...) In structural terms, and as highlighted in the EEAS review, there is still work ahead towards improving the integration of the crisis management structures into the EEAS. I intend to streamline the internal delineation of work, to avoid overlaps and enhance civil/military synergies."*

### **On restructuring the EEAS management system**

*"More generally on the organisation of the service, the top management team that was put in place for the launch of the EEAS could be streamlined in the future, now that the establishment phase has been completed. I will want to undertake an overall assessment of priorities and resources before taking any decision."*

### **On the role of EU delegations**

*"EU Delegations will be an essential tool of our work, as they represent the Union abroad, manage community policies and are of key direct service of information. As with Headquarter structures, the decisions regarding deployment of staff in delegations has to be dynamic and responsive to changing political priorities and circumstances on the ground. Equally the overall budget constraints may require tough decisions. Eventual changes will be agreed in the network with the Council and the Commission and the full transparency with the European Parliament."*

## On the 'double-hatted' role as the Vice President of the Commission

### As an active member of the College of Commissioners

*"The High Representative is also Vice-President of the Commission, and I intend to play this role to the full. I will be responsible for steering and coordinating the work of all Commissioners with regard to external relations will chair a Commissioners' group on external Action to develop a joint approach."*

### As with regard to the deputising system within the Commissioners' Group on External Action

*"Furthermore as agreed with President Juncker, I intend to ask the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations as well as other Commissioners as appropriate to deputise for me if and when necessary in areas related to the Commission's competence."*

## On relations with the Member States

### On the need for a close coordination in CFSP/CSDP

*"Cooperation with Member States is also vital at all levels and on regular basis. I intend to discuss with Foreign Ministers how best they can all contribute to EU's external action. As the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) remain largely intergovernmental and since decisions in these areas are subject to unanimity among Member States, it is important to set strategic priorities of the EU foreign policy with the full co-ownership by all member states."*

## On the possibility of enlarging the scope for qualified majority voting (QMV) in CFSP/CSDP

*"With regard to the Council's decision making procedures, the Treaty of Lisbon has enlarged the possibilities as decisions have been taken by consensus. Together we can achieve objectives that individual Member States cannot. As High Representative, I have a mandate to contribute to the development of the CFSP and I will not hesitate to recommend the use of qualified majority voting as provided by the Treaty as long as it can help us to better achieve our goals."*

### On making use of the Lisbon Treaty provisions regarding permanent structured cooperation

*"The provisions of the Treaty on permanent structured cooperation have not been used yet and therefore are part of the untapped potential of the Treaty. Military capabilities remain with the Member States, and in line with the Treaty, it is for Member States that fulfil the criteria and which have made the commitments on military capabilities and out in the relevant Protocol to notify their intentions. I will work towards creating a better understanding of the potential usefulness of this provision to support deeper defence cooperation among the Member States in line with the guidance from the European Council of December 2013."*

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<sup>1</sup> Quotes are either taken from HR/VP Mogherini's answers to the questionnaire or from the hearing held on 6 October 2014. In case of multiple quotes on the same issue, only one is reported here. Some quotes may be free translations of the original language spoken.

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