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Uachtaránacht na hÉireann ar
Chomhairle an Aontais Eorpaigh
An Ghné Pharlaiminteach

Irish Presidency of the
Council of the European Union
Parliamentary Dimension

CONCLUSIONS
of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy
and the Common Security and Defence Policy

Dublin 24 & 25 March 2013

Introduction

1. The second meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy, hereinafter referred to as “the Inter-Parliamentary Conference”, was held in Dublin on 24 and 25 March 2013, at the invitation of the Ceann Comhairle and the Cathaoirleach, the Presidents respectively of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann, the two Houses of the Parliament of Ireland, in the framework of the Parliamentary Dimension of Ireland’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in accordance with the Decisions of the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments made at its meetings in Brussels on 4 and 5 April 2011 and in Warsaw on 20 and 21 April 2012, and in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference adopted in Paphos, Cyprus, on 9 September 2012.
2. The Inter-Parliamentary Conference was attended by delegations of the national Parliaments of Member States of the EU and the European Parliament. Delegations of national Parliaments of EU candidate countries and European member countries of NATO which are not EU Member States also attended as observers.

Procedural business

3. The Inter-Parliamentary Conference adopted a proposal by the Presidency Parliament, made pursuant to the Conclusions of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Cyprus, to appoint an Ad Hoc Review Committee (AHRC) to conduct a review of arrangements for the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in accordance with the decisions of the Conference of Speakers and the Inter-Parliamentary Conference. Adoption was subject to the inclusion of Italy as a member of the Working Group of countries that will co-operate closely with the Presidencies in presiding over the AHRC. The incoming Presidency of Lithuania is asked to preside over the commencement of the work of the Ad Hoc Review Committee. The proposal as adopted is appended (*Appendix 1*) to these Conclusions.
4. The Inter-Parliamentary Conference considered a proposal by the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, made pursuant to the Conclusions



of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Cyprus, on a fact-finding mission regarding the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Neighbourhood. It was agreed to report the comments made on the proposal to the Cyprus Parliament and to ask it to refer it or a revised proposal to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Lithuania in September.

Proceedings of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference

High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

5. The High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, addressed the meeting and set out the priorities and strategies of the EU in the area of the CFSP and CSDP.
6. Catherine Ashton, speaking to the topic “The CFSP and CSDP - Working for Peace, Security and Development in Africa”, discussed the benefits of an integrated approach to ensure that various policies and instruments at the EU’s disposal are used coherently and effectively in support of common objectives. Concrete success of this approach in Horn of Africa is demonstrated by the curbing, since May 2012 of hijacking of vessels at sea. Also discussed was the use of a similar Comprehensive Approach in Sahel/Mali; importance in each situation of creating circumstances and long term vision to aid transition to democratic rule; the importance of role of women; continued support by the EU and its Member States in supporting the transition process initiated in several Arab States including importance of supporting specificities of each country.
7. The High Representative’s address was followed by a wide-ranging debate. The themes of the discussion included the importance of respect for local populations and adapting Comprehensive Approach to specificities of each country/region; need for “strategic patience” with long term vision in assisting countries; importance of supporting development of concrete essential services; deep democracy, linking political reform with economic reform; other areas of concern including Eastern Partnership countries, Central Africa and Congo; continued importance of EU’s Strategic Partners; concern with aspects of Human Rights in Russia; continued support for Middle East Peace Process; enhancing the development of defence capabilities by strengthening European defence cooperation through Pooling and Sharing and ensuring Research and Development is used to best effect.



Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland

8. Ireland's Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Eamon Gilmore T.D., addressed the meeting on the topic of "Conflict Prevention - the EU as Peacemaker" and set out the perspectives of the Irish Presidency in the area of the Common Foreign and Security Policy generally.
9. In the course of his address, the Tánaiste noted that the EU itself was a prime example of conflict resolution having emerged from centuries of enmity and division. In Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement was a recent example of a framework which acknowledged separate political identities and traditions while at the same time respecting and helping to bridge them. There was growing appreciation for the role of the Union as a force for good in the world. He urged greater use of mediation as a useful and cost effective tool. He noted that the Union was involved currently in building state capacity in Libya, implementing the Comprehensive Approach in Somalia and strengthening the capacity of the authorities in Mali.
10. The address by the Tánaiste was followed by a wide-ranging debate. The themes of the discussion included the need for even greater foreign policy vision; the supply of arms to the rebels in Syria; the promotion of good governance; the increase in settlements in the E1 area as a serious threat to the two state solution in Israel; the need for countries to implement the development aid target of 0.7% of GNI (as the UK had recently) and the need to look beyond current conflicts to future areas of conflict such as Pakistan and Morocco. The Tánaiste acknowledged that Europe could do more in relation to tax justice and Europe not providing tax havens for multi-national companies to evade and avoid paying taxes in African countries where they are operating.

Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Ireland

11. Ireland's Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Mr. Alan Shatter T.D., addressed the meeting on the topic of "The European Council on Defence 2013" and set out the perspectives of the Irish Government in the area of the Common Security and Defence Policy generally.
12. In the course of his address, the Minister highlighted active engagement and common themes emerging since December 2012 including the need for; Pooling and Sharing, clearly articulated political commitment to deployment of Battlegroups; development of functional toolbox of military capabilities and improved EU level decision making cycles; emphasised Common Security and Defence Policy must ensure maintenance of peace and security, so as to



guarantee security of EU's citizens and the promotion of its interests; EU has to be able to rely on itself to facilitate actions and reactions to world events, therefore may need to consider Member States specialising in niche capabilities; internal delays must not delay launching of CSDP operations and political will needed to make capabilities available when and where needed. Finally need to strengthen Europe's Defence industry to ensure it is more integrated, sustainable and competitive with well-functioning defence market.

13. The address by the Minister was followed by a wide-ranging debate. The themes of the discussion included the economic situation and impact on defence capabilities, responses to existing and emerging threats; existing European shortfalls in key enablers; capability requirements into the future and developing a common understanding of priorities; enhancing operational effectiveness; improving capacity of EU to rely on itself to facilitate actions and reactions to world events; cooperation with other relevant international actors.
14. Remarks were also made by Mr. Maciej Popowski, Deputy Secretary General, European External Action Service.

Workshops

15. The plenary meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference was suspended to permit delegates to participate in two workshops.

The Comprehensive Approach to instability in Africa - the experience of the Horn of Africa

16. Delegates met in Workshop format to debate "The Comprehensive Approach to instability in Africa - the experience of the Horn of Africa". The workshop was moderated by Mr. Ronan Murphy, former Director of Irish Aid. Ms. Joelle Jenny, Director for Conflict Prevention and Security Policy, EEAS, made opening contextual remarks. The rapporteur was Mr. Arnaud Danjean, Chairman of the Security and Defence sub-Committee, European Parliament.
17. A number of key themes and challenges emerged in the course of debate among delegates. These included the efforts to resolve the conflict in Somalia and the state-building and stabilisation effort in that country, serious food instability and vulnerability problems in the region, cross-border tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea, threats of terrorism and the continuing threat to international shipping from pirates.



18. Delegates discussed the combination of humanitarian and development efforts, together with the political engagement of the EU Special Representative and the work of the three CSDP missions. Particularly highlighted was the importance of partnerships especially with the African Union which ensures legitimacy and local ownership, and of good coordination between Member States' actions with those of the EU institutions.
19. The workshop noted that development of a genuine 'Comprehensive Approach' to the external relations of the EU should ensure that the various policies and instruments at the EU's disposal are used coherently and effectively in support of common objectives. The comprehensive approach should apply to all aspects of the "conflict cycle" from prevention to mediation to crisis management to post conflict reconstruction and peace-building. Delegates also recognised the importance of ensuring that humanitarian assistance should continue to be available to all who need it.

The Middle East Peace Process - the role of the European Union

20. A second Workshop was held at which delegates debated "The Middle East Peace Process - the role of the European Union". The workshop was moderated by Mr. Andreas Reinicke, EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process. The rapporteur was Mr. Petras Auštrevičius, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.
21. A number of key themes emerged in the course of debate among delegates. These included the urgent need for genuine, substantive and continuous negotiations on the MEPP; the need for a comprehensive, regional solution to ensure long-lasting peace; the importance of a negotiated peace based on the two-state solution; and the on-going determination of the EU to work constructively with all who wish to ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the region, including the US and the Quartet and regional actors including Turkey and Egypt. Delegates emphasised that ending the conflict is a fundamental interest of the EU and noted the importance of a ceasefire agreement in Gaza. In addition to its diplomatic role, the provision of humanitarian and development assistance to different countries in the Middle East was discussed. Recent developments, including the formation of a new Israeli government and the visit of President Obama and his strong political commitment to the peace process, were noted in the hope such landmarks will add fresh impetus to the peace process in due course. Delegates also discussed current developments regarding Syria and the Arab Spring. The complexity of the situation in Syria and the risk for further instability in the region was acknowledged. Delegates expressed a desire to see the EU fulfil its political leadership potential in the region including by means of financial assistance.



