

ENGAGING EUROPE IN THE WORLD



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The manifesto signed by the Task Force of Notre Europe – Jacques Delors Institute on the external action of the EU calls on the European political authorities who take office this summer to commit to a strategic rebound in the European engagement at the international level in five domains: external and defence policy, energy, migration, trade and enlargement and neighbourhood policy.

The world is undergoing profound changes which call for a more reactive and responsible Europe. We have to reverse the scenario of a progressive erosion of its international influence.

The new economic and financial powers whose GDP overtook that of the old industrial powers in 2012, are dramatically changing the balance of forces in the world. With the world's economic centre of gravity shifting towards the Asia-Pacific region and China set to become the world's leading economic power, the G7 might have no more European members in it by 2050. But the European Union could certainly be a member if it so wished.

The emerging countries will of course remain focused on their domestic issues (the consolidation of their growth model, protests against central authority, social issues and so forth) for some time to come. But their economic potential and their potential for influence, along with their legitimate aspiration to carry greater weight on the international stage, are very real.

These trends might also be accompanied by a shift in diplomatic and military clout as the new economic powers' arms race speeds up, while the Europeans continue to slash their own defence budgets.

In this new multipolar world, the Western model is no longer the yardstick, and no single power is in a position to guarantee the leadership required to respond to the global challenges. The multilateral institutions have not yet been tailored to cater for this new balance (or disorder) of forces. There is a genuine deficit in global governance despite the absolute need for such governance in handling the key issues associated with

international security, macro-economic and financial regulation, and human development (managing natural resources, climate change, growing inequality and so forth).

This rapid change in the global situation goes hand in hand, on the European Union's doorstep, with clear difficulty in turning, like in the past, the attractiveness of the European model into the main tool for stabilisation in the EU's neighbourhood. Our neighbours' reform paths diverge. Their alignment with European choices, which it was still possible in the 2000s to hope would be gradual and functional, has become less of a foregone conclusion. And indeed on its eastern border, with the Ukraine crisis, the EU is measuring the head-on rivalry pitting it against Moscow in its traditional area of influence. In the south, also, Europe's influence is increasingly disputed because new foreign investors (such as China or Qatar) do not insist on the same conditionality as the EU (which pegs increased exchanges and investment to more sweeping reforms). The fragility of our neighbours' domestic cohesion is increased by the appearance on the scene of these counter-models and of radical or fundamentalist movements. The EU's leadership, for example, which has rested hitherto on its economic power, on its political model and on the prospect of membership for some of our neighbours in the Balkans rather than on European foreign policy, is no longer sufficient. The Community's institutional agenda and such instruments as association agreements are out of sync with the pace of transformation in our neighbourhood. We should prepare ourselves to struggle more fiercely in defence of our values and our interests.

Moreover, Russia's posture in Ukraine and China's stance in its neighbours' territorial waters are

reminding us quite brutally that conflict-generating territorial ambitions remain a threat. The showdown with Russia, unprecedented since the end of the Cold War, combined with the instability in countries on the Mediterranean's southern shore and with the clashes in the Middle East, demand that we actively tailor our external action policy to the reality of an increasingly unpredictable neighbourhood.

The member states cannot afford to make do with a weak, fall-back posture. To avert the risk of strategic downgrading and to find its place in this context of increased, more competitive and probably more conflict-based global interdependence, no single member state is able to address all of these challenges on its own. In order to carry weight in this new stage in the globalisation process and to rediscover our power of attraction and our strength for change in our neighbourhood, the European scale is more relevant than ever.

The EU has numerous trump cards available to it today: it has the largest internal market in the world, an active trade policy, the best-funded development and humanitarian aid policy, a way of life based on respect for the rule-of-law state and for the principles of democracy, a will to combat inequality and to promote the protection of the environment, a European institutional framework strengthened by the Treaties, and so forth. It is by making the best use of this "European added value" and further mutualising our strengths through common policies that we will be able to bolster our influence.

