

Working Group VII

Working document 7

Working group VII – "External Action"

Subject: **Draft text on principles and objectives of EU external action**

Members of Working Group VII will find attached a draft text by the Secretariat on the principles and objectives of EU external action, as requested by the Group. The text takes into account comments and proposals by members, as well as current Treaty language on principles and objectives of the different external policy areas.

Principles and Objectives of EU External Action

1. The Union's action on the international stage will be guided by, and designed to advance in the wider world, the very values which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, solidarity, respect for the independence of sovereign states, freedom of opinion and opportunity, freedom from famine and fear. The Union will seek to develop relations and build partnerships with all countries, and regional or global organisations, who share its values; will seek multilateral solutions to common problems; will fully respect all international obligations; and will act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.
2. The European Union will define and pursue common policies in all areas of external relations where competence has been attributed to it and will work for the closest possible co-operation and the maximum degree of joint action in those areas where responsibility remains with the Member States:
 - (a) To safeguard the interests, independence and integrity of the Union;
 - (b) To consolidate and support democracy, the rule of law, international justice and human rights;
 - (c) To encourage the integration of all countries into the world economy, including through the abolition of restrictions on international trade;
 - (d) To foster the economic and social development of developing countries, and to reduce poverty in the world, in particular in the least developed countries;
 - (e) To assist communities, countries or regions confronting human or natural disaster;
 - (f) To develop international measures to preserve the environment and global natural resources, and ensure sustainable development; and
 - (g) To preserve peace, and strengthen international security, in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter.
3. Some EU internal policies have external aspects. When considering such aspects, the Union will have in mind the above objectives.