



# **EUROPE'S VOCATION TO PROMOTE PEACE IN THE WORLD**

A CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMECE BISHOPS  
IN VIEW OF THE FORTHCOMING EU GLOBAL STRATEGY  
ON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY





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of the European Community*

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# FOREWORD

The European Union started life as a project of peace and reconciliation. Over the years, as European integration transformed our continent's political culture and economic life, the dangers of armed conflict between the nations of Europe receded. The peace dividend of the European project is very precious. That commitment to maintaining peace within and to promoting it in the wider world is an essential ingredient of the EU's mission. The Catholic Church embraced that aspirational pursuit of peace right from the outset and the Bishops of COMECE welcome an opportunity to reiterate the significance of that engagement for peace seventy years later.

We would all agree that in 2016 our world is more fragile than we believed up until recently. Europe has a series of armed conflicts on its borders. The Middle East, no longer so far away, is more unstable and the political situation there is more volatile than it has been in many years. One of the most urgent tasks which the EU has to address at this juncture in its history is the elaboration of a new Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy.

This present report on Europe's Vocation to Promote Peace in the World, received and adopted by the COMECE Plenary Assembly on Thursday 3 March 2016, is the fruit of consultation with experts on peace and security questions. It is inspired by a long tradition of Church reflection on peace and is presented in its final form as the contribution of the COMECE Bishops to the preparation of the Global Strategy. I take this occasion to thank the COMECE Commission on the External Relations of the EU, that functions at the same time as an ad-hoc working group of the Conference of European Justice & Peace Commissions and is chaired by Archbishop Jean-Claude Hollerich, for the diligent preparatory work and advice.

It is my hope that the text of the report will be of assistance to policy makers as they prepare the final series of recommendations on peace and security to the European Council next June. We also hope that the report may foster the debate with civil society and become a significant point of reference for an even wider public.

**Reinhard Cardinal MARX**

Archbishop of Munich and Freising

President of COMECE





# INTRODUCTION

*“Peace is not merely the absence of war, nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. Rather it is founded on a correct understanding of the human person and requires the establishment of an order based on justice and charity.”* (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 494)<sup>1</sup>

(1) In its biblical sense, peace is understood as a gift of God entrusted to all men and women who are called to attain it<sup>2</sup>. Peace among individual people and peace among nations are closely interconnected. An essential ingredient of peace is the safeguarding of the good of every person and of the whole person. Without respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, peace on earth cannot be achieved<sup>3</sup>.

(2) The history of mankind is also a history of violent conflicts and wars, which are *“never an appropriate way to resolve problems”*<sup>4</sup>. Conflicts seem to be an anthropological inevitability and can also fulfil positive social impact functions, and yet they must be distinguished from their forms of expression and their causality<sup>5</sup>. They must, however, be made a link in the chain of a new process with a view to building communion since *“unity is greater than conflict”*<sup>6</sup>. Peacemaking, understood as a dynamic process, requires a constant effort directed towards *“civilising of conflicts”*, particularly aimed at transforming their violent manifestations into ways in which they can be addressed by non-violent means<sup>7</sup>. For this, in the first place a culture of *“pre-emptive peace”* seeking to address the underlying root causes of violence already existing at an early stage needs to be adopted.

(3) The Church, with its teaching on peace going back twenty centuries, has been a strong advocate of peace efforts for transforming disorder into a unifying *“tranquillitas ordinis – tranquillity of order”*<sup>8</sup> governed by the principles of *“truth, justice, charity and freedom”* as proclaimed by the Encyclical *Pacem In Terris*, the Church’s *“Magna Charta for peace”* and the first papal letter addressed to all men and women of good will<sup>9</sup>. The Church has moreover been a vigorous promoter of

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1 <http://bit.ly/1Pf5yNy>.

2 Cf. Pope Francis, *Overcome Indifference and Win Peace* (2016), <http://bit.ly/1QxSmJr>.

3 Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2304, <http://bit.ly/1lvbntF>.

4 Cf. Compendium, 497.

5 Cf. Thorsten Bonacker, Peter Imbusch, *Zentrale Begriffe der Friedens- und Konfliktforschung: Konflikt, Gewalt, Krieg, Frieden* (2010), 67-78.

6 Cf. Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), 226-230, <http://bit.ly/1RsbuHF>.

7 Cf. Berghof Foundation, *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation* (2011), <http://bit.ly/1OaOetk>.

8 Cf. Saint Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 19,13.

9 Cf. Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris* (1963), 35, 80, <http://bit.ly/1KzQ0Y3>.



## 6 INTRODUCTION

the “*right to peace*”, the respect for which implies “*building of a society in which structures of power give way to structures of cooperation, with a view to the common good*”<sup>10</sup>. The concrete demands of this common good are to be applied in space and time. As time goes on, these requirements also need to be constantly re-examined since “*peace is never attained once and for all, but must be built up ceaselessly*”<sup>11</sup>.