We call on the European political authorities who are set to take office during the summer, to commit to this strategic comeback from the very beginning of the legislative term from 2014 to 2019. This effort must, of course, focus on the Union's internal policies in order to guarantee, in particular, a return to growth in all of the member states, which is essential for the credibility of the social market economy. But defending our interests in the world also requires rapid progress in the sphere of the Union's external policy.

We must speed up the adoption of mechanisms for the collective management of crises, and check the decline in our military capabilities. Our interests in the energy sphere must be coordinated in order to ensure security of supply, which can be enabled by a European energy community. We must evince greater solidarity in the struggle against illegal immigration by simultaneously

developing a common policy for legal immigration that will allow us to address the challenge of our demographic decline. We must also help our businesses to benefit from the growth of the emerging markets and promote our standards in the context of our common trade policy. And lastly, we need to adopt a more proactive stance with our neighbours.

It is only by embracing these concrete targets in the short and medium term in order to allow these five priority projects to make progress that we will be able to contribute to strengthening our place and our role on the international stage.

It is in this perspective that we make the following recommendations, whose objective is not to cover all the issues of the EU external action, but to identify the priorities of the legislature that opens in the wake of the European elections.

1. A more united and more realistic Europe for crisis management

The number of crises around the edges of the European Union is growing. Yet they are profoundly different in their nature, in their repercussions, and in the responses we can offer them according to whether they are taking place on the southern shore of the Mediterranean or in the Union's eastern neighbourhood.

In the latter case, it is impossible not to take Russia's specific role into account. Vladimir Putin seems to have shut the door against cooperation in order to set off down the path of a confrontation with his neighbours, with Ukraine topping the list but also towards his former Western partners, be it the United States or the European Union. Thus managing the crisis currently gripping Ukraine does not fall solely to the Europeans. The crisis needs to be managed in conjunction with the Atlantic alliance. But the EU still has a special political responsibility towards the area. It needs to urgently redefine the principles and the management of its overall policy towards Russia, of its neighbourhood policy and even of its enlargement policy.

The crises being played out on the Mediterranean's southern shore, whether we are talking about Africa or the Maghreb and the Middle East, are of a different nature. But we can no longer rely on the efforts made by our ally the United States to stabilise our neighbourhood because that country is now deploying its defence

resources in the Pacific and calling on us to become more independent. We have to display greater responsibility in the way we prepare to handle the major crises on the EU's doorstep by strengthening our collective decision-making and defence capabilities.

The decisions reached last December by the European Council are a step in the right direction. In the field of military capability, they seek to prevent the ongoing tendency to slash national defence budgets from leading to further shortfalls in our capability. In the defence industry, it is only by cooperating that we will succeed in maintaining our technological skills and in making up for the way in which we are lagging behind in certain areas. Yet we cannot be content with simply maintaining the kind of military resources that enable us only to intervene in local conflicts ahead of UN intervention. We need to speed up the implementation of collective crisis handling instruments by making sure that in the next legislative term we devote our energies to:

1.1. Developing a common foreign policy

There is no point in our having military or civilian crisis management tools if we do not agree on how, where or when to use them. More rapid progress has occasionally been made in the CSDP field than in the foreign policy sphere, so it is primarily on that field that efforts must focus. It is imperative to define common positions towards third countries, particularly Russia, but also towards major strategic issues - regional stability in the Middle East, nuclear non-proliferation, the use of force and so forth. It is only on the basis of these common visions that we will be able, in the event of a crisis, to take collective decisions to commit European resources, whether we are talking about economic sanctions or about military resources.

1.2. Reviewing the European security strategy

The list of priority threats drafted in 2003, including the struggle against terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction and traditional local conflicts, now has to be completed by the growth of certain social phenomena (political transitions, interfaith clashes, international migrations and so forth) and of such sectoral issues as the securitisation of energy supplies or of sea lanes (through which some 90% of world trade currently transits).

Yet this revision cannot be limited to the mere juxtaposition of sectoral or regional strategies. We have to specify what our priorities are for managing the various aspects of our interdependence and for defending our interests in different geopolitical areas (the Atlantic, Asia, the Mediterranean and Africa, the Arctic) in order to better anticipate the kind of external intervention to which we may need to resort. This also presupposes our clarifying the extent to which we are prepared to resort to the use of force.

