



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

**Parliamentary Meeting
8 and 9 May 2006, Brussels**

The EU in the World and the Borders of the EU

Position of the European Parliament

A PROSPEROUS AND PEACEFUL EUROPE WITHOUT BARRIERS

A - EU ENLARGEMENT

1. In its resolution of 16 March 2006¹ on the Commission's 2005 enlargement strategy paper the EP welcomes the fact that the Commission advocates an *"outward looking Union which continues to present itself as a reliable partner for its neighbouring countries, committed to promoting stable democracies and prosperous economies."*
2. For any further accessions, the EP insists on the need for the application of *"fair and rigorous conditionality"*², stressing the importance of implementation and enforcement of legislation adopted to comply with EC law.
3. The European Parliament expects to see Romania and Bulgaria join the Union on 1 January 2007³, provided that all conditions as laid down in the relevant Treaty of Accession are fulfilled.
4. The EP welcomes the Council's decisions to open accession negotiations with Croatia (in October 2005) and to grant the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the status of candidate country (in December 2005).⁴
5. The EP had already recommended the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey in its resolution on Turkey's progress towards accession of 15 December 2004⁵, while noting at the same time that the negotiation process with Turkey *"...by its very nature is an open-ended process and does not lead 'a priori' and automatically to accession..."*
6. With regard to the remaining three Western Balkan countries⁶ the EP clearly supports *"the European perspective of the western Balkan countries, which will become an*

¹ Resolution of 16 March 2006 on the Commission's enlargement strategy paper, Brok report (A6-0025/2006)

² see fn 1

³ i.e. to avoid the application of the safeguard clause providing for a postponement by one year to 1 January 2008

⁴ see fn 1

⁵ Resolution of 15 December 2004 on Turkey's progress towards accession, Eurlings report (A6-0063/2004)

⁶ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo

*integral part of the EU once they have met the established criteria"*⁷, in line with the commitments of the June 2003 Thessaloniki European Council.

7. Already in November 2003 the EP, based on Article 49 TEU, had recalled the *"...right of countries, such as Ukraine and Moldova... to obtain EU membership when they fulfil all the requisite political and economic criteria..."*⁸
8. However, in its resolution of 19 January 2006 on the period of reflection: the structure, subjects and context for an assessment of the debate on the European Union, the EP also stressed that *"it is not possible to further enlarge the Union after the accession of Bulgaria and Romania on the basis of the Treaty of Nice."*⁹
9. The EP, in its resolution of 16 March 2006 on the enlargement strategy further recalled that *"the capacity for absorption of the Union ... remains one of the conditions for the accession of new countries"* and noted *"that defining the nature of the European Union, including its geographical borders, is fundamental to understanding the concept of absorption capacity"*. The EP thus requested the Commission to submit a report by 31st December 2006 setting out the principles which underpin this concept.
10. The EP also takes the view that, before taking a final decision on any new Member State joining the Union, it must be ensured that adequate budgetary resources are available to allow the proper financing of the Union's policies.
11. On enlargement in general, the EP stresses the importance of proper information and communication with EU citizen and suggests drawing up a *"communication strategy so as to meet the legitimate concerns of the European public regarding European enlargement and integration"*.¹⁰

B - CO-OPERATION AND INTEGRATION WITH EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS

12. The EP attaches greatest importance to closer and intensified relations between the EU and its Eastern and Southern neighbours, including the concept of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)¹¹. In November 2003 the EP called for the bilateral Action Plans to be complemented with multilateral arrangements, while insisting on a differentiated approach. It also called for the inclusion of the South Caucasus in the ENP, a proposal that was subsequently taken up by Commission and Council.
13. In view of the ENP, the EP demands to use *"all diplomatic, financial and political means available"* in order to *"support the aspirations of the peoples of our neighbouring countries to full political freedom, ...economic and social development"* and welcomes the idea of a *"European neighbourhood agreement"* at the end of the

⁷ see fn 1

⁸ Resolution of 5 November 2003 'Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours', Napoletano report (A5-0378/2003)

⁹ Resolution of 19 January 2006, Duff / Voggenhuber report (A6-0414/2005)

¹⁰ see fn 1

¹¹ In addition to the Southern dimension of the ENP, the EP had repeatedly supported the **Barcelona Process** and suggested it to be turned into an ambitious programme for inter-regional cooperation which would eventually lead to the creation of an association of Euro-Mediterranean states and incorporate a Charter for Peace and Stability and a single market.

