

Foreign Affairs and Human Rights



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Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament

Increasingly, UK foreign policy whether we like it or not has an EU dimension, especially when we are working through the UN structures and the G20 or involved in CSDP operations. The challenges we in Britain face are challenges that other European countries and our major economic partners globally face too – for example, fighting terrorism and international crime, managing migration flows, defending external borders, mitigating climate change, and solving environmental challenges, energy security, arms control, nuclear proliferation and managing international development aid. Gone are the days when diplomacy was just about state-to-state bilateral relations, we are now also agenda setting at a supranational and multilateral level. Today, foreign policy is a broad umbrella shaped by many interests that often coincide but sometimes conflict.

Conservative Party's Foreign Policy Priorities:

- Creating a National Security Council
- Committing to the transatlantic alliance
- Deepening of alliances beyond Europe and North America
- Reforming older institutions such as the UN and making effective use of new ones such as G20
- Upholding our own values abroad

Our work this year in the European Parliament

This year has seen an important number of developments in Foreign Affairs at the EU level:

The further development of the EEAS

Following the approval of the European External Action Service created by the Treaty of Lisbon which Conservatives opposed, Charles has been engaging pragmatically with the structures that are now being created in order to put the service into operation, and also exercising democratic oversight over the service; this year the Parliament has scrutinised the budget to ensure that the service delivers value for

money and has questioned candidates for EU delegation heads to ensure that only the most qualified staff are appointed as heads of delegations throughout the world.

Encouraging and Consolidating Democracy in the Middle East and Africa

This year has been a time of momentous change in countries of the Middle East and North Africa; Revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt have been a reflection of frustration at the country's lack of democracy and relative economic stagnation. Several governments of these countries have been swept aside for failing to meet the aspirations of their peoples. In Libya, human rights were routinely abused and Colonel Gaddafi never stood for election since coming to power 42 years ago. That was why Charles expressed grave concern at the renewal of the EU's Framework agreement with Libya in January this year and supported Prime Minister David Cameron's courageous UN and NATO initiative to protect the Libyan people and bring down the tyrant.

Throughout the region, we now have a tremendous opportunity to foster functioning democracies that will serve the will of their people. However, the revolutions and overthrowing of dictators are only the first steps on the road to producing



*Charles with Bangladesh Prime Minister
Sheikh Hasina (second from right)*

prosperous and democratic societies with a lasting legacy of stable and moderate governments.

In the European Parliament we shall be coordinating our work to support these countries. We shall be scrutinising the EU's policies that promise to help support institutions and deliver financial aid. Later this year, the Foreign Affairs Committee shall be undertaking a review of the European Neighbourhood Policy and we will be working to ensure that the Parliament's recommendations to the Council and Commission highlight any potential shortcomings in the current policy given the new political environment in transitional democracies.

Conservatives will also continue to ensure that while resources are allocated to institution building efforts in Tunisia and Egypt, that other essential issues in Middle Eastern politics are not overlooked. The ECR Group has continued to raise awareness of problems in Israel, putting direct pressure on the EU's High Representative, Baroness Ashton, to work to stop the Gaza Flotillas and have demanded exactly how the High Representative plans to engage with a new unitary Palestinian Authority and the question of recognition of Palestinian statehood at UN level. Charles has been instrumental in ensuring that projects that foster democracy have been supported in North African countries at this critical point in time, while ensuring that our neighbours to the East such as Ukraine and Moldova are not overlooked by developments in the Arab world.

Assessing opportunities for EU Enlargement

British Conservatives support the enlargement of the EU to include countries that fully meet the Copenhagen criteria, as we believe that a larger EU should result in a more flexible and less centralised union. This year a number of key developments have occurred in a number of EU candidate countries;

In April this year, the European Parliament delivered its report on the status of Iceland's accession negotiations. While Conservatives in the European Parliament are broadly supportive of Iceland's application, we have stipulated that the issue of Iceland's fishing fleets overfishing mackerel stocks as well as the Icesave issue need to be fully resolved in order to successfully conclude



Charles in conversation with President Jacob Zuma of South Africa during his visit to the Foreign Affairs Committee. Charles visited the African Union HQ in Addis Ababa in September where he met the South African mission to the AU to discuss EU-Africa relations.



Charles holding a press conference with the Prime Minister of Montenegro Milo Đukanović in Podgorica during a visit as European Parliament Permanent Rapporteur

accession negotiations. Charles has also visited Montenegro to investigate the country's efforts to meet the Copenhagen criteria. Furthermore, Conservatives will also be evaluating Croatia's progress to accession, paying particular attention to the measures that Croatia is taking to stamp out corruption.

Defending Human Rights

Charles is also the Spokesman for Human Rights for the Conservatives in the European Parliament. Human Rights are at the very core of the EU's values and its work, and through his work in the Parliamentary Committees and Delegations as well as the drafting of numerous resolutions, speeches and articles, Charles has worked to defend human rights and promote democracy throughout the world. Just some of the issues on which Charles has worked include the persecution of Christians and other religious minorities; discrimination against homosexuals, particularly in African countries; the stoning to death of women for adultery in Somalia and Afghanistan, intimidation of journalists in countries including Russia and

China; trafficking of women for sex slavery in the EU; and the execution of juveniles, particularly in Iran. Charles has called for EU measures against oil and mineral resources being used globally to finance armed conflict, which follows from the successful EU-initiated Kimberly process which prevents the export of 'blood diamonds' by West African militias. 🟡🟢