1.3. Preparing a White Paper on EU security and defence

As we continue to cut our defence budgets, the rest of the world is continuing to pursue its arms race: the share of global military spending that the BRIC countries - Brasil, Russia, India and China - have devoted to expenditure on defence shot up from 8% to 13.5% between 2001 and 2011, as against a drop from 30% to 18% in the Europeans' case, while the United States is stable at 41% and Russia has announced a 44% increase in its defence budget over the next three years.

We can no longer put off drafting a White Paper on EU security and defence which would enable us to set out down the path of a more active rationalisation of the member states' military capabilities and would be designed to support the European defence industry in this increasingly competitive international arms market. The next legislative term is going to have to address the obstacles standing in the way of the drafting of this White Paper at the appropriate political level.

1.4. Clarifying the CSDP's constraints and resources

A number of political constraints need to be addressed if we seriously wish to deepen the CSDP. On the one hand, there is the specific position of the United Kingdom, which is at once a crucial, major military power and, at the same time, very hostile to the prospect of European defence. We can no longer continue to act as though that paradox does not exist. And on the other hand, there is the matter of unanimity or flexibility in implementing the CSDP: quite apart from military operations for which a consensus remains necessary, it is high time that those member states which can and wish to do so, began to seriously explore the opportunities offered by permanent structured cooperation, with regard for instance to the creation of an EU military staff.

In the context of the current budget deficit, the proposal put forward by France in December 2013 to endow the EU with a European fund for military operations going beyond the simple sharing of costs established under the Athena mechanism, has put the finger on a solidarity issue which the Twenty-Eight rapidly need to address.

And lastly, where capability is concerned, the goal of first entry in a crisis theatre, which led in particular to the creation of battlegroups, needs to be rethought in the light of past experience, of strategic needs, and of the member states' political will. A robust capability for second entry that is sustainable over the longer term and for brokering reconciliation and reconstruction in countries that are emerging from crises is an issue which must be explored in greater depth.

2. A very necessary common energy policy

2.1. What European certainties in a rapidly changing energy context?

We need to develop a European energy community, which is becoming more necessary than ever before, in order to ensure greater security, independence and international influence for the EU in the face of growing competition for access to resources, but also to strengthen the competitiveness of our economies in this sphere and to complete our energy transition.

The energy sphere is currently undergoing profound change. China's ongoing growth, the aftermath of Fukushima, and the boom in the development on unconventional gas (and oil) in the United States and its impact on industrial competitiveness, are all question marks but also opportunities for the EU. The price of hydrocarbons has been subject to growing fluctuation since 2007, with major repercussions on an EU that is increasingly dependent for its energy supply. Global competition for access to resources has also increased, and the EU is once again having to face tremendous energy-related tension in its neighbourhood, primarily to the east and especially in view of the crisis between Ukraine and Russia. While the EU has been able to make progress over the past few years in the diversification of its gas sources and the security of its gas supplies, a great deal more progress has yet to be made, especially in connection with the intelinking of gas networks between member states so as to guarantee effective solidarity and mutual aid, which is particularly necessary in the present situation.

As the EU has also committed to a transition towards a low-carbon economy, these various developments are causing tension - between the three goals of sustainable development, competitiveness and security of supply - which is likely to jeopardise the energy transition in Europe in the medium and longer term; and national tension between unilateral policies tending to destabilise the European energy system as a whole.

The next European legislative term is going to have its work cut out to adopt and implement binding instruments to reflect the new realities and requirements of the EU's and its member states' energy policy, and to thus pave the way for the construction of a "European energy community" more necessary today than it has ever been in the past. If energy solidarity is to become a tangible reality for all of the Europe's citizens, then major progress must be made on a European scale.

2.1. Relaunching competitiveness and "competition which stimulates"

It is only by completing the integration of a competitive and integrated internal energy market on a European scale that energy resources can be optimised within the EU and that energy industry operators can finally become competitive at the European and international level. The member states themselves have to taken this process on board and the are implementing it in good faith. The lessons imparted by the new dynamics of the European and international markets that have occurred since 2007 must also be taken on board. We have to make haste in completing the implementation of a reliable, efficient and competitive internal energy market and in building an integrated, smart network capable of serving the internal market and of allowing us to achieve the goals of sustainable development and security of supply.

