

Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) 7–9 September 2017, Tallinn

Co-Chairs Statement

On 7-9 September 2017, Estonia hosted the 11th Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC CFSP/CSDP). The Conference was co-chaired by Mr Marko Mihkelson, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Estonia, Mr Hannes Hanso, Chairman of the National Defence Committee of the Estonian Parliament and Mr David McAllister, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament.

Debates between national and European members of parliament took place during the Conference, on major current issues related to the EU foreign and security policy, which European citizens need to face today. Questions surrounding the future of transatlantic relations, the increasing threat of terrorism, the refugee and migration crises, cyber-attacks, attempts to disrupt the international order but also rising populism and the unity of the west were high on the agenda.

The discussions of the Conference were opened by Mrs Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Republic of Estonia who participated in the debate on defining Europe's place in the world.

The Chairmen stated that Europe is ready to contribute to strengthening transatlantic ties and continue close relations and cooperation in all sectors, including the international fight against terrorism, cyber threats and trade. In addition, the discussions voiced a deep understanding that in today's turbulent world, the only possible response lies in closer cooperation based on common democratic values, solidarity and mutual respect.

Vice-President / High-Representative Mogherini provided an outline of the recent discussions in the informal meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ministers of Defence, outlining the CFSP priorities and goals for the year to come and engaged in the discussion on new initiatives of permanent structured cooperation as well as the ongoing process regarding the common funding of EU operations. There was a clear agreement amongst the participants that the principle of solidarity among the Member States is one of the founding principles of the EU and the only effective way to tackle the challenges today's world is facing.

Great attention was also paid to the various ways to strengthen European defence and foster EU-NATO cooperation. Discussions focused on the need for better cooperation and cost-effectiveness in building up necessary resilience and ensuring capability development, as well as on growing support for the new



initiatives related to situational awareness and crisis management. The chairs highlighted the need for the adequate defence spending.

The chairs expressed deep concern about the developments in North Korea and called on the EU to maintain the common approach to persuade the DPRK to abandon its weapons of mass destruction program.

Finally, Members welcomed the in-depth discussions held on the practical aspects to fight hybrid wars. It was highlighted that in today's digital world where information is plentiful, security starts with the consumer who needs adequate tools to think critically and thus explore all information freely but safely, notably online.

This Interparliamentary Conference enabled national and European parliamentarians to coordinate their political positions on key security and defence issues with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of national and EU-level policy-making in tackling these global challenges.

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Chairman
National Defence Committee
Parliament of Estonia

David McAllister
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Affairs
European Parliament

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Chairman
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