



The following background document has been drafted and produced by our European Solidarity Corps intern Claire Gozé. The document stands as a background briefing and concept note for our event: *The Conference on the Future of Europe and the EU Global Role*

The event took place online on May 14-15, 2021 and included one training on how to use the Conference on the Future of Europe Digital Platform, and another training to support the participants to draft and structure policy recommendations.





14 years after the Lisbon Treaty, what is the present state and the future of EU foreign policy?

The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 January 2009, gave the EU a legal personality and an institutional structure for its external service. It also eliminated the pillar structure put in place by the EU Treaty in 1993. It created a series of new CFSP (Common Foreign and Security Policy) actors, including the office of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is also Vice-President of the Commission (VP/HR), and the new permanent President of the European Council. In addition, it established the European External Action Service (EEAS) and strengthened the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which is an integral part of the CFSP.

The legal basis for the CFSP is set out in the EU Treaty and was revised in the Lisbon Treaty. Title V (Articles 21-46) of the TEU sets out general provisions on the Union's external action like: compliance with UN charter, promoting general trade, humanitarian support and global governance. It also sets out specific provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP): establishment of the European External Action Service and member state's responsibilities. Part Five (Articles 205-222) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) deals with the Union's external action: EU's common commercial policy, cooperation on development and humanitarian aid for third countries, Solidarity clause, etc. Articles 346 and 347 of Part Seven also apply (territorial and temporal application).

Creating a European defence union:

For the past few years, EU has been facing many security challenges: terrorism, organised crime and cybercrime, the rise of populism governments inside and outside its borders (the mandate of Donald Trump up until last year) and the Brexit. To overcome these challenges, a comprehensive and structured improvement of CSDP should be implemented to finally achieve a European Defence Union. Closer defence integration would bring more security for European citizens, more stability at the EU borders, more efficient military spending, and a stronger voice for the EU at global level. A strong European defence would complement and strengthen NATO, leading to a more robust and balanced transatlantic relation and a better effectiveness of NATO in the regions bordering the European Union. The idea is to build a closer defence integration in order to preserve the security of European citizens and strengthen border security to stabilize them. For the EU to be able to solve conflicts as a global player, it is necessary to have a stronger foreign policy. To do that, the article 329(2) of the TFEU defining the unanimous vote to the Council for foreign and security policy should be changed in favor of a qualified majority.





Take the lead in NATO actions:

To this day, the bigger financial contributor to NATO activities are the United States, and given that the only serious EU coordinating effort used to be undertaken within NATO, European countries' defence systems became structurally dependent on the US. Not having its own army, the EU should take the lead in NATO actions: strengthen the transatlantic partnership, take greater responsibility for its collective security and territorial defence and develop the coordination between EU members within the Alliance (NATO) for the EU values to be taken into account and weigh more when it comes to collective decisions.

Do more together to build a “diplomatic muscle” in a multipolar world:

In order to be a global player, the EU must achieve strategic autonomy, i.e. emancipate itself from the international leaders of our multipolar world:

1. Politically from the US.
2. Economically from China concerning trade.
3. From Russia for mineral resources (natural gas).

The EU should strengthen cooperation in its foreign policy area pursuing the: “diplomatic muscle” policy strategy. This means a policy of cooperation without dependency to any world hegemonic power. To do that, several policies nowadays in place would need further development: expand the EU's soft power, support the international institutions, protect the international law, and act as an international mediator.

The interests of each country VS the EU interest, and the possibility of being a global player:

The EU has undoubtedly a strong theoretic influence in the international area due to its position, its action in terms of the major challenges facing our societies (environment, energy, information society, terrorism, etc...). On the other hand, its strategic interests are limited by the European member states themselves because they more often prefer to pursue and safeguard their own political interests. In order to be operational and concrete, the EU's common interests have to be perceived and accepted as such by the Europeans themselves, and the EU member states governments too.

With the Green Deal for example, the EU has the opportunity of being a global player and influencing the world stage in the field of climate change. Yet, the European member states have different approaches in addressing the climate economic issues. The challenge for the future is to achieve the ambition of the Green Deal overcoming the divisions and unifying the priorities. It is essential to reach a consensus and to include all types of stakeholders, particularly the citizens, in the debates on the ecological transition.





In order to build stronger cooperation between Europeans and be a global player, the European Union has to develop in its values a stronger integration of the citizens' voices. That is why the Conference on the Future of Europe has been launched on the 9th of May 2021. Its aim is to collect ideas for EU reform from European citizens through a series of consultations: conferences, panels and debates involving European citizens, the Conference Plenary including different types of stakeholders and a Digital platform serving as a database for all policy recommendations.

Sources:

- [Union of European Federalists \(UEF\): Resolution on the EU-US relationship](#)
- [Statecraft | SUMMARY: NATO 2021 Summit](#)
- [NATO and the European Union: a defensive relationship - The New Federalist](#)
- [NATO Review - Strengthening EU-NATO relations](#)
- [Union of European Federalists \(UEF\): 5 proposals to create a European Defence Union](#)
- [Security Union Strategy \(europa.eu\)](#)
- [The Strategic Interests of the European Union - Carnegie Europe - Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#)
- [CoFoE - Conference on the Future of Europe - JEF Europe](#)