Conclusions

The Inter-Parliamentary Conference adopted the following conclusions:

The Inter-Parliamentary Conference -

22. *Being committed to fulfil the role envisaged for it by Title II of Protocol I of the Treaty of Lisbon and mandated to it by the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments,*
23. *Aware of the dynamic and expectations for a more effective and coherent Common EU Foreign and Security Policy and Security and Defence Policy, resulting from the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon,*
24. *Cognisant of the fact that the CFSP and CSDP involve the contribution of a variety of actors and policies at both national and EU levels,*
25. *Conscious that the multi-layered nature of the CFSP and CSDP necessitates close cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Parliament, with full regard to their respective rights, duties and representative mandates,*
26. *Is committed to contributing to the development of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference towards an optimum configuration,*
27. *Resolves to enhance the democratic engagement in the CFSP and CSDP by promoting a more systematic, regular and timely exchange of information on the different aspects and implications of the CFSP and CSDP at both national and EU levels,*
28. *Recalls the achievement of the EU in being awarded the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize as an example of regional reconciliation and peace following the devastation and destruction of the first half of the twentieth century; Recognises that promoting peaceful resolution of conflict has been a core part of the Unions CFSP since the 2001 European Council made a commitment to strengthening capacities for conflict prevention and peace-building including preventive diplomacy, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation;*
29. *Considers the further strengthening of these capacities to be essential to achieving a Comprehensive Approach; Believes that the Union's unique experiences and resources in this field, including those of its national parliaments, should be utilized and shared;*



30. Emphasises that the strength of the EU lies in developing a Comprehensive Approach drawing upon its unique ability to mobilise the full range of political, economic, development, humanitarian and - as a last resort and in accordance with the UN Charter - military means to address global challenges and threats; Is convinced that the effectiveness of this approach is only possible by solid coordination between the European External Action Service and the Commission and crucially via the support and complementarity offered by the actions of the Member States;
31. Welcomes the HRVP's initiative to map out in a report how to achieve such a Comprehensive Approach and thereby make full use of the potential of the Lisbon Treaty; Is convinced that inter-parliamentary engagement through dialogue, cooperation and promotion of democracy constitutes a significant long term component of this Comprehensive Approach;
32. Is determined, by means of this enhanced dialogue and exchange of information, to address the decision-making, capacity-building and operational weaknesses of the CFSP and CSDP, in order to make it more effective and efficient in addressing our common challenges and pursuing our common goals,
33. Expects the High Representative to bring forward an ambitious report in a timely manner on the review of the organisation and functioning of the EEAS as decided by Council on 26 July 2010 and to allow adequate time for debate and comment on this report by parliaments,
34. Acknowledges that the complex crisis situation in Mali and the Sahel represents a serious and immediate challenge for European foreign and security policy and fully supports the actions initiated by France and reinforced by the EU in Mali involving the deployment of the Comprehensive Approach, especially, the establishment of the EUTM Mali,
35. Welcomes the efforts to establish the rule of law and address the loss of life in the Horn of Africa and supports all efforts to fully implement the EU strategy for the Horn of Africa, which implements the Comprehensive Approach and, in particular, the achievements of the three current operations EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUTM Somalia and EUCAP Nestor to reinforce the prospects of sustainable regional stability,
36. Encourages the African Union including regional organisations to play a greater role in addressing the conflicts in Africa and specifically in the Horn of Africa,



37. Calls on the various EU institutions to develop further the tools at their disposal for conflict prevention and, in particular, mediation which is an effective and cost-efficient instrument for conflict prevention and to deploy all of these tools in a much more coordinated way,
38. Notes the commitment made by the HRVP to ensuring the EU plays a prominent role in the difficult but important process of peace in the Middle East; supports wholeheartedly the Council conclusions of December 2012 on the Middle East Peace Process and welcomes any moves aimed at the restarting of genuine negotiations on the MEPP and at the achievement of the two-state solution with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security; recalls that solving the conflict in the Middle East is a fundamental interest of the EU as well as of the parties themselves and the wider region,
39. Stresses that the need for progress in the peace process is even more urgent due to the ongoing changes in the Arab world; Highlights the need for dialogue with the Arab League and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference as well as other relevant regional actors on how to help restart negotiations; welcomes the positive commitment to the peace process by the re-elected US administration and believes that the EU should make dialogue and coordination with the US on this issue a high priority; Stresses the importance of continuing support to the Palestinian Authority in order to maintain their statehood management capacity,
40. Notes that the report of the High Representative aimed at developing further proposals and actions to strengthen CSDP and improve the availability of the required civilian and military capabilities is due by September 2013, with a view to a full discussion at the December 2013 European Council and urges the fullest consultation possible with all parliaments in this regard,
41. Encourages the Council to give a much-needed political boost to address the serious decline in European defence investment, capabilities and industrial capacity and to reconsider the financing mechanism of CSDP operations as well as the EU battle groups; Welcomes also the important contribution being made by the European Commission's Task Force,
42. Trusts that the European Council will reaffirm the importance of the defence pillar in the EU's comprehensive approach and commit to addressing defence capability shortfalls as well as bridging the gap between the Union's civilian and military capacities; Encourages therefore the European Council to set out a roadmap with specific timelines for achieving progress on defence issues