2.3. Fostering a diversified energy mix and bolstering security of supply in Europe

The energy transition process demands a common approach to the diversification of energy resources. The EU needs to take care to preserve the balance of its supplies in its energy mix by fostering as diversified a mix as possible. In this connection, a more coordinated approach, especially with regard to the development of renewable energy, would have the merit of ensuring the better optimisation of resources and of avoiding "stop and go" policies which hamper the necessary investments. A consistent and harmonised

approach within the EU is also necessary in order to ensure that the various national instruments adopted by the member states to guarantee their security of electricity supply do not destabilise the European system as a whole. All existing incentive measures, whatever the type of energy involved, should be gradually suspended. Joint European research in the area of new technologies must be revived on a large scale.

2.4. Pursuing the diversification of gas supply sources on a European scale

The EU still depends to a considerable degree on certain sensitive regions for its oil and gas. It is crucial that we pursue a strategy for the geographical diversification of supply sources. To achieve this, we have to prove capable of speaking with a single voice on the international energy scene, forging as many partnerships as necessary with the supplier and transit countries outside our borders in order to conclude agreements that are favourable to the EU as a whole. This demands that we be able to pool certain supply capabilities by benefiting from an interconnected internal market, and to negotiate the necessary framework agreements with the supplier and transit countries at the EU level. The success of this project will constitute major progress in the sphere of our common foreign policy.

In addition to all of this, the EU needs to adopt a more determined stance with foreign operators and suppliers, with Russia heading that list, in order to make sure that the Community acquis and the regulations governing its internal energy market are scrupulously complied with. The EU needs to be strong and firm with Russia over its attempts at destabilisation and over its tactics consisting in dividing in order the better to rule. This involves forcing Russia and its businesses to comply scrupulously with our ground rules when they operate on Europe's markets, whether it be for the supply of gas or in any other sector of the European energy market. The Europeans also need to make more of the fact that Russia depends as much, in fact probably more, on the income it earns from the export of its hydrocarbon resources (gas and coal, but also uranium) to the EU than we depend on Russia for our gas supplies (30%). While it is unthinkable in the short or medium term for us to stop importing gas from Russia, the relationship between the EU and Russia in the energy sphere must be rethought in order to allow us to overcome this virtually ongoing showdown and to finally manage in a constructive fashion the interdependence binding the Russians and the Europeans in numerous areas, especially in the energy industry.

3. A responsible, solidarity-based Europe in the sphere of human resources

We also have to face a demographic challenge. The relative weight of our ageing population, which is only going to account for approximately 7% of the world's population by 2050, is a major human resource issue for our economic growth because China, India and Africa on their own are expected to account for two-thirds of young professionals aged between 19 and 25 by 2030. In addition to which, international migration has multiplied threefold in forty years, with south-south migration reaching the same level as south-north migration in 2013. Applications for political asylum are also increasing exponentially as we see more and more political crises and civil wars triggering refugee flows in hitherto unknown proportions (six million people have left Afghanistan and four million have left Iraq since the 1980s). This demographic evolution in the EU and in the rest of the world, and the deep transformation of international migrant flows, demand that we root our immigration policy in a rationale of global change.

Our attention focuses primarily today on securing our external borders and on handling illegal immigration while we tend to neglect the issue of legal migration, a topic barely touched on at the Community level. Yet there is a double challenge here: we need to better balance the burden of the struggle against illegal immigration and of asylum seekers, and at the same time we need to be one step ahead of the EU's demographic decline.

3.1. Strengthening intra-European solidarity and cooperation with countries of origin and transit

Within the Schengen area, member states retain responsibility for monitoring the Union's external borders. We have already adopted major legislation and resources at the European level, implementing mechanisms of solidarity for those member states most heavily exposed to illegal immigration (the Frontex Agency coordinates the mobilisation of European resources and can count on a rapid intervention force [Rabits], on centralised information systems, and on funding to offset the burden of monitoring borders and of taking in immigrants).

