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Committee on Foreign Affairs

2009/0000(INI)

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DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

on the institutional aspects of setting up the European External Action Service
(2009/0000(INI))

Rapporteur: Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that the role of the European Union as a global player has increased over the last decades and that a new approach is needed if the EU is to act collectively and meet global challenges in a coherent, consistent and efficient manner;
2. Welcomes the outcome of the Irish referendum, which paves the way for completion of the procedure for ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon and the setting-up of a new institutional structure, including a permanent President of the European Council, who will ensure external representation of the EU on issues concerning its common foreign and security policy (CFSP), and the new post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who will also act as a Vice-President of the European Commission; notes that the High Representative will be mandated by the Council to conduct the Union's CFSP and to make proposals for the development of that policy and that the unity, consistency and effectiveness of the external action of the Union will be ensured by the Council and the High Representative; recalls that, in fulfilling his mandate, the High Representative will be assisted by the European External Action Service (EEAS);
3. Underlines the fact that the European Parliament has consistently called for the creation of a common European diplomatic service, which would be commensurate with the Union's international role, and which will raise the visibility and enhance the capacity of the Union to act effectively in the international arena; calls on the Council, the Commission and Member States to seize the opportunity offered by the setting-up of the EEAS to create a more coherent, consistent and effective foreign policy;
4. Taking into account the fact that the European Parliament will be consulted on the setting-up of the EEAS, and given the budgetary consequences, believes that an early and substantive dialogue with Parliament is essential for the effective start-up of the EEAS and to ensure that it receives the necessary financial resources;
5. Calls on the High Representative to come forward with his/her proposals as soon as possible; insists on compliance with the following principles:
 - (a) the EEAS should be established and set up within the administrative and budgetary remit of the Commission while faithfully carrying out its Treaty mandate to assist the High Representative in conducting the Union's common foreign and security policy on behalf of the Council;
 - (b) the EEAS must deal with the CFSP and the common security and defence policy (CSDP) and with the tasks and policies currently dealt with by the Directorate-General for External Relations (DG Relex) in the Commission; in addition, the High Representative should present a comprehensive proposal on how other major external action-related policies will be organised in the new institutional set-up; enlargement, trade, development and humanitarian aid together constitute a

substantial part of the EU's overall external policies; there are compelling reasons to include development policy in the new service;

- (c) the EEAS must include the military and civilian crisis management units within the Council secretariat, even if for military personnel the command and organisational structure may have to differ from that for civilian personnel; the sharing of the intelligence analysis of players within the EEAS is of vital importance in order to assist the High Representative in fulfilling his/her mandate of conducting a coherent, consistent and efficient external Union policy;
 - (d) the High Representative should pay particular attention to recruitment and staff issues, as the EEAS will encompass staff from the Commission, from the Council and from the Member States; for the EEAS to become a professional diplomatic service it will need to be adequately resourced and staffed on the basis of merit and with respect for the appropriate selection procedures and an adequate geographical balance;
 - (e) Member States' diplomats and staff coming from the Commission and the Council should have equivalent status and roles, and should be subject to the same conditions of employment, whether they are seconded, temporary agents or EU officials;
 - (f) the building of an "esprit de corps" through joint training and professional development is essential for the EEAS's ultimate objective of creating a framework of integrated diplomacy that brings together national and European levels of diplomacy; in order to develop a common European diplomatic culture in the EU's international relations, joint training programmes and a common diplomatic syllabus will be required; the existing training measures and networks of diplomatic training centres could usefully be brought together in a European Diplomatic Academy;
6. While the European Union delegations will be an integral part of the EEAS, and while they should take their instructions from and be subject to the supervision of the High Representative and should administratively belong to the Commission, requests the next High Representative to commit him/herself to informing Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs about his/her appointments to senior posts in the EEAS and to agreeing to the committee conducting hearings with the nominees, if the committee so decides; also requests that the next High Representative commit him/herself to renegotiating the current interinstitutional agreement with the European Parliament, in particular on access to sensitive information and other issues relevant for smooth interinstitutional cooperation;
7. Notes that, while the EU delegations in third countries will complement existing diplomatic representations of the Member States, there will be possibilities for long-term gains in efficiency, as the future EU delegation could in many cases take over consular services and deal with Schengen visa issues;
8. Calls on the Commission, the Council, the Member States and the next High Representative to clearly commit themselves to a comprehensive and ambitious plan for the setting-up of the EEAS, as a gradual and step-by-step approach could lead to

inconsistencies and waste of resources;

9. Reiterates its determination to exercise its budgetary powers to the full in connection with these institutional innovations; emphasises that all aspects of the funding arrangements for the EEAS must remain under the supervision of the budgetary authority in accordance with the Treaties.