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including the Pooling and Sharing initiatives through the European Defence Agency as well as other solutions to make sure that the Union's security is assured despite the significant defence cuts in all Member States,

43. Asks the Presidency Parliament, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference, to forward these Conclusions to all delegations, to the Presidents of National Parliaments and of the European Parliament, to the Presidents of the European Council and the Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy,
 44. Between now and the next meeting of the Conference, its members will focus on identifying the obstacles to the implementation of all the provisions to the Lisbon Treaty concerning the CSDP. During the next meeting of the Conference, a session should be devoted to a discussion of these questions. The conclusions of these questions could be sent to the European Council in view of the December meeting devoted to the defence questions.
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APPENDIX 1

DECISION BY THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE TO APPOINT AN AD HOC REVIEW COMMITTEE

History

The Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments agreed, in the Conclusions which it adopted in Warsaw on 21 April 2012, as follows concerning the review of arrangements for the Inter-Parliamentary Conference:

“The Conference of Speakers recommends conducting a review of these arrangements for the Inter-Parliamentary Conference after two years from its first meeting, and submitting conclusions from such review by the relevant Presidency of the Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments.”.

The first Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Cyprus on 9-10 September 2012 -

“Endorsing the recommendations of the Conference of Speakers meeting in Warsaw in April 2012 that the Conference of Speakers should conduct a review of arrangements for the Inter-Parliamentary Conference two years after its first meeting,”

adopted Rules of Procedure which provided, in Article 9, that -

“The Inter-Parliamentary Conference may appoint an ad hoc review committee which would, eighteen (18) months from the first meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference, evaluate the workings of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference and make recommendations thereon to be deliberated upon by the Conference of EU Speakers.”.

The Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Cyprus on 9-10 September 2012 agreed the following paragraph in the Introductory Remarks to its Conclusions:

“The Inter-Parliamentary Conference adopted its Rules of Procedure. All amendments submitted by national Parliaments and not taken on board will be reviewed by an ad hoc committee to be established by the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in order to evaluate these proposals and present recommendations to the Speakers’ Conference of the EU, within eighteen (18) months from the first meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference. The incoming Irish Presidency is asked to submit to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference a proposal on the composition of the review committee.”.

Proposal of the Irish Presidency

An Ad Hoc Review Committee (AHRC) is appointed to conduct a review of arrangements for the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in accordance with the decisions of the Conference of Speakers and the Inter-Parliamentary Conference.



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The AHRC is composed of one representative of each of the delegations of the national Parliaments of the EU Member States and the European Parliament.

The AHRC shall be presided over by the Presidency Parliament, in close co-operation with the Trio national Parliaments (Ireland, Lithuania and Greece), the European Parliament, Cyprus and Italy.

A Working Group of the AHRC is established to conduct a preliminary review of arrangements for the Inter-Parliamentary Conference.

The Working Group is composed of one representative of each of the delegations of the Trio national Parliaments, the European Parliament, Cyprus and Italy.

The Working Group shall be presided over by the Presidency Parliament.

The Working Group may request the observations of the national Parliaments of the EU Member States on any matter within its remit. National Parliaments of the EU Member States may, at their own initiative, submit observations to the Working Group.

The Working Group shall report its observations and recommendations to the AHRC.

The Working Group shall meet at the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Lithuania but may meet by agreement at any time before it reports its recommendations to the AHRC.

The AHRC may meet by agreement at any time but shall meet in advance of and make observations and recommendations to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference presided over by the Greek Presidency.

The AHRC ceases to exist on the conclusion of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference presided over by the Greek Presidency.

Indicative Roadmap

September 2012	Cyprus	The Irish Presidency is asked to submit to the IPC a proposal on the composition of the AHRC.
March 2013	Ireland	A proposal is submitted by the Irish Presidency to the IPC in Dublin.
September 2013	Lithuania	The Working Group meets at the IPC. Before the Greek IPC, the Working Group submits recommendations to the AHRC.



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Before the Greek IPC, the AHRC prepares its final recommendations.

March 2014	Athens	The AHRC submits its final recommendations for agreement by the IPC.
February 2015	Rome	The Conference of Secretaries General considers the recommendations of the IPC.
April 2015	Rome	The Conference of Speakers considers the recommendations of the IPC.