Yet the upcoming legislative term must further bolster solidarity among member states by developing urgent aid tools for certain member states, by boosting the

resources earmarked for Frontex and Europol in order to smash the illegal maritime traffic, and by adopting regulations demanding respect for fundamental rights and the principle of non-refoulement in operations on the high seas, which will make it possible at once both to hinder access to European soil and to rescue endangered migrants.

Moreover, we must be more pro-active in seeking the cooperation of the countries of origin and transit via readmission agreements in the context of a broader policy governing legal immigration (readmission in return for the issue of visas). But we must also take care to ensure that such agreements are accompanied by a policy designed to improve migrants' standards of living in detention camps outside European territory.

The right to asylum is one of the areas in which the Europeans have made the greatest progress over the past few years. Yet the shareout of refugees among member states can be managed better and we can develop a fairer system for asylum seekers.

And finally, the EU's migration-related issues are far too divorced from Europe's development and cooperation policy. Increased synergy between private and public development initiatives would be beneficial for the countries of origin. We need to move further forward in this direction by supporting the move to revise the United Nations' Millennium Goals in order to forge a link between immigration and development.

3.2. Developing a responsible migration policy

Yet we have to go beyond, to transcend, the security-based approach to external border monitoring if we are to develop a common policy on legal immigration capable of countering the EU's demographic decline. The contribution made by net migration to the growth of the EU's overall population has been dropping since 2013. Without fresh immigration, there could be a 12% drop in the European population of working age by 2030, and it would already start showing in terms of a shortage of labour between now and 2020.

To bolster our economic dynamism, the funding of our social systems and the continued existence of our public services over the next few decades, we are going to have to resort to immigration and we are even going to have to become more attractive in order to exert a pull on those migrants to whom other regions and continents are opening their doors.

This issue does not attract a great deal of attention in the current high unemployment situation, but if we are to carry weight on the international stage by becoming an attractive destination so as to be able to meet our future labour requirements, we need a common strategy. A responsible and reasonable European policy is the only way to ensure compliance with European values in terms of worker safeguards and to avoid there being any inconsistency with the struggle against unemployment with new arrivals weighing down on the unemployment figures. Moreover, this common policy would be designed to combat the abuse which exists in the sphere of access to welfare benefits.

Support for legal immigration can be strengthened by the development of mobility partnerships allowing groups of member states sharing the same need for (highly) qualified labour and offering similar working, salary and living standards, to cooperate more closely on implementing policies capable of attracting people with the right profile. Also, "sponsorship mechanisms" can be built into the mobility partnerships. And lastly, the prospect should also be entertained of circular migration programmes based on financial incentives for migrants to return to their countries of origin.

In addition, we have to improve the framework for legal immigration. Harmonising the terms governing the legal admission of immigrants in every member state and facilitating intra-European mobility would make it possible to turn the EU into a single, consistent space which would be more attractive and thus allow us to compete with other regions of the world engaged in the race to lure talent. For intra-European mobility to become a real opportunity, we have to remove certain legal, administrative, and bureaucratic barriers, to implement some form of portability of social rights and benefits, to develop a system for trading information, and to establish the mutual recognition of qualifications.

And finally, the development of policies designed to open up the legal immigration circuits will be doomed to failure unless it is accompanied by integration policies aiming to bolster migrants' reception and adaptation in our countries. In this field the EU plays only a subsidiary role because responsibility for integration impacts a number of sensitive areas governed by the exclusive authority of member states (access to health care, education and housing). Yet having said that, it is certainly possible for member states to improve the exchange of best practices in the sphere of integration.

4. An increasingly pro-active Europe in the sphere of trade

The EU continues to be the world's leading commercial power and has proven to be more effective in checking the downward curve of its share of global trade than either the United States or Japan with a view to the rise of the emerging economies. While we are finding it difficult to translate that commercial power into political influence in order to turn it into a lever for reform in our trading partners, aside from Europe's enlargement strategy, nevertheless the dynamism of this common policy remains crucial to our economic growth.