(4) It is now more than fifteen years since the Bishops of COMECE launched a reflection on the meaning of the value of peace and the ways it can best be attained and maintained<sup>12</sup>. Despite the progress achieved in some areas, it is regrettable to have to state today that many of the worrying issues raised by the Bishops back then still perdure. The issues range from the threat of fundamentalist terrorism and organised crime, the economic, social and ecological risks of globalisation, social injustices, continuing military overspending<sup>13</sup> to insufficient progress in nuclear disarmament efforts or nationalistic tendencies which undermine the pursuit of the common good. All these developments threaten peace both internally and at a global level, and have not as yet been effectively addressed.

(5) True to the mission entrusted to it by the Second Vatican Council to “*scrutinise the signs of the times and to interpret them in the light of the Gospel*”<sup>14</sup>, the Church is required to constantly re-read and understand the *signs of the current time*. In the present European political context with the preparation of an EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy on the horizon, the COMECE Commission on the External Relations of the EU<sup>15</sup>, together with a group of experts, prepared this report as a contribution of the COMECE Bishops to the ongoing debate. It takes a fresh look at the developments that have taken place in the geopolitical environment of the European Union in recent years and provides a renewed reflection on how nowadays Europe can truly live up to its vocation to promote peace in its wider neighbourhood and in the world. This report does not aim at providing any technical solutions or definite answers but rather to offer reflections for orientation and recommendations for action.

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10 Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Respect for Human Rights: The Secret of True Peace* (1999), <http://bit.ly/1SzOM0Y>.

11 Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et Spes* (1965), 78, <http://bit.ly/1lmUu1K>.

12 Cf. COMECE, *Truth, Memory and Solidarity – Keys to Peace and Reconciliation* (1999), <http://bit.ly/1TEvJB6>.

13 Cf. SIPRI Military Expenditure Database 2015, <http://bit.ly/1W9JyuS>: World military expenditure was estimated at \$1676 billion in 2015, representing 2.3 per cent of global gross domestic product.

14 *Gaudium et Spes*, 4.

15 The Commission of COMECE on the External Relations of the EU functions at the same time as an ad-hoc working group of the Conference of European Justice & Peace Commissions.

# 1. READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIME

## Encouraging signs

(6) The European Union has significantly expanded over the past fifteen years, including the historic expansion in 2004 marking the re-unification of Europe after decades of division. Through the instruments of its Enlargement Policy, the EU has made an important contribution to achieving relative stability in the Western Balkans after the horrific wars of the Yugoslavian succession despite lasting political problems<sup>16</sup> and burdens from the past.

(7) Considerable progress has been achieved in reaching a diplomatic solution mediated by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the Iranian nuclear crisis, which gives hope for stabilisation of the Middle East region.

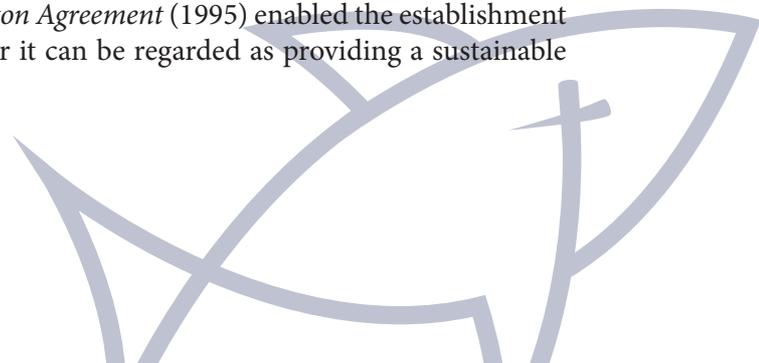
(8) At a more global level, the European Union has been playing a leading role in the fight over climate change and it made an important contribution to reaching an ambitious agreement at COP 21 in Paris. The EU is the world's largest trading bloc and, together with its Member States, the EU has contributed to more than half of the world's development and humanitarian aid provided to the needy and crisis-affected regions. Moreover, with its over thirty peacekeeping operations and civilian missions the EU has to date helped to maintain peace in several of the world's trouble spots, such as currently in Mali, the Central African Republic or in the waters off the coast of Somalia.

## Worrying signs

(9) In recent months, an *arc of instability* at its Eastern and Southern borders has surrounded the European Union. The annexation of the Crimean peninsula constituted a serious violation of international law, and violence in Eastern Ukraine between Russian-backed separatist forces and the Ukrainian military has claimed numerous innocent victims and caused great suffering throughout the population. Without the commitment of all parties concerned to implement fully and in good faith the jointly-reached Minsk accord, there is the risk of it becoming another “*frozen conflict*” in the Eastern European region.

