EPP CONGRESS
HELSINKI 2018

epp
european people's party

A Europe that defends our values and interests in the world

Policy Paper 4

adopted at the EPP Congress, Helsinki (Finland), 7-8 November 2018

EPP Policy Paper 4

A Europe that defends our values and interests in the world

As the world is changing and security challenges increasing, European citizens expect better protection against threats from the Union. The EPP has been at the forefront of promoting Euroatlantic cooperation and a stronger role for the EU in defence and security. We recognise that in today's increasingly volatile world, Europeans, more than ever, need to take fate into their own hands. We need a European Security and Defence Union that addresses the security threats of today and tomorrow, focusing on our own resilience, tackling threats in our neighbourhood and helping to solve global security problems. We need to do so in coordination with our transatlantic partners and NATO.

Our values are our interests

The European Union was founded on principles that aim to safeguard peace, our way of life, democracy and prosperity, equality and human rights. The only safe world is a multi-lateral rules-based world. Dictatorships and authoritarian regimes lack these values and therefore will always be a source of instability and unpredictability, undermining the rules-based global order. Support for democracy and the rule of law, both within the EU and globally, must remain a cornerstone of our policy. Furthermore, the diminishing space for civil society in authoritarian countries may pose risks to our own freedom. We should aim to halt the spread of authoritarianism and reduce its influence in our own societies. Global democracy support can be achieved by developing closer ties with civil society through organisations such as the European Endowment for Democracy. In addition to this, good governance must become a more prominent part of our efforts to bring stability to affected regions. Across the globe, democratic movements without long-term strategies of good governance will either lose power or resort to undemocratic means to keep it. In our efforts, we must increase coordination with our transatlantic partners, especially with the US Congress and Civil Society, with friendly and democratic governments across the world as well as with transnational institutions. Political conditionality must remain an element of all forms of economic cooperation with our partners. Incentives for strengthening the rule of law, democracy and civil rights must be included in every agreement and subsequently implemented.

Our strength is our best defence

Today, the threats to our way of life, freedom and prosperity are not exclusively external. Since 2015 jihadist terrorism has become an internal and external threat. It is enhanced by actors with the ability to act on a global level such as Al Qaida and ISIS/Daesh. Another emerging threat comes in the form of attempts to influence our politics and societies through political corruption, cyberwarfare, disinformation and the direct or indirect support of parties and movements. The Russian Federation is the clearest example, but China, Turkey and some Gulf states have also begun to interfere in the EU and its neighbourhood with increasing intensity. The result is that external challenges have become internal dangers.

Defence against these new or reinforced threats begins at home. Member states should improve their infrastructure against cyber-attacks and develop cyber-defence capacities. The EU should assume a coordinating role in this, promote "best practice" procedures and upgrade the existing Europol cyber unit to a real European cyber-brigade to improve the capacity to defend ourselves. Our capacities must include countering information warfare. In addition to this, member states should develop their strategic communication and counter-disinformation capacities. The EU itself should strengthen its East Stratcom Team in the European External Action Service (EEAS). Intelligence and police cooperation must be stepped up: This requires initiatives to enhance trust between member states and their authorities. Violent political radicalism, especially Islamist extremism, must be fought with more strategic foresight and determination in all member

states. Foreign investments, especially by Russian and Chinese entities, must be scrutinised more thoroughly, particularly in sectors such as media, strategic infrastructure and technology. The EU should improve its monitoring capacities in this regard, and member states should be more receptive to advice coming from EU institutions. Economic, diplomatic and political sanctions, especially those directed at individuals, must remain an instrument of our arsenal of responses to direct external aggressions, on our territory.

