



2021/2182(INI)

11.11.2021

OPINION

of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the implementation of the common foreign and security policy – annual
report 2021
(2021/2182(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Gerolf Annemans

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Notes that the geopolitical impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and a quickly deteriorating security environment are posing unprecedented challenges to the Union's common foreign and security policy; emphasises that, in the face of these challenges, the Union needs to increase its resilience and fundamentally evaluate and improve the effectiveness and speed of its responses to the fast-changing global environment;
2. Calls on all responsible EU decision-makers to significantly increase the EU's geopolitical footprint; calls on the Commission and the Member States, in the meantime, to leverage all existing legal and policy instruments to bolster the EU's role in the world; recalls that the fight for human rights and democracy should remain at the core of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP); recalls the Treaty provisions conferring on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) competence for the conduct of the Union's CFSP; calls on the Member States to recognise the role of the VP/HR in international negotiations; observes, in this regard, that provision is often not made for the involvement of the VP/HR in international negotiations; underlines that a strong perception of the role of the VP/HR could translate into the common security and defence policy (CSDP) having an increased geopolitical impact;
3. Recalls Article 31(2) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which allows the Council to take certain decisions on CFSP matters by qualified majority voting (QMV), and the 'passerelle clause' contained in Article 31(3) TEU, which provides for the progressive switch to QMV for decisions in the area of the CFSP that do not have military or defence implications but enhance the EU's solidarity and mutual assistance in times of crisis; underlines the need for the EU to respond to a rapidly changing global environment, recalling that it rarely sends strong signals to third countries, in particular those with aggressive foreign policies run by autocrats;
4. Remains strongly committed to the Union's partnership with NATO, which remains fundamental to the EU's security policy; underlines the importance of strengthening the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO; welcomes, in this regard, the ongoing preparations for the new EU-NATO Joint Declaration, which will be presented before the end of the year; calls on the VP/HR and the Member States to seize the occasion to deepen multilateral security cooperation with trusted partners and ensure consistency with internal policies; points out that the EU must meanwhile assume responsibility and bolster its security policy through the relevant internal policy frameworks;
5. Regrets that there is no structured EU-UK cooperation in the area of foreign, security and defence policy; calls for the full and effective implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement and the Withdrawal Agreement, in particular the provisions related to cooperation on global issues in multilateral forums, the promotion of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, climate change, sanctions regimes, non-

proliferation and disarmament, the fight against terrorism, and cybersecurity; welcomes the setting up of the EU-UK Parliamentary Partnership Assembly and calls for its swift constitution and start of work;

6. Recalls that on 16 June 2020, the EU defence ministers decided to develop a Strategic Compass for security and defence; notes that a legal-political agreement is expected to be issued at the beginning of 2022¹; observes the potential of the Strategic Compass, which could form the core of the new European defence strategy and improve the current tools; notes, furthermore, that the Strategic Compass aims to foster a common European ‘strategic culture’, pushing Member States towards a common understanding of the key threats to Europe and how the EU can be a security provider;
7. Calls on all EU decision-makers to ramp up efforts to fight foreign third-party interference, manipulative disinformation, information manipulation and other hybrid threats that undermine the Union’s ability to cope with new challenges, and develop and implement effectively its internal and foreign policies; notes the increase in disinformation campaigns linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and the negative role that certain actors played in advancing these campaigns; calls for better and deeper coordination to identify in a timely manner and efficiently deter cyber-attacks that risk jeopardising the EU’s internal stability and hybrid threats that weaponise migration and energy supplies, thereby endangering the EU’s internal and energy security; calls on all EU institutions and the Member States to modernise their responses to these threats, through, inter alia, a new EU hybrid toolbox, which should include consistent collective countermeasures against foreign aggressors;
8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to enable and strengthen parliamentary oversight of EU external action, including by continuing its regular consultations with the VP/HR and the Commission; underlines that such oversight plays an important role in ensuring the proper functioning of European democracy and public trust; stresses that such oversight can serve as the starting point towards a stronger institutional role for Parliament in the CFSP; calls for the swift conclusion of negotiations to replace the 2002 Interinstitutional Agreement on Parliament’s access to sensitive information of the Council in the field of security and defence policy; calls for the coordination of Member States’ security and information services to be implemented;
9. Calls for the active involvement of Parliament’s instruments in the CFSP; underlines the importance and unique nature of Parliament’s set of democratisation programmes, such as the ‘Jean Monnet Dialogue’, aimed at fostering and strengthening the work of parliaments; recalls that all EU institutions should participate and work together in activities that aim to counteract the global backsliding of democracy, including through election observation, mediation and dialogue activities, conflict prevention, the Sakharov Prize award and network, and parliamentary diplomacy, with Parliament keeping a prominent role;
10. Recalls that, in its resolution of 15 January 2020 on the European Parliament’s position on the Conference on the Future of Europe², Parliament listed ‘Security and the role of

¹ See European Parliament briefing:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698057/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)698057_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698057/EPRS_BRI(2021)698057_EN.pdf)

² OJ C 270, 7.7.2021, p. 71.

EU in the world' as one of the policy priorities; welcomes the fact that this was, *inter alia*, translated into tangible action, in the form of the plenary working group on 'EU in the world'; notes that a considerable number of contributions on the Conference platform propose strengthening the EU's role in the world; recalls that the Conference on the Future of Europe can serve as an opportunity to discuss the institutional status quo and give a new impetus to EU democracy; calls on the participants of the Conference to consider all possible avenues to achieve that goal.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	9.11.2021
Result of final vote	+: 17 -: 2 0: 5
Members present for the final vote	Gerolf Annemans, Damian Boeselager, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Pascal Durand, Daniel Freund, Esteban González Pons, Giuliano Pisapia, Antonio Maria Rinaldi, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Helmut Scholz, Pedro Silva Pereira, Sven Simon, Antonio Tajani, Guy Verhofstadt, Loránt Vincze, Rainer Wieland
Substitutes present for the final vote	Gunnar Beck, Angel Dzhambazki, Alin Mituța
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Stelios Kympouropoulos, Ljudmila Novak

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

17	+
ID	Gerolf Annemans, Antonio Maria Rinaldi
NI	Fabio Massimo Castaldo
PPE	Esteban González Pons, Stelios Kypouropoulos, Ljudmila Novak, Sven Simon, Antonio Tajani, Loránt Vincze, Rainer Wieland
S&D	Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Giuliano Pisapia, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Pedro Silva Pereira
VERTS/ALE	Damian Boeselager, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Daniel Freund

2	-
ID	Gunnar Beck
THE LEFT	Helmut Scholz

5	0
ECR	Angel Dzhambazki, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski
RENEW	Pascal Durand, Alin Mituța, Guy Verhofstadt

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention