



SUNY Model European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: European Council meeting (9 April 2022)
-Conclusions

Delegations will find attached the conclusions adopted by the European Council at the above meeting.

I. UKRAINE

Acceleration of the membership application of Ukraine towards accession as an EU member and increase pressure on Russia

Background

On February 24, 2022, at 05:55 am Moscow time, Vladimir Putin denounced Ukraine's sovereignty and right to independence and choice of security by approving the use of the Russian armed forces to invade Ukraine. Its objective is to overthrow the democratic government, install a pro-Russian regime, and destabilize the region. This attack is the most significant threat to European security and stability since 1945.

Several EU member states proposed an acceleration of the membership application of Ukraine towards the goal of accession, to ease tensions and provide expanding support in the region while assisting in reforms and criteria required by standards consistent with EU requirements (Copenhagen criteria).

Eight years ago, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was removed by the Ukrainian parliament and fled to Russia. His departure came after more than one hundred demonstrators were killed when he gave the order to evacuate by force demonstrators in Independence Square in Kyiv. These demonstrators had been gathering for three months following the Ukrainian government's decision not to sign an association agreement with the EU and to favour a rapprochement with Russia. They considered themselves European and a sovereign nation-state. Since this 'revolution of dignity,' and despite the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of the Donbas, Ukrainians have not turned away from their European aspirations. According to a poll by the Ukrainian Institute Rating Group published on February 17, 2022, 68% of respondents support membership in the EU. In 2015, the EU recognised 'Ukraine's European aspirations' and welcomed 'its European choice.' In 2017, the Ukrainian parliament, the Rada, passed a law making EU membership one of the strategic goals of Ukraine's foreign and security policy. This law, which came into force in 2019, enshrines this goal in the country's constitution and thus marks, according to the speaker of the parliament at the time, 'the irreversibility of our European choice.'

Ukraine cooperates with the EU within the framework of the Eastern Partnership and has already adopted most of its legislation and economic policies in accordance with the association agreement signed with the EU and entered into force in 2017.

One only has to walk through the streets of Warsaw, Bratislava, Tallinn, Bucharest, or Vilnius to see the beneficial effects that EU membership has had on these cities. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe contribute fully and greatly to making the EU an economic, political and technological power. The youth of Kyiv, a city full of life, innovation, and creation, aspires to the same success and opportunities. Since 2014, Ukraine has paid dearly for its thirst for freedom and belief in European ideals and a democratic world. Despite the attacks, threats, and ongoing war Ukrainians want to join Europe. The time has come to strengthen our support for Ukraine.

Recommendations

1. The Commission should grant Ukraine candidate status, in recognition of its commitment to complying with the Copenhagen criteria and the ongoing military crisis. However, any completion of the accession process shall not happen until the conclusion of the current Russo-Ukrainian War.
2. The EU should immediately recognize full rights and privileges of Ukraine as a sovereign nation-state.
3. The EU recommends member-states increase weapons, resources, funds, and humanitarian aid to Ukraine, while respecting the military neutrality of the neutral states and supporting NATO's deployment of troops in Eastern Europe.
4. The member states will submit recommendations and expectations for sanctions to the Commission to be introduced to COREPER II as soon as possible.
5. The EU should commit to fighting Russian capital acquired through proven illicit means within the jurisdiction of each member-state. We should put pressure on countries lacking in sanction compliance or giving shelter to financial assets by sanctioned Russian individuals.

II. THE STRATEGIC COMPASS

Background

In the past 20 years, the EU has successfully managed more than 30 civilian and military operations to fulfil Petersberg Tasks as defined in Article 43(1) of the TEU, specifically (1) joint disarmament operations; (2) humanitarian and rescue tasks; (3) military advice and assistance tasks; (4) conflict prevention and peacekeeping tasks; and (5) tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation. In this time period, the EU has established a joint decision-making apparatus and command and control capabilities. In 2017 Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel expressed a sentiment that is increasingly repeated in Europe: ‘We Europeans should take our fate into our own hands’. The High Representative for the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/VP of the European Commission (HR/VP) echoed this sentiment when he declared the EU ‘has to learn the language of power’. The Russian invasion of Ukraine demonstrates the need for the EU to build a strong European Defence Union (EDU) from its current joint civilian and military peacekeeping, policing, and judicial operations to a full-fledged security and defence capability. Recognizing this need for independent action and expressing a desire for the EU to become a strategic global actor, in 2020 the European Council directed the HR/VP to develop a ‘Strategic Compass’ for security and defence that would guide the EU through 2030. The Strategic Compass has now completed its two-year consultation and reflection period, which culminated in the presentation of a proposal to the 23-24 March 2022 meeting of the European Council. Events, however, have not stood still for the EU’s Member States to act expeditiously to ensure European citizens can live in security and peace. The following recommendations draw on the four baskets proposed in the Strategic Compass: Capabilities, Crisis Management, Resilience, and Partnerships.

Recommendations

Capabilities

- The European Council strongly recommends member-states increase their defence spending to a minimum of 2% of national GDP by 2030. Each member-state will determine how funds are allocated within the jurisdiction of defence spending. An annual

report monitoring defence spending will be submitted to the Commission's Directorate General for Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS).

- DG DEFIS staff should be increased immediately through voluntary seconding of national defence experts from throughout the EU Member State's civil service, with the goal of permanently increasing DG DEFIS staff by 10 per cent by 2024.
- The European Defence Fund (EDF) of 7,9 billion EURO for MFF 2021-27 to be increased by 5 billion EURO to be raised through Euro Defence Bonds, collateralized by the EU's budget and issued by the European Central Bank. The success of the Next Generation EU funding mechanism approved as part of the MFF 2021-27 package demonstrates the viability of Eurobonds. These bonds will be guaranteed by the member states in relation to their contribution to the MFF.
- The Commission must continue discussions on its space policies to elaborate on how the EU should increase its presence in Space and clarify what that looks like and define the objectives. The Commission should also outline what the expectations of member states are to contribute to this. These would include countermeasures and system hardening against electronic warfare and ASAT (anti-satellite weapons) threats to the Galileo and Copernicus constellation.
- Invest in naval capabilities to ensure free and open access to maritime routes, protect overseas territories, manage illegal and irregular migration, and EU citizens in maritime areas.
- Continue the efforts of the European Defence Agency (EDA) to de-fragmentize the European defence industry.
 - PESCO should continue to focus on 'cluster' packages particularly a European Next Generation Fighter, combat and ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) drones, hypersonic propulsion technologies, Surface-To-Air Missile Systems (SAMS), next-generation Main Battle Tanks, automated ground combat systems, the development of a carrier strike group and anti-submarine warfare capabilities. Systems should be integrated via a C4ISR (Command, Control, Communication, Computer, and ISR architecture).
 - More effort should be made to increase defence R&D and production capability throughout EU member states keeping in mind solidarity goals of PESCO and CSDP.

- Annual progress report optionally submitted to DG DEFIS on joint defence capabilities tied to the NATO Defence Planning Process.
- Recognizing that to build a state-of-the-art defence industry, EU citizens will need to have the highest quality education in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). An EU-wide lottery will be launched, proceeds of which will support university and technical college education in STEM fields for EU citizens and permanent residents, which will be allocated for scholarships and maintenance for students on a competitive basis.

Crisis Management

- Merge the existing Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) (command and control – C₂) and the existing Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) into a new ‘European Combined Planning and Conduct Capability’ structure by January 1, 2024.
- The Military Committee (EUMC) composed of the Member State Chiefs of Defence should be elevated to that of C₂ reporting directly to a newly created position of EU Chair of the EUMC. The EUMC Chair will convene meetings and coordinate the EUMC. The Chair of the EUMC will rotate in the reverse order of the Council Presidency, beginning with France, then moving to Slovenia, then Portugal, etc. Nations shall have the option to forfeit their term as chair if they do not believe their capabilities or morals line up with its duties. The EUMC will serve as an advisory body to the newly created European Combined Planning and Conduct Capability.
- Establish a permanent EIF of 5,000 emergency security personnel minimum with resources available for a maximum 10,000 personnel (under review of the council). The EIF will not be a standing army, but instead be a force limited to the boundaries of the EU responsible for crisis-management tasks. The use of the EIF to intervene is at the request of the sovereign member state. The contribution of such resources is at the discretion of the member state. Intervention against crises such as those of ethnic cleansing or genocide will be coordinated with NATO. The EIF will prioritize crisis management in Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Southern Boundaries.

- The European Council directs the FAC to lay out the specific circumstances under which Articles 42 7 TEU (‘mutual assistance clause’) should be invoked.
- The EU should create a stockpile of emergency supplies such as PPEs, medicines, vaccines, fuel supplies, and so forth that would be shared based on an additional point, to be introduced as Article 42 8 TEU.
- Recognizing the immediate and existential threat posed by irregular migration and its weaponization by actors opposed to the security of the EU as a whole, the Council directs the establishment of a permanent effort within the ECPC support, to logistically and materially, the border control efforts of member states if requested by Central Europe and Mediterranean member states. Further, this body will be responsible for the integration and enlargement of Frontex and other EU efforts into the border security apparatus of member-states. Further, we call upon all member states to commit to make every possible effort to mitigate the effects of weaponized and illegal migration.
- Recognizing the current underrepresentation of women in intervention forces, the EU shall foster an exchange program for female doctors to train at medical schools in France, Denmark, and Germany in order to achieve EU goals of attaining gender equality and increasing readiness for crises. In the future, this program will be expanded to willing EU nations who achieve a minimum score of 60.0 on the EU Gender Equality Index and are willing to finance scholarships.

Resilience

- The member states will develop the EU’s intelligence efforts to counter hybrid threats (disinformation, cyberattacks, the use weaponization of irregular migration) through:
 - Doubling the staff of intelligence personnel at the EEAS (EU Intelligence and Situation Centre – EU INTCEN). The EU INTCEN’s intelligence gathering mandate should broaden from open source to active intelligence gathering remaining within the guidance of the DSGVO.
 - Deploying ‘Rapid Reaction Cyber Threat Teams.’
 - Enabling more Frontex support for borders where irregular migration is being used as a weapon by hostile countries (such as Belarus). The EU will put in place stricter accountability measures for Frontex to ensure less corruption. Frontex would present a semi-annual report on their actions and activities to the European Courts to ensure accountability.

- Developing the ability to launch counteractions against countries and groups seeking to harm the EU or its Member States.
- The member states will increase media literacy skills of Europeans to decrease their vulnerability to disinformation campaigns by China, Russia, and other countries and criminal groups seeking to destabilize European democracies.
- The member states will develop a plan to deploy the EIF to help mitigate climate change such as shoreline erosion.

Partnerships

The European Council approves the establishment of an organization to advance the recruitment of women for peacekeeping cooperative operations, as well as additional emphasis on those currently involved in active operations. The program will be inclusive to all, no matter their gender identification, with special attention paid to sex and human trafficking. It should exist as a universal program led by the EU with collaboration from the United Nations to foster further relationships among the two international organizations.

The European Council approves the establishment of a Gold Card directive, to promote the further cooperation and relationships between the EU and the African Union (AU). The directive will serve two purposes. It will invite citizens of EU member states to study in the EU on research and education programs. This will also include job training programs with the expectation that recipients will return to their home nation to further the development of their home state. It would operate on a 1:2 ratio with one year in the EU and at least two years in the country of origin.

The European Council approves the initiative to establish dialogue to potentially expand the already existing AU-EU-UN Task Force from solely Libya to all current civil conflicts within the African Union. This will not include Mali due to their suspension in light of the recent coup and accusations of war crimes against their citizens. It will also include an “Opt-Out” Clause for those member states who wish not to participate in certain conflicts. The option of the “Opt-Out” clause being extended to the African Union would be an element of the dialogue. Other elements for the dialogue would include discussions such as leadership that should resolve the process

between the three agencies. The goal of the Task Force is to expand peacekeeping operations where the African Union requests in accordance with AU-EU-UN agreement.

The European Council wishes to build upon the current favourable trade relations the EU has with the nations of Japan and South Korea. This would see the creation of a diplomatic summit, where a forum would be met to discuss the movement and expansion of information—as well as misinformation—as well as electoral manipulation pursued by third parties. The European Council will consider the possibility of opening the forum to other nations in the Asia-Pacific region.

III. COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM/BORDER CONTROL

Background

The Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was negotiated and established in response to the EU's experience of the refugee crisis brought about by war in Yugoslavia and the Serbian-Kosovo conflict. Since the CEAS's adoption, the EU has struggled to balance the EU's humanitarian values expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the imperative of border management in the Schengen Area to ensure that Europeans are secure and safe. Some Member States, particularly the Southern Seven, and governmental and non-governmental organisations have long expressed their dissatisfaction with gaps in the CEAS with respect to qualification determinations, reception conditions, services provided to refugees, the Dublin Regulation rules for determining where an asylum application should be filed, and so forth. Then in 2015-16 the CEAS came under enormous pressure when more than one million Syrians sought asylum in the EU as they fled the civil war precipitated by the Arab Spring movement. The current crisis involves more than 2.5 million (as of March 12) Ukrainians fleeing violence inflicted by the Russian military.

The following concerns must guide the EU's CEAS:

- *Providing safe haven for Ukrainians fleeing the violence of the Russian invasion through the mechanism of the Temporary Protective Directive (TPD) of 2001.*

The Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) of 2001/44/European Council was enacted after the 1990s wars in the former Yugoslavia, but the EU activated it for the first time when the Justice and Home Affairs Council voted unanimously to invoke TPD on 4 March 2022. Article 2 (a) of the TPD defines temporary protection as:

a procedure of exceptional character to provide, in the event of a mass influx or imminent mass influx of displaced persons from third countries who are unable to return to their country of origin, immediate and temporary protection to such persons, in particular if there is also a risk that the asylum system will be unable to process this influx without adverse effects for its efficient operation, in the interests of the persons concerned and other persons requesting protection.

Under this directive, temporary protection is available to Ukrainians displaced from Ukraine on or after 24 February 2022 following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. As a result of this conflict, more than 2.5 million Ukrainians (as of 10 March 2022) have fled, with over 1.5 million entering Poland alone. The TPD directive, unlike the Dublin Regulation, allows Ukrainian nationals to travel visa-free in Europe for a 90-day period, after which time they can select the EU Member State that they would like to stay in and apply for temporary protection. The TPD, however, has never been tested. ‘Cracks’ in the TPD system are emerging, with many of its aspects being voluntary rather than required by EU law. Furthermore, many Europeans as well as the global community question why the TPD was not invoked other occasions. In 2011 the JHA Council denied requests by the Italian and Maltese governments to activate TPD for Tunisians and Libyans fleeing due to Arab Spring in Tunisia and the fall of the Qaddafi regime on the basis that the conditions for activation were not met (despite over 55,000 Tunisians and Libyans having arrived to Lampedusa by sea). Again, in 2015 when one million Syrian refugees who had fled the civil war sought refuge in Europe, the JHA Council did not activate the TPD. The uncertainty in Member States surrounding their obligations under the TPD points to a need for a more common and structured TP framework for migrants to safely evacuate and apply for asylum in EU Member States, while at the same time deterring terrorists, smugglers, and human traffickers from taking advantage of the chaotic situation at the EU’s borders with non-Schengen countries. Do only Ukrainian citizens qualify for TP? For example, the Nigerian government has condemned the treatment of thousands of Nigerian students and citizens studying and living in

Ukraine who are being denied TP simply because they are not Ukrainian citizens. People of color are being met with acts of discrimination and violence when attempting to flee into other EU Member States, with multiple reported incidents, including video footage.

- *Dealing humanely with irregular migration in the Western, Central, and Eastern Mediterranean.*

The EU continues to ‘offshore’ irregular migration from Africa with Libya its principal partner in stemming irregular migration along the Central Mediterranean route. The EU and some Member States (particularly Italy) have spent millions of euros through the Emergency Trust fund for Africa (EUTF Africa) North of Africa window: to subsidize and train the Libyan Coast Guard on search and rescue (S & R) operations to prevent irregular migrants from successfully reaching EU territory through the Central Mediterranean (including patrol speedboats, rafts, trucks, satellite telephones, uniforms), interdiction and return, and humanitarian assistance (for example, hygiene kits, blankets, clothing, medical care). Investigative reporting has revealed that Frontex operates reconnaissance planes that transmit aerial surveillance footage to the Libyan Coast Guard, which then overtakes the migrants’ crafts and forcibly inters asylum seekers in Libyan detention centres and camps. Asylum seekers from African countries interred in Libyan milita-run detention centres are suffering human rights abuses including bribery, beatings and torture, sexual and gender-based violence, murder and being sold into slavery. It is widely understood that the EU pays for all aspects of the offshoring of migration interception and ‘containment’ in Libya, including the SUVs used to hunt down migrants who have escaped detention centres, even if the EU does not pay for the actual detention centres or its guards. The migration pressure from African countries will continue to grow more urgent as population growth in African outstrips that of other global regions. The EU needs to seek out both regional and global solutions to refugee crises and irregular migration.

- *Due to the Dublin Regulation that requires under most circumstances for asylum seekers to remain in and apply for asylum in those Member State where they arrived on EU territory, certain EU Member States, particularly the Southern Seven (Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, and Spain) have been unduly burdened by the Dublin requirement.*

Suffering in overcrowded closed migration campus in Greece continues, with asylum seekers who crossed to Greek islands from the Aegean (Eastern Mediterranean route) being forced to remain while it can take years for Greek authorities to make an asylum determination. The Juncker Commission's European Agenda on Migration failed to achieve agreement in Council, particularly the 'fairness mechanism' that would be triggered if the number of asylum applications reached over 150 per cent of a pre-determined reference number, with asylum seekers over that threshold relocated across the EU. The Commission's 'New Pact on Migration and Asylum' (2020) offers 'flexible solidarity'.

- *Reducing incentives for third countries to weaponise migration (as particularly illustrated on the borders of Belarus/Lithuanian; Morocco/Spain's autonomous city of Ceuta; and Greece/Turkey)*

The unpopularity of irregular migration among Europeans has been manipulated by anti-democratic populist parties throughout the EU. This vulnerability has been exploited by some third country governments seeking to weaponize migration against the EU. *The EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan* and *Turkey Facilitation Agreement*, in effect since March 2016, has been effective in stemming the flow of irregular migration to Greece; however, this agreement has created a situation where other third countries now expect the EU to provide substantial support for their governments to reduce irregular migration to Europe.

- *Returning migrants to their home countries who do not qualify for asylum.*

Reducing the presence of irregular migrants in the EU has been stymied by home countries that do not want to accept the return of their citizens, not least because of the dependence on families and the government's current account balance for remittances. Progress must be made in this area.

- *Assisting migrant-sending countries to reduce incentives for citizens leaving their countries for the EU.*

The EU needs to do a better job of persuading migrants to follow established legal channels to apply to emigrate to EU Member States and working with host countries to provide opportunities that will reduce incentives for outward migration.

- *Implementing policies to ensure that refugees who are granted asylum in an EU member state are afforded opportunities to thrive in all aspects of life – education, social mobility, housing, jobs training through inclusionary policies while recognizing that asylees must accept the European way of life, including its democratic values and seek to integrate themselves and their families into the Member States that have granted them asylum.*

The EU and its Member States must continuously work to ensure migrants and their families are afforded the opportunity to enjoy all of the benefits of European society and dynamic economy, but migrants must also accept that the benefits of European citizenship carrying obligations and responsibility to accept the European way of life.

- *Reforming the UN system to tackle migration at the global level.*

Migration is a global concern. The International Migration Organisation (IOM) and the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) were founded after World War 2 with disparate missions; however, their missions increasingly overlap in the context of contemporary migration issues. The UNHCR, operating under the auspices of the General Assembly, protects refugees worldwide and facilitates their return home or resettlement. The IOM's mission as an organization related to the UN is to ensure the 'orderly and human management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people'. Neither is a specialized UN agency and depend on voluntary contributions. It is increasingly recognized that the distinction between refugee and migrant can no longer be clearly delineated – the 'hungry idealist' – can be both a refugee/asylum seeker, but also select a particular country or region for migration because of the superior economic opportunities afforded to the migrant and their families. This overlapping mission has led to wasteful duplication, confusion, and even rivalry between the IOM and UNHCR.

- *Tying ODA Funding to Third Country Cooperation in Stemming Migrations Flows.*

European countries and EU institutions, collectively are the most generous donors to Official Development Assistance (ODA). The European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) manage the EU's ODA donation and the EEAS coordinates foreign policy. The EU institutions (without EU member states) rank third among donors. European institutions

also mobilize private investments to supplement ODA. The *Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe* contains the bulk of EU institutions' ODA contributions with an envelope of EUR 79.5 billion for 2021-27. It has been increasingly recognized that one of the mechanisms for decreasing irregular migration from the EU's troubled neighbourhood is through reallocation of ODA to those recipient countries whose governments comply with the EU's request that their border control authorities prevent irregular migration across land and sea borders into the EU. The EU and its Member States are the largest contributors of ODA to the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA) and Sub-Saharan Africa. Due to non-cooperation of many governments in MENA and Sub-Saharan Africa with respect to controlling outward irregular migration, some member states have asked whether ODA should be considered a tool for the EU to use in persuading third country governments to cooperate.

Recommendations

Border Control and Interdiction

The European Council agrees to an increase in funding for the advancement and growth of the Coast Guard units currently active in the Mediterranean attached to Southern European Member States. These nations include Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Malta, and Cyprus. This increase in funding was suggested by a coalition of nations including Italy, Cyprus, Greece, and Malta, for the purpose of stemming the flow of migrants coming across the Mediterranean, fleeing civil conflict in their home nations. These nations include, but are not limited to Libya, Syria, and Tunisia.

The European Council has denied the revival of Operation Sophia, which was active in the Mediterranean region from 22 June 2015 until concluding operations on 31 March 2020.

Stemming Irregular Migration

The European Council intends to increase the funding of external humanitarian aid organizations, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) currently active in Libya. This would also see the creation of an outside committee, whose purpose is to investigate and determine those organizations most deserving of financial aid. The Council hopes that the funds

allocated for these humanitarian aid organizations would be for the betterment and improvement of the state of Libya, without having a direct influence upon the financial affairs of opposition parties currently active in the state.

Asylum

The European Council directs the Commission and the European Union Asylum Agency (EUAA) to work towards developing a single asylum application, which would be run by a committee. Asylum seekers will complete one application for residence in the EU and receive a list in return of the member states that have accepted their application. Member states will ultimately receive the right to deny any applicant residence in their nation, and it is the hope of this body that this committee would dispel any concerns member states may have in the realm of national sovereignty.

The European Council approves the reallocation of funds, from to be determined existing programs, for the improvement of the current immigration processes in the EU. This will include the construction of proper immigration centres, in both the Eastern and Southern regions, as well as the creation of proper surveillance measures along current EU borders. Through the proposed centre, immigrants may find placement within the EU through a more controlled process that will not overwhelm member states immigration and border control systems. The placement method will allow immigrants to choose amongst the current twenty-seven member states, so that, if one nation finds cause to reject the applicant, they can still find placement within the Union.

The European Council approves the creation of a Joint Committee on European Emergency Asylum (JCEA) which is created in light of the recent and ongoing migrant crisis currently affecting the EU Member States in the Mediterranean region, as well as in Eastern Europe. With that said, the Committee will be divided between the two regions, one focused on the migrant crisis impacting the Mediterranean, and the other impacting Eastern European member states who share a border with Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. This Committee will be created in response to these extraordinary events and will not be used as a means to facilitate proper

immigration into the EU. That duty will be the responsibility of the immigration centres outlined in the previous statement.

IV. THE GREEN DEAL AND ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Background

Food insecurity refers to the inability to access nutritious food due to financial constraints. In fact, combatting food hunger is a primary goal of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs). The economic hit that the EU faced during the pandemic reveals a well-needed reform of agri-food systems to guarantee affordable food to all citizens. This means making such systems more economically efficient and environmentally sustainable. The Farm to Fork Strategy promotes the goal of making food systems healthier, more sustainable, more efficient, and better for the workers involved.

The EU is the global leader in the fight against climate change. Climate change policy is of vital importance to the well-being and survival of Europe as well as the rest of the world. Southern and central areas of Europe have been witnessing strong and frequent heat waves that have resulted in droughts, forest fires, and crop failures. Southern Europe has also been experiencing record low rainfall that makes it more susceptible to drought and wildfires, while Northern Europe has been experiencing unusually high rainfall resulting in more frequent floods.

Natural gas is one of the primary sources of energy in European households, and 40% of natural gas imported by the EU comes from Russia. As the Russia-Ukraine crisis continues, Russia is threatening to halt the delivery of natural gas through its pipelines, and whether they follow through with this or not, one thing is certain, and that is energy prices are going to soar. The economic consequences of the geopolitical crisis between Russia and Ukraine, is another reason the EU needs to consider Europe's energy independence while deciding its Green Deal policies.

In 2019 Ursula von der Leyen appointed Frans Timmerman as executive vice president of the Commission, to focus on the Green Deal, with the goal of making Europe the world's first climate-neutral continent. Timmerman's portfolio includes climate, environment, energy, and transport, underlining the Commission's commitment to tackling environmental policy, while

considering its interconnectedness with other policies that impact the environment.

Environmental policies cannot be decided without considering energy policy at the same time and need to be enacted in a way that facilitate maximum flexibility when transposing into national law. Environmental policy will continue to be tied closely to climate change and to energy efficiency and security.

The use of nuclear energy for the generation of electricity is considered safe. In the last six decades there have only been three significant accidents in the history of civil nuclear power: Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima Daiichi. Every year several hundred people die in coal mines, and there is wide public acceptance that the risks associated with these industries are an acceptable tradeoff for the services they provide. However, with nuclear energy, the very few accidents have been spectacular and newsworthy. Although nuclear energy can generate electricity safely and would greatly assist the EU in reaching their goal of being carbon neutral by 2050, it still faces opposition among its member states.

The Austrian Minister for Climate Protection, Ecology, Energy, Transport, Innovation, and Technology Leonore Gevessler has stated Vienna is seriously concerned that nuclear power is too expensive and too slow to help in the fight against climate change. The Minister also pointed out the problem of nuclear waste and the fact that it has not yet been solved, as reasons for nuclear energy not being a safe source of energy. German Environment Minister Steffi Lemke, supported by her Austrian counterpart Leonora Gevessler, also believe nuclear energy cannot be considered safe and can lead to terrible man-made disasters and poisoning the planet for many decades to come.

The Energy Tax Directive (ETD) (2003/96/EC) establishes minimum taxes for motor and heating fuels and electricity. On 14 July 2021, after extensive public consultation, the feedback period ended on 18 November 2021. The Commission then submitted to the European Parliament (Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee) and the Council (Working Party on tax questions) a revised ETD that aligns these taxes with Green Deal climate targets by ensuring that the taxation rates reflect their impact on the environment and our health. The European Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on the ETD on 21 January 2022. The new rules aim at addressing the harmful effects of energy tax competition, helping secure revenues

for Member States from green taxes less determinantal to growth than taxes on labour. They will remove outdated exemptions and incentive for the use of fossil fuels, while promoting clean technologies. The revised ETD will also help foster investment in new and innovative green industry and help facilitate the transition away from fossil fuels toward clean fuels and support the EU's delivery of its ambitious targets on the reduction of GHG emissions and energy savings.

Recommendations

1. The European Parliament and the Council are directed to move expeditiously in considering the Fit for 55 Package, which was presented by the Commission on 14 July 2021. This package of legislative proposals aims to align the EU's climate and energy policy framework with its new economy-wide target for 2030 of reducing net GHG emissions by at least 55% and put it on track to reach its objectives of becoming climate neutral by 2050. To ensure adaptability with the changing economic, political, and environmental situation, the nonpartisan commission shall be created and permitted to make amendments or changes within a reasonable scope of power delegated, and a majority of the body approves of the aforementioned changes on a bi-annual basis. The Commission will re-evaluate the tariffs on maritime and aviation emissions as a part of the Fit for 55 Package, which disproportionately impacts the island nations (i.e., freezing tariffs as the EU members attempt to reach the Fit for 55 goals; cut tariffs on maritime and aviation tariffs for necessary imports to island nations).

2. The Fit for 55 Package includes a proposal for a Social Climate Fund (SCF), which will be funded from a part of the Emissions Trading System (ETS) auction revenue. This is to support vulnerable households, micro-enterprises and transport users, notably for investments, to reduce emissions and energy costs as well as for temporary direct income support. The Commission is directed to create a permanent Social Justice Climate Forum (using as its basis the Ad hoc Working Party on Social Climate Fund) composed of stakeholders from throughout the EU to set out the parameters to qualify for funding under the SCF. At least 25% of ETS auction funds will be allocated to the SCF. A board of experts independent from the Union and the member states would ensure that the SCF will take into account different income levels of the members. This is to maintain a proportional partition of the SCF funds to ensure equitably sharing of any

economic hardships induced by the Fit for 55 Package. The board will be composed of members from other existing agencies within the EU and recognised international agencies.

3. The Fit for 55 Package includes the ETS Innovation Fund funded by ETS auctions. The Commission is directed to create an ETS Innovation Fund Forum, which will be composed of experts and stakeholders from throughout the EU to set out the parameters to qualify for funding under the ETS Innovation Fund.

4. The Commission should move forward in plans for the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) own resources to the EU's budget. The CBAM should be applied to any product imported from a country outside of the EU that does not have a system to price carbon such as the EU ETS. This is a fairness mechanism for EU companies that pay a higher price for green production. The CBAM resource will be shared so that 30% of the revenue will be kept by the EU country levying the CBAM at the port of entry to cover administrative costs. The remaining 70% will go to the EU budget.

5. The Commission is directed to establish a 'Wise Person's Task Force' that will be charged with an all-inclusive study of total energy needed for the EU to become carbon neutral, and how the EU can work with the rest of the world to achieve this. Studying the state of play for the EU in using renewable sources of energy instead of nuclear such as solar power, solar-thermal power, wind power, and hydropower, and solving nuclear waste disposal problems. The Wise Person's Task Force will inventory existing skills among EU citizens and residents and estimate the skills/college degrees needed for the EU to develop the technology to become a climate mitigation leader by 2050.

6. The member states will reduce dependence on Russian natural gas and petroleum requires continuing to seek out other sources. More funds should be allocated for ports that can handle liquified natural gas. The liquified natural gas can be imported on maritime routes from the United States, Australia, and Qatar or from forming new alliances with other countries that have natural gas reserves. The member states recognize that nuclear energy may be required as a bridging energy source until new green sources become more viable.

7. The Commission is asked to report its progress on Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022 spending with respect to meeting the goal of 25% of the EU's annual budget expenditure to contribute to climate action.
8. The member states will advocate for climate change education among the EU citizenry. Possible options are including it in school curriculums and awarding climate activism. Additionally, creating an optional educational participatory program sponsored by the EU, whereby each member of the EU has the option to join in said program.
9. The member states will reduce energy demands in the private and commercial sector by providing incentives or levying fines as the member state sees fit.
10. The member states will continue allocating funds for reducing carbon emissions and promoting the use of renewable energy sources. Possible options include providing tax breaks to carbon efficient companies or those researching, producing, and distributing green energy.
11. The member states will provide financial assistance for participation in the FCCNP.
12. The member states will regulate all nuclear and gas plants for safety, accident and contamination prevention and waste disposal.
13. The member states will continue to press non-EU countries to reduce their reliance on non-green energy in international forums. The member states shall continue pressing other countries to reduce their reliance on non-green energy sources. However, no direct monetary assistance is necessary. The EU member states will simply act as role models for non-EU member states.
14. The member states funds from the Plastics Own Resource (in place since 1 January 2021) non-recycled packaging waste should be earmarked for a new competitive grant program to universities and independent labs to research improving waste management technology in the EU.
15. The EU should work to closely follow the initiatives proposed by the Farm to Fork Strategy. It should continue to dedicate a portion of the EU budget to maintain green food subsidies in member states, as well as research into more low-cost and region-friendly crops.
16. The EU will continue to diversify the supply of raw materials away from Russia.

17. The EU will create an emergency loan program, financed by the European Central Bank (ECB) in the form of low interest rates, with the exception of negative interest rates, to member states that engage in sanctions and bans of vital resources to their economy in order to uphold the interests and the values of the EU. The loans would be delivered to the extent to which the members are impacted by the restrictions they undertake. These resources would be used to develop alternative infrastructures which would ensure that the members are not dependent on external actors that can wield a disproportionate amount of influence on EU member states. The ECB will determine the extent of the loans allocated to the members.

V. VACCINES

Background

Africa is currently the least vaccinated continent in the world; only 11 percent of the entire continent is vaccinated. So far, out of the 54 African countries, only Mauritius and Seychelles have met the 70 percent vaccination goal. Seven other countries are nearly there with a 40 percent vaccination rate. However, 21 countries have vaccinated less than 10 percent, 16 have vaccinated less than 5 percent and three have vaccinated less than 2 percent. There is currently an average of 6 million people vaccinated every week in Africa, this number will need to increase to 36 million people a week if Africa wants to reach its 70 percent vaccination rate in a reasonable period. There have been a total of 239,000 deaths caused by Covid, with a reported 8.6 million cases means that Africa has a morbidity rate of 39 percent. Though there is a need for vaccines in various African countries, these countries lack the resources to obtain them. According to a study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 40 African countries, there is a €120 billion gap in funding for vaccines. The largest cost undermining African vaccination rates is the finances to transport vaccines into the continent.

Currently, the EU has committed to providing Africa with 450 million vaccine donations by mid-2022. However, this will not be enough to help the African population reach its goal.

Vaccination donations are only a short-term solution to a long-term problem and there are more efficient ways to vaccinate the continent of Africa. In February of 2022, the EU and the African Union agreed to work on a joint vision for the future. For Africa to be an effective partner and

ally to the EU, the general population must be fully vaccinated. Or with aid given to the economy.

Recommendations

VIA Requires that the EU will enable:

1. Africa to reach its 70 percent vaccination rate by no later than 2023. The Commission is directed to examine the prospects for:
 - a. Temporarily suspending the intellectual property rights (patents and copyrights) on vaccines for three months starting no later than July 1, 2022, so that African countries will be able to produce the vaccine creating jobs and economic development opportunities for Africans.
 - b. Providing funding to help close the 120 billion Euro gap needed to vaccinate the African population by 25 percent between July 1, 2022, and January 1, 2023.
2. Provide training to African doctors and nurses to develop skills of administering vaccinations in six traveling vaccination training stations for three weeks in each country.
 - a. Along with the process of administering vaccines, the courses in the station would provide a basic overview of anatomy, biology, and the history of vaccines.

VI. The EUROPEAN SOCIAL MODEL

Background

In a 1989 address to the European Parliament, European Commission President Jacques Delors observed ‘you cannot fall in love with the single market’. Although a major architect of the internal market’s completion, Delors understood the importance of the EU’s social dimension. In recent years the EU has struggled to demonstrate to ordinary working European men and women that the EU improves their everyday lives. The EU leadership has been accused of perpetuating a neoliberal vision of Europe at the expense of the European Social Model (ESM). The emphasis on the internal market at the expense of Social Europe has had the deleterious effect of treating Europeans as producers and consumers rather than citizens. Proponents of Social Europe argue that recent populist successes in mobilizing the European public underlines the importance of reinvigorating Social Europe. Two timely ways to demonstrate that the EU improves the lives of

Europeans is to support a more flexible workweek and to show solidarity in the field of health care.

The Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC) set down fundamental social objectives: promotion of employment, improved living and working conditions, proper social protection, dialogue between management and labour, the development of human resources, promotion of high employment. and the combating of labour market exclusion. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights includes chapters on freedoms, equality, and solidarity, articulating rights to fair and just working conditions, social security and social assistance, equality between men and women, and trade union rights such as collective bargaining and strike action, including articulating rights to fair and just working conditions. It was announced in February this year that Belgium has adopted a four-day workweek. Employees who want to opt for the new work regime will be able to work up to 10 hours per day if trade unions agree, instead of the current 8 hours, to work one day less per week for the same pay. The benefits include helping citizens reduce transit and childcare costs. The four-day workweek will reduce the amount of fossil fuels emitted in commutes and will help achieve the EU's Green Deal. There are also many potential benefits to the health of individuals, such as better morale and improved work-life balance. In addition, reduced need for sick days will improve efficiency. As reported in the *Harvard Business Review*, many organizations in Europe are (already) cutting workweeks, though not wages, from 36 hours (five days) to 28 hours (four days) to reduce burnout and make workers happier, more productive, and more committed to their employers. There is a precedent for this policy: Iceland implemented a four-day workweek from 2015 to 2018. In studying the trial, the researchers found that participants 'took on fewer hours and enjoyed greater well-being, improved work-life balance, and a better cooperative spirit in the workplace — all while maintaining existing standards of performance and productivity'. Japan, Scotland, and Spain all have plans to pilot a four-day workweek.

The 1986 Single European Act established a requirement for European policies to guarantee a high level of health protection. Article 168 of the TFEU states that 'Union action, which shall complement national policies, shall be directed towards improving public health, preventing physical and mental illness and diseases, and obviating sources of danger to physical and mental health'. Article 168 also states 'The Union should encourage cooperation between the Member

States in the areas referred to in this Article...’ The European Health Insurance Card has been available since 2004 and since 2011 EU citizens have had access to healthcare in other Member States. Article 35 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights guarantees health care for Europeans: ‘Everyone has the right of access to preventive health care and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices. A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Union policies and activities’. Nevertheless, according to the OECD Health Indicators, there are persistent health inequalities among EU’s Member States. Furthermore, it has been increasingly challenging to keep up with health care spending in EU’s poorer states due to financial constraints imposed by the EU after the 2006 eurozone crisis. The coronavirus pandemic further revealed the disparity among health care systems in the EU, where poorer member states had difficulty delivering vaccines and did not have enough ICU beds for patients with coronavirus, especially in rural areas. There is a large disparity among rich and poor EU Member States in health care spending. Per capita GDP health care spending for Greece (2021) and Romania (2021) was €1603 (7.8% of GDP) and €838 (5.7% of GDP), respectively (Source: World Bank for Romania, WHO for Greece). This compares to 9.9% of GDP for the EU. Among the EU Member States, the largest shares were recorded in Germany (11.5% of GDP) and France (11.3%), followed by Sweden (10.9%). Life expectancy is 81.3 in the EU-27, but only 75.6 for Romania and 74.6 years in Bulgaria as compared to 82 years in France and 83 in Spain (2019, Eurostat). Out of pocket costs are also significantly different – from a low of 9% in France to a high of 47% in Bulgaria. Solidarity is not the only reason why Europeans should be concerned about poorer health outcomes in the countries with lower per capita health care spending. A system with fewer disparities will reduce health care shopping (wealthy citizens of the poorer Member States traveling to Northern Europe for medical and surgical procedures), ensure adequate health care for residents of other EU Member States traveling and residing in other Member States, and reduce outmigration of health care providers from the poorer to richer Member States. Furthermore, the poorer Member States are experiencing strains to their public health systems caused by asylum seekers and refugees and often these individuals do not want to even be in these EU member states, but rather are seeking to settle in Northern Europe. This has been an ongoing problem for Greece, particularly concerning Syrians fleeing from civil war and now Ukrainians fleeing to nearby EU Member States. Now is the time to improve health care

systems in poorer EU Member States to better respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and future pandemics.

The European Health Union

Recommendations

1. The Commission will develop an enhanced health programme within Horizon Europe, with the creation of a European Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority.
2. The Commission will provide support to regions and Member States experiencing difficulty attracting health workers. The best way to do this is to incentivize healthcare personnel to stay within the countries they have citizenship in in light of many healthcare personnel moving to countries with larger GDPs for a higher salary, creating a deficit of healthcare personnel in smaller countries despite the amount of healthcare personnel being trained there. There will be two parts to help bridge this gap:
 - a. Healthcare personnel from EU member states with a higher per capita GDP will send healthcare personnel to countries with a smaller per capita GDP. The EU could help incentivize the salary for these positions.
 - b. Subsidies/incentives for the salaries of healthcare workers who have recently received their certifications in those member states with lower per capita GDP. This will enable recently trained health care workers to receive higher salaries and remain in their home member states. This initial incentive will last for 5 years after completion of health care certifications.
3. The EU will promote policies to safeguard the rights of health workers.
 - a. To retain healthcare workers and protect work life balance of medical professionals, the Commission will investigate ways to help member states pay overtime and working hours, as well as providing necessary medical equipment such as PPE
4. The Commission will develop an EU health policy with recommending health expectations in coordination with the WHO.

5. The Commission will engage in enhancing Public Health Education
 - a. Increase health literacy among European citizens.
 - b. Ensure all citizens have access to reputable and reliable sources for receiving healthcare information, allowing them to take preventive measures.
 - c. Increase community participation by developing educational campaigns and programs that promote healthy habits and environments.
6. The Commission will propose a plan that provides flexibility for member states to choose where to allocate funds in the medical sector, keeping in mind:
 - a. This funding will be prioritized to member states based on their medical needs.
 - b. National governments must submit an audit of delegated EU funds.
7. The Commission will propose a plan to improve the quality of care in the public health sector.
 - a. Increase access to public doctors.
 - b. Establish measurements and benchmark national health care systems through a Health Care Scoreboard.
 - c. Crisis Preparedness
 1. Strengthen coordination at the EU level when facing cross-border health threats
 2. Advancement of European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)
8. Funding Mechanisms
 - a. Over the next six-year period, the budget of the cohesion fund will be raised to 8 billion euros. The payment of the budget will be divided among member states according to their percentage of the EU's overall GDP.

b. The European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) visa waiver program is expected to cost €7 per applicant when it is fully operational. Non-EU nationals who do not need a visa to travel to the Schengen area will need to apply for a travel authorization through the ETIAS system prior to their trip. Part of the funding stream of ETIAS will be earmarked for solidarity in healthcare.

c. The Commission will raise a tax on the profits of large multinational companies, a share of those profits will be allocated to the EU budget. This will be based on the international agreement to tackle tax avoidance and ensure that profits are taxed where economic activity and value creation occur. This taxation reallocation will now be broken down based on their GDP percentage in relation to the EU. Those possessing 2% or greater of the EU GDP would attribute 25%, those between 1% - 2% will attribute 15%, finally those with below 1% of the EU GDP will attribute 5%. These shares of the EU budget will be earmarked for Social Europe programs.

d. The Commission will propose a scheme whereby individual healthcare personnel who are either being sent to the poorer EU member states or incentivized to remain in the poorer EU member states will receive a tax break of 20% of net income, which will be subsidized by the funding outlined in the other points in this health care plan.

The Four-Day Workweek

Recommendations

1. Implement a pilot project to analyse 4-day work-week policies already implemented in member countries France and Belgium, whose findings will be shared with the European Council through a sub-committee of the European Economic and Social Committee.
2. The sub-committee is to conduct consultations with industry leaders across the EU to better understand operational policies and impacts of a four-day workweek versus a five-day workweek.
 - a. To investigate which industries and/or job types could implement the

programme and which could not.

3. Recommend that multinational corporations and member states take steps to protect the compensation and existing workers' rights of workers who change to a hybrid work style.
4. Using existing research institutions and efforts, the EU recommends investigating the impacts of a four-day work week versus a five-day workweek on environmental impacts as well as economic factors such as: unemployment, productivity, inefficiency, and fossil fuel consumption.