ENP process *"for those countries which are not applying for EU membership but which have come closer to the European Union's body of law"*.¹²

14. By taking the initiative in developing new ideas for the future relations between the EU, candidate countries, future members and neighbours, the EP in its resolution of 16 March 2006 on the enlargement strategy called on the Commission and the Council *"to submit, for all European countries currently without membership prospects, proposals for a **close multilateral relationship with the EU**"* and underlined that *"it is up to all countries with recognised membership prospects to join this multilateral framework as an **intermediate step towards full membership**"*.¹³

THE EU AS A PARTNER FOR TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

15. The EP repeatedly expressed its support to a multilateral approach to trade policy, and supported the WTO as the guarantor of a rules-based international trade. It also noted that a failure of the multilateral negotiations and a shift to bilateral/regional agreements would lead to an unequal process of liberalisation and uneven development and thus be detrimental, especially for the least developed countries.
16. The EP also advocates a "parliamentary dimension" to the WTO in order to enhance the transparency and democratic accountability of the WTO and the multilateral trading system¹⁴.
17. In its resolution of 1 December 2005 on preparations for the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong the EP reaffirmed its strong support *"for placing development at the heart of the Doha Round"* and stressed *"that the negotiations must serve the purpose of eradicating poverty and bringing about fairer distribution of the benefits of globalisation."* In its resolution of 11 January 2006 on the outcome of the Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, the EP called on *"all developed and emerging countries to take responsibility for successful end-negotiations."*
18. In its resolution of 23 March 2006 on the development impact of Economic Partnership Agreements¹⁵ (EPAs), the EP stressed *"that the Development Policy Statement (DPS)... provides guidance to the EPA negotiators"*, i.e. the European Commission's Directorate-General Trade. The EP urged DG Trade to adhere to the principle of asymmetry and flexibility, to let *"developing countries decide and reform trade policy in line with their broader national development plans"*, and to fully align its negotiation strategy with the overarching DPS principle of policy coherence for development.
19. Contrary to trade, development policy is a Community policy, in which the European Parliament has the power of co-decision. It is thus the only area of foreign policy in which the Council shares legislative powers with Parliament.
20. The EP attaches greatest importance to maintaining the European Union's commitments to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.¹⁶

¹² Resolution of 19 January 2006 on the European Neighbourhood Policy, Tannock report (A6-0399/2005)

¹³ see fn 1

¹⁴ Sessions of the WTO Parliamentary Conference are held once a year and on the occasion of Ministerial Conferences.

¹⁵ Morgantini report (A6-0053/2006)

¹⁶ See, for example, resolution of 2 February 2006 on the annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of CFSP, Brok report (A6-0389/2005)

21. In its resolution of 17 November 2005¹⁷ on the proposal for a Joint Declaration by the Council, the EP and the Commission on the EU Development Policy ("The European Consensus") the EP reiterated its position *"that the overall objective of EU development cooperation should be the reduction and ultimately the eradication of poverty within the framework of sustainable development."* At the same time, the EP stressed *"that the concept of poverty is multidimensional - relating inter alia to human capabilities such as consumption and food security, health, education, rights, the ability to be heard, human security, social justice, dignity and decent work."*
22. The EP, in its resolution of 6 April 2006, on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly¹⁸, welcomed the conclusion of the negotiations on the amendment of the Cotonou Agreement in December 2005, but regretted that the agreement reached at the December 2005 Brussels summit¹⁹ *"...remains short of the initial proposals aimed at maintaining the same level of aid as under the 9th EDF."*
23. The EP takes the position that the development of Africa must be a priority for the external action of the Union and *"welcomes the Commission initiative for a joint strategy for Africa going beyond traditional development aid policies and seeking the economic and social reconstruction of the countries of the African continent."*²⁰
24. In its resolution of 21 September 2000, on complementarity between Community and Member State policies on development cooperation²¹, Parliament had expressed the view that consistency of action on the part of the EU was a priority if the effectiveness and credibility of aid were to be enhanced.

