

MEPs take stock of the EU's foreign, security and defence policy priorities

- EP supports setting up an EU Security Council
- Fend off any external interference in the 2019 EU elections
- EU-NATO cooperation should be complementary

On Wednesday, the European Parliament adopted two resolutions reviewing key EU foreign, security and defence policy choices.

Following Tuesday's debates with EU Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini, Parliament's annual resolutions on the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) were approved by the full House during the plenary session in Strasbourg on Wednesday.

Building resilience to external threats

In the resolution on the CFSP, MEPs insist that member states should prioritise unified EU positions over national interests. They suggest improving decision-making among EU countries by setting up an EU Security Council and replacing the unanimity requirement with qualified majority voting in the Council on matters relating to the CFSP.

MEPs also highlight the EU's need to be more resilient to external interference, especially with regard to the next European Parliament elections on 23-26 May 2019. The EU should also be more resilient to terrorist attacks, notably jihadist terrorism, but also to radicalisation, illegal migration, propaganda, online and offline disinformation campaigns, Russian attempts to carry out cyberattacks and other hybrid threats that require rapid and coordinated counteraction.

The "less for less" policy towards countries that are violating human rights and democratic standards, including stripping them of preferential terms, for example on trade and development, should be considered further. In particular, no agreement between the EU and third countries should be ratified until human rights benchmarks are met, MEPs stress. The resolution finally calls on all EU countries to respond jointly to the migration crisis.

Quote

"The EU's current security environment is more volatile, unpredictable, complex and ambiguous than at any other time since the end of the Cold War. The EU therefore has a growing responsibility to safeguard its own security while defending its interests and values. The time has come for the EU to take its destiny into its own hands, to embrace its role as a fully-fledged, sovereign, political and economic power in international relations that helps to resolve conflicts worldwide and shapes global governance", said EP rapporteur [David McAllister](#) (EPP, DE).

Strengthening the EU's common defence

Although the rules-based world order is being increasingly challenged, EU defence integration is moving forward, MEPs note in the report on the CSDP. While welcoming the implementation of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), they also stress the need to invest more in intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, satellite communications and autonomous access to space and permanent earth observation. Improving EU civilian and military capabilities, including through pooling and sharing, is important, as today's security challenges are too vast to be successfully met by any single country on its own. EU countries must endeavour to improve military capabilities to cover the full spectrum of land, air, space, maritime and cyber spheres, in order to make the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy a credible force, MEPs say.

The strategic partnership between the EU and NATO is also fundamental to addressing Europe's security challenges. EU-NATO cooperation should be complementary and guarantee full respect for the autonomy and decision-making procedures of the other. MEPs finally call on political forces in both Europe and North America to strengthen rather than to undermine this crucial transatlantic security bond, and avoid the kind of recent difficulties experienced in trade.

Quote

"The world order is currently confronted with important systemic changes, in which multilateralism tends to be replaced by unilateralism, free trade by protectionism, and solidarity by self-interest. The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is one of the useful tools for addressing many of these challenges. Global answers are needed, yet these are difficult to get in an increasingly fragmented system. For this, the CSDP should be used more efficiently and in coherence with other external and internal instruments in order to enable the EU to contribute in a decisive way to managing international crises and to exercise its strategic autonomy", said EP rapporteur [Ioan Mircea Paşcu](#) (S&D, RO).

The resolution on CFSP was approved by 401 votes to 173, with 73 abstentions, while the CSDP resolution was adopted by 376 votes to 215, with 41 abstentions.

Procedure: non-legislative resolutions

Further information

[The adopted text will be available here \(12.12.2018\)](#)

[Watch a video recording of the debate \(11.12.2018\)](#)

[European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee](#)

[Procedure file \(CFSP\)](#)

[Profile of CFSP rapporteur David McAllister \(EPP, DE\)](#)

[Committee press release on the CFSP \(21.11.2018\)](#)

[Procedure file \(CSDP\)](#)

[Profile of CSDP rapporteur Ioan Mircea Paşcu \(S&D, RO\)](#)

[Committee press release on the CSDP \(13.11.2018\)](#)

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