Europeans will have to contribute to their own security more than ever. Structures should be prepared for civilian assistance to armed forces in cases of hybrid attacks and war. The Nordic and Baltic countries are leading the way in this regard. Military mobility across the EU should be strengthened by means of a reinforced standardization of transport infrastructure taking into account the respective constitutional requirements of member states. All member states of the EU should aim to spend at least 2 % of GDP on defence by 2025 – and at the same time, we welcome the establishment of the European Defence Fund in 2017. This will promote cooperation and cost savings among Member States in producing state-of-the-art and interoperable defence technology and procurement of equipment, including the strengthening of the European Defence Agency (EDA). This will result in a more efficient use of taxpayers' money. Furthermore, intervention capacities by the EU must be strengthened: Hence we need a common intervention force. We should build on, and extend, the system of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) to enable us to cooperate in defence, including better EU command and control structures. We need an integrated defence market and vastly improved pooling of resources in Research and Development. In a later stage of the Brexit process, security cooperation, especially on terrorism and hybrid threats, will be an important element of the future EU-UK relationship. NATO-EU coordination and cooperation must be constantly and persistently enhanced and deepened, especially when it comes to cyberwarfare and hybrid aggression against us. We also must work on our internal civil resilience, through policies that enhance our citizens' awareness on security and defense and that contribute to strengthening our European values.

The security of our neighbourhood is our security

What happens in the Eastern and Southern neighbouring regions, has a direct impact on us. Poverty, instability, corruption, the absence of the rule of law, hybrid warfare, frozen conflicts, civil war and large numbers of refugees are direct challenges for European societies. That is why it is in our immediate interest to strengthen democracy, the rule of law and good governance, and to foster economic development in our neighbouring regions.

The EU's pre-enlargement policy in the Western Balkans needs a strict and fair approach. This will require more attention and a higher volume of cooperation, but also strict conditionality based on reaffirming the Copenhagen criteria as outlined in the European Commission's Western Balkan Strategy. Fighting corruption, putting in place the rule of law and strengthening the independence of justice is one essential precondition of joining the Union. We insist that all preconditions for membership of the Union must be fully and sustainably met by applicant states. Efforts for reconciliation via civil society organisations, and for cross-border and regional cooperation using market integration, must be enhanced. Attempts by external actors to expand their influence and destabilise the situation must be countered with attentiveness and stronger EU engagement.

Strategic partnerships must be built with both governments and societies in Eastern Europe. Ukraine must be supported in its ongoing efforts to counter Russian aggression, fight corruption, reform the economy and public administration and strengthen the rule of law. Russia's aggression against its neighbours must be recognised and met with a determined and common response by the Union. Both military strength and a constructive dialogue with Russia are necessary. We will not accept Russia setting the framework in the region.

Strategic partnerships and project-oriented cooperation between local communities must also be built with our Southern neighbours. The Euro Mediterranean cooperation framework should be strengthened, making better use of market access in order to foster economic development

in the partner countries. After World War II the 'Marshall Plan' was initiated by the Americans to help rebuild the Western European economies. This contributed largely to our continent's recovery. It helped us to help ourselves. In the years and decades to come, we will have to develop a strategy to help Africans to help themselves, improve living conditions and economic development and security so that they can provide a better future for themselves in view of their fast-growing population. The Marshall Plan with Africa should be based on security, good governance, food, health and education projects and introduce initiatives that have a long-term impact and also serve Europe's interests on the continent. In the meantime, the EU and its member states should uphold their treaty obligations on development cooperation, and their international commitments to achieve the 0,7% Official Development Assistance (ODA) target.

Facing the new challenges to the rules-based multi-lateral order

If we return to a world of great power competition and protectionism, we will not be able to maintain freedom and prosperity at home. Free and fair trade and effective multilateral institutions are indispensable. The World Trade Organisation should be the only appropriate forum to address trade disputes. It must be respected and strengthened. The United Nations system, despite its deficiencies, remains our best hope to prevent a backslide into a dangerous world in which stronger countries make their own international laws. That is also why the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court in The Hague and other multilateral institutions should be consistently supported by the EU. Moreover, the system of global treaties such as the Paris Climate Accord, must be strengthened. In all of these cases, we should devote more energy to raise the awareness of our global partners, including the current US government, of the dangers of weakening the global liberal order. In such cases, we must also partner with legislative, regional and civil society to counterbalance potentially uncooperative national governments.

Europe was the point of origin for the development of freedom and modernity. Rooted in Judaism and Christianity, Greek philosophy and Roman Law, the Enlightenment and Humanism, as well as the attraction of the European Union and its member states: This is our soft power. Now we must add hard power and civil-military capacities. Above all, we must recognise the window of opportunity, make use of our newfound sense of purpose, to make for a more secure Europe in a more secure world.