And it is only going to become increasingly necessary in future years as imports and exports are called on to play an ever more decisive role in the EU's economic growth with the development of international production chains. Moreover, the explosion of the middle class in emerging countries, which is set to rise from the current figure of two billion people to approximately five billion between now and 2030 (with Asia heading the list, followed by Latin America, but also by Africa), means that 90% of additional demand will come from the rest of the world and so we have to seek our growth in this extraordinary appetite for consumption which comes from outside the EU.

We need to help our businesses to develop, and we need to start doing that in the upcoming legislative term by:

4.1. Increasing the EU's focus on Africa

Over the past few years we have tended to focus on our trade with such countries as China, India and Brasil, thus underestimating our interests in Africa. Yet Africa's development pace is accelerating, with a current average annual growth figure of 5%. There are endemic problems such as border clashes and evanescent states, as well as major differences in the degree of development in the various African countries, but the prospects are promising. We can benefit both from the African economic players' ability to slot into the global market and from the appetite for consumption looming on our very doorstep.

4.2. Promoting Transatlantic standards

The decision to negotiate a transatlantic trade and investment partnership (TTIP) with the United States, the country with which we most closely share our values, is a major initiative which is going to mobilise the European Commission at great length during the upcoming legislative term. There exists in the world no other equivalent project between two partners of similar economic magnitude and importance. Together, we account for just under half of international trade exchanges.

The crucial issue in these negotiations is linked less to the traditional issues in any free-trade agreement (customs tariff cuts, curbing subsidies and so forth) than to a reduction of regulatory differences in goods and services, which by facilitating the functioning of multinational production chains (the new and crucial issue of the globalisation process) would have a far greater impact on the growth of trade than simply cutting customs tariffs and duty. This project is decisive from both an economic and a geopolitical standpoint: it would facilitate the promotion of our standards on the international stage at a time when other powers, with China heading the list, are making no secret of their ambitions in the field of standards. This must encourage us to be prudent yet also ambitious in the way we conduct these negotiations.

In order to negotiate this regulatory convergence which would allow our businesses to achieve major economies of scale, we have the advantage of being able to benefit from the lessons learnt in the construction of the single market. What is involved here is not deregulation by any means. The attachment that we feel for our collective choices, just like the attachment that the United States feels for its collective choices, cannot lead to a weakening of our standards of protection. Any compromises negotiated are more likely to be achieved by alignment on a higher precautionary level; and where harmonisation proves impossible, we can move via the path of mutual recognition to a simplification of certification procedures, the current duplication of which comes at a high cost for our businesses.

While the Europeans see the TTIP as a response to the concern sparked by the shift in US interests towards the Pacific, nevertheless we still need to pursue our own strategy towards Asia in order to ensure that we tap into the trade flows in those markets with their ongoing potential for growth. The TTIP project must not lead to our aligning our strategic interests with the US policy of containing China's power. In order to

properly manage the agreement's geopolitical impact, we need to foster a situation of gradual multilateralisation, in particular by simultaneously completing other trade negotiations with China and with other coastal countries of the Pacific (Australia, South Korea, Chile etc.), with Africa, with Russia, and the Atlantic coast of South America.

In any event, the imperative that we are facing today involving the diversification of our energy supply in order to reduce our energy dependence on Russia only bolsters the geostrategic goal of these negotiations, because the TTIP would facilitate our access to US shale gas which is pegged to the conclusion of a free-trade agreement with a third country.

4.3. Preventing the fragmentation of international trade

To ensure that the negotiations currently under way or any future maxi-regional agreements do not, with the TTIP, spawn competing regulatory blocs which might foster a return to the fragmentation of international trade, we need to take care to standardise regulatory convergence at the multilateral level.

This, because these various negotiations' aim to include elements of regulatory convergence would require that those taking part in them reach agreement over the ground rules making it possible not to bar access to these blocs and thus fly in the face of the fundamental principles of fairness and openness in international trade which underpin the potential for global growth..

Thus the challenge facing us in the coming legislative term is to take our cue from the TTIP negotiations and a pro-active engagement strategy with the new economic powers, to defend the assignation to the WTO of the power to monitor regulatory convergence, since this would help to set that regulatory convergence more firmly in a multilateral framework.

4.4. Strengthening the EU's anti-dumping policy

The current legislative term has already endeavoured to adapt this policy to the globalisation of trade and to the rise of China (the main target of anti-dumping probes) by simplifying procedure and by making it more reactive. Yet it is the member states that impart their definitive seal to the measures adopted by the European Commission, and their respective economic specialisations and diverging economic targets

seriously hamper this policy's scope and potential. We need to improve consultation among member states in order to prevent them from being exposed to targeted retaliatory measures.

5. The Union and its neighbours: what relations for the future?

It is in the EU's vital interest to base its relations with its neighbours on a common bedrock of interdependence and, if possible, of shared values, thus forming a fully-fledged centre of influence at the international level. This endeavour, however, continues to be a longer-term goal, which is not yet being translated into a political reality. In view of this, it is crucial for the EU to develop a strategic vision of its relations with its neighbours, a vision conjugated primarily around issues associated with enlargement, with neighbourhood policy and with the strategic players that go by the names of Russia and Turkey.

5.1. "Europe" and its "enlargements": enough, or more?

The enlargement policy, which was expanded after the fall of the Berlin Wall, helped to impart concret substance to the EU's elusive "external policy" by allowing the EU to contribute to the stability and to the economic development of many of its neighbours, particularly in central Europe. Yet it still has not exhausted all of its beneficial effects and it must be pursued yet further, in particular with regard to the Balkans. Croatia's membership of the EU and the candidacies currently being put forward confirm that "Europe" is still considered attractive despite the crisis. The EU continues to hold important appeal for the countries in south-eastern Europe that are currently "candidates" for membership, both as an area for reconciliation, stability and trade, and as a historical and geographical area embodying the "European family" in the eyes of the world, an area to which it is only logical that they should belong. As things stand today, only such peripheral countries as Iceland and Turkey seem to hold greater reservations regarding the prospect of full membership of the EU.

The policy has not yet exhausted all of its political virtues. Thus the effectiveness and legitimacy of the EU's enlargement policy is going to depend largely on the extent to which it is tailored to reflect the following viewpoints:

- the legal viewpoint: the policy needs first and foremost to allow Europe to penetrate its neighbours before the reverse happens. We need to accompany the enlargement policy with extremely stringent monitoring of the terms set for membership both while negotiations are being conducted and once those negotiations have been completed. That is the price to pay in order to safeguard the cohesion and solidity of the “European club” which candidate countries intend to join;
- the social viewpoint: Europe can also become an area for relocation, as limited in its scope as it is costly for its victims and for the EU’s image. We need to organise clear and explicit protection for those Europeans who might suffer when the next countries join, even if the impact of their membership is only moderate;
- the political viewpoint: the EU needs to adopt a clear stance on “Europe’s” new borders in order to avoid giving the impression that it is dashing irresponsibly ahead. This must spawn a clarification of the status of each one of its neighbours, because not all of them are irrevocably fated to join.

It is on this basis that the European authorities will find it easier to reconcile the enlargement and the deepening of European integration in the medium term. The prospect of membership cannot be the only tool in Europe’s “good neighbourly” policy with regard to the continent as a whole.

5.2. The EU’s neighbourhood: how to seize this opportunity?

The Arab revolutions in the south and recent events in the framework of the Eastern Partnership in eastern Europe must prompt us to conduct an in-depth review on one of the other “pillars” of the EU’s external policy, namely our “neighbourhood policy”. This policy’s goal has been to get our neighbouring countries to tie in with Europe by offering them economic rapprochement and the opportunity to share in our common values and principles at the political level. But recent events have shown that reality does not always move in that direction. The initial aim is being increasingly called into question. A large number of those countries are facing serious political, economic, social, security-related and even humanitarian crises. An increasing number of them are losing their appetite

for a rapprochement with the EU and are turning away from the relational model offered them – some on ideological grounds, other simply no longer seeing any concrete benefits in it, and yet others, including the sensitive case of Ukraine, being deeply split between those in favour of a rapprochement with the EU and those in favour of other centres of attraction, with Russia heading the list. The EU has not yet come up with a satisfactory answer to the growing competition from other influences in its neighbourhood (illiberal values, new attractive markets and so forth). In this critical context, it has become obvious that the group of countries concerned by Europe’s neighbourhood policy is less and less homogeneous.

5.3. A European neighbourhood policy (re)founded on greater differentiation among partners

The best short-term response that the EU can produce to these challenges is to highlight the implementation of the differentiation principle in relation to its partner countries’ appetite and to their ability to draw closer to the EU. We need to offer additional benefits to countries which commit to addressing their chronic ills (nepotism, corruption, the siphoning off of national resources and revenue, and so forth) and to having less truck with those who cock a snook at fundamental human rights. Such an approach entails making a clear distinction between two groups of countries.

The first group of countries includes those such as Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Moldova, Georgia and may be also Ukraine, which wish to mould their economies to reflect European standards and the single market, and which agree to make and do make sufficient efforts to achieve that goal, but which also agree to make progress towards the democratisation of society in order to be able to subscribe to European principles and values. For these countries we can do much more than has been done to date, particularly in such fields as economic aid, opening up trade, personal mobility, and support for the democratisation of institutions in partner countries and for the development of their civil societies. The implementation of EU aid must be subject to specific negotiations with the beneficiary countries and it must be in proportion to their degree of economic and political modernisation, yet without enforcing excessively stringent conditions on them because that might delay or undermine the support that these countries need. Also, the EU has to prove capable of responding adequately to the expectations and to the display of attachment to

the values of openness, democracy and freedom coming from the people in certain neighbouring countries, by forging partnerships directly with the key players in civil society and with the democratic forces, and by facilitating the issue of visas for certain sectors of the population. This thorough review would allow us to entertain healthier relations, which would make it possible for both sides to have a clear, unambiguous vision of the limits of our engagement. And that, in turn, would make it possible to adapt the available instruments accordingly. Having said that, however, support for civil society in all of these countries should be strengthened regardless.

5.4. Other major players in the EU's neighbourhood: Russia and Turkey

Setting our relations with our neighbours on a common base of interdependence and, if possible, also of shared values demands that the EU make further progress along the path of stable and constructive cooperation with Russia and with Turkey, the inescapable neighbours looming large on our borders. The EU's influence over Turkey has decreased in direct proportion to the difficulties and delays encountered in the membership negotiations with the country. The ambiguity evinced by several member states and their grassroots opinions with regard to Turkey's potential membership, however, is not just going to go away. In the light of these difficulties, and while still continuing to pursue negotiations, we can set up close cooperation with Turkey on the basis of our shared interests in the neighbourhood.

The Ukrainian crisis illustrates how difficult it is for the EU and Russia to maintain a serene and constructive dialogue. This episode reminds us that Moscow hasn't relinquished its influence in the eastern parts

of Europe, where the Union holds equally legitimate interests and ambitions. The escalation of tension would be a strategic mistake both for the EU and Russia which yet has to prove its willingness to de-escalate the conflict. Vladimir Poutine needs to understand that there is nothing to be gained for the Russian people in a confrontation with the EU. Too many countries within the Eastern Partnership are "caught in between" the EU and Russia and feel they are "forced" to choose one of the two partnership models. Rather than confrontation zones, these countries should become regions of cooperation between the EU and Russia, which both have much to gain from their economic and democratic development.

In order to consolidate our relations with Russia, we first need to trigger a debate regarding our aspirations and our interests, and on what we truly expect from this partner, going on to then develop a common position towards it. This also requires that we accurately define the "red line" that Russia cannot cross, particularly in relation to compliance with international law and respect for the sovereignty of certain areas, and that the Europeans be prepared to defend that line firmly. It is only by displaying a united front that we will be able to appear stronger and to acquire greater credibility in Russia's eyes.

It is only by evincing the determination to build these initiatives into the agenda of our next legislative term that we will be able to present a pro-active and responsible strategy for Europe's engagement in the world, a strategy equal to the expectations of Europe's citizens as a whole.

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