PROTECTING SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

25. For many years, defending **human rights** in the world has been one of Parliament's primary concerns and an area in which it has been most prominently involved in public debate. The EP introduced the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in December 1985. The prize is awarded annually in recognition of an action or achievement relating to respect for the defence of human rights. Today it helps to underscore Parliament's commitments to defend human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world.
26. The EP attaches greatest importance to the respect and monitoring of and the dialogue on human rights in the EU's relations with third countries. In its resolution of April 2005 on the annual report on human rights in the world, the EP urged the European Commission *"to put in place a clear mechanism for implementation of the human rights clause included in the EU contractual relations with third countries and to review, in light of this, present and future agreements."*²²

¹⁷ Wijkman report (A6-0319/2005)

¹⁸ Cornillet report (A6-0063/2006); The European Parliament makes a significant contribution to ACP-EU cooperation through the work of its Committee on Development and through the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

¹⁹ EUR 22 682 million allocated to the 10th EDF (2008-2013)

²⁰ resolution of 2 February 2006 on the annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of CFSP, Brok report (A6-0389/2005)

²¹ Ferrer report (A5-0227/2000)

²² Coveney report (A6-0086/2005)

27. The European Parliament has repeatedly welcomed the debate on and developments of **CFSP** and **ESDP**. Nevertheless, throughout its resolutions it points to the lack of a parliamentary dimension and notes a serious democratic deficit.²³
28. The European Parliament has sought throughout the 1990s to suggest an extension of the scope of **CFSP**. Bearing in mind conflicts throughout the world but especially those in the Balkans and in the Middle East, as well the changing nature of the security situation after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the EP has focused its attention on the following subjects:
- the performance of CFSP is weakened by the three-pillar structure;
 - the EU should have legal personality in order to act as a coherent legal entity in world affairs;
 - the use of qualified majority voting (QMV) should attribute a more flexible character to CFSP; Member States should make less systematic use of the constructive abstention mechanism;
 - the creation of a single European diplomatic service;
 - despite the CFSP bodies and tools put in place by the Treaty of Amsterdam, the need for institutional reform has been pressing.
29. The EP has been stressing the importance of developing the military assets and capabilities of the Member States as well as the civilian instruments of conflict prevention and crisis management²⁴.
30. In its resolution of 19 January 2006 on the period of reflection: the structure, subjects and context for an assessment of the debate on the European Union, the EP expressed *"fears that without a constitutional settlement it will not be possible for the Union ... to become a credible partner in world affairs."*²⁵
31. The EP takes the view that the *"CFSP cannot be reduced to a mere adjunct to the foreign policies of individual Member States and calls, therefore, on all Member States to act in a constructive manner in line with the spirit of the Constitution so as to enable the EU to play an effective role on the world stage."*²⁶
32. The EP takes the position that *"the period of reflection on the... Constitutional Treaty, ...presents an excellent occasion to further identify and examine any existing shortcomings in the CFSP/ESDP fields and ways in which those shortcomings could be appropriately addressed, first by making the most of the existing treaties, and second, when the time comes, by applying the new constitutional provisions."*²⁷

²³ The EP made this point again in its Resolution of 2 February 2006 on the annual report from the Council to the EP on CFSP where it deplored the Council's practice of merely informing Parliament and submitting a descriptive list of CFSP activities carried out in the previous year. Most recently however, the trilogue of 4 April 2006 agreed in the draft Interinstitutional Agreement (IIA) on the financial framework 2007-2013 that in future the Council Presidency will consult the EP on a forward-looking document, which will be transmitted by June 15 for the year in question, setting out the main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP, including the financial implications. Furthermore, the Council Presidency will keep the EP informed by holding joint consultation at least five times a year.

²⁴ See, for example, resolution of 10 April 2003 on the new European security and defence architecture – priorities and deficiencies, Morillon report (A5-0111/2003)

²⁵ Resolution of 19 January 2006, Duff / Voggenhuber report (A6-0414/2005)

²⁶ see fn 20

²⁷ see fn 20

33. The EP advocates, in the context of CFSP and ESDP, regular meetings bringing together representatives of the competent committees of national parliaments and the EP, with a view to examining the development of the two policies jointly with the Council Presidency, the HR for CFSP and the Commissioner responsible for external relations.
34. The EP requested an update of the European Union's Security Strategy *"maintaining its civil/military dual approach and its crucial concepts of preventive engagement and effective multilateralism, reflecting the 'responsibility to protect' as adopted at the UN Summit of September 2005."* At the same time the EP noted that *"both climate change and the spread of poverty in the world should now also be seen as major threats to the Union's security"*²⁸ while stressing that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) should be regarded as the most dangerous threat to international security.

²⁸ see fn 20