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<sup>16</sup> E.g. with regard to Bosnia and Herzegovina; the *Dayton Agreement* (1995) enabled the establishment of peace, yet it remains an open question as to whether it can be regarded as providing a sustainable solution.



(10) The Southern part of our neighbourhood has been marked by regular flare-ups in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and failing state structures in the Middle East, in particular in Syria, Iraq and Libya. Following Western interventions, the insufficient handling of transitional processes has enabled extremist groups and individuals to exploit the power vacuum and use violence to oppose democratic change. This region also faces the risk of becoming the ground for proxy wars and a battle for strategic interests among some members of the international community.

(11) We have been witnessing the emergence of *hybrid threats* that lie below the threshold of conventional warfare. These threats have highlighted gaps in the current international legal framework that is still dominated by the traditional military and state-centric concepts of security. Technological progress and digitalisation has not only opened up a number of opportunities in communication, transport or the economy; it has also created new vulnerabilities and possibilities for destabilising actions, such as cybercrime, espionage or disinformation campaigns.

(12) New forms of terrorism have also emerged that go well beyond national or regional boundaries and pose an immediate threat to peace in Europe and our neighbourhood, such as was recently witnessed in Belgium, France, Lebanon, Tunisia or Egypt. This threat to peace has both an external and an internal dimension. It is troubling to note that some young Europeans are responding to the recruitment drives of those inciting them to engage in violent extremism. This often develops within the context of disillusionment and missed opportunities, of socio-cultural identity crises and failed integration. These terrorist movements tend to apply extremist interpretations of religion or instrumentalise it to achieve their imperialistic, political and economic interests. Violent acts incited and carried out in the name of religion are widely denounced<sup>17</sup>. It is regrettable that in many instances efforts to hold the perpetrators accountable for their horrendous crimes<sup>18</sup> have been rather disappointing and mechanisms of tackling impunity lacking.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Pope Francis, *Address to the members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See* (12 January 2015): “*Religious fundamentalism, even before it eliminates human beings by perpetrating horrendous killings, eliminates God himself, turning him into a mere ideological pretext*“, <http://bit.ly/17AzfKK>.

<sup>18</sup> The European Parliament resolution of 4 February 2016 on the systematic mass murder of religious minorities by the so-called ‘ISIS/Daesh’ stresses that “*the so-called ‘ISIS/Daesh’ is committing genocide against Christians and Yazidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities, who do not agree with the so-called ‘ISIS/Daesh’ interpretation of Islam, and that this therefore entails action under the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*”. It also recalls that “*action should be taken for it to be recognised as genocide by the UN Security Council*“, <http://bit.ly/1K3uJGO>. Cf. also the Resolution 2091 (2016) on Foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe on 27 January 2016, <http://bit.ly/20x9DV5>.

(13) The limited access to natural resources, including food and clean water, loss of biodiversity, energy scarcity or the increasing economic inequality and social injustice in many parts of the world, particularly in Africa, may constitute another major source of conflict in this century<sup>19</sup>.

(14) Wars, insecurity, destitution but also the negative consequences of climate change have forced millions of people to leave their homeland and seek asylum or the opportunity of a better life in Europe and other neighbouring regions, many of them losing their lives at our borders.

(15) Globally, the geopolitical landscape has seen the rise of new powers in Asia, Africa and Latin America, thus leading to an increasingly multi-polar world. Blocked initiatives within the United Nations bodies, the stalling of the Doha Development Round within the World Trade Organisation or the failure of the International Monetary Fund reform, demonstrate the challenges posed by the new world order to the current predominantly Western-shaped multilateral framework.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (2015), Chapter I, <http://bit.ly/1Gi1BTu>.



## 2. EUROPEAN UNION AS A PEACE PROJECT FOUNDED ON VALUES

(16) The European Union is a project of peace and reconciliation. The process of European integration is based on values<sup>20</sup> rooted mainly in Christian inspiration<sup>21</sup> and widely held as a universal ethos. Pope Francis recalled in his speech before the European Parliament<sup>22</sup> the “*firm conviction of the founders of the European Union, who envisioned a future based on the capacity to work together in bridging divisions and in fostering peace and fellowship between all the peoples of this continent*”. The unique contribution of the European Union to the advancement of peace and reconciliation in Europe over six decades was also recognised by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. And yet - not least through the recent events at our Eastern and Southern borders, and even on the European continent itself - we are constantly being reminded that the value of peace cannot be taken for granted.

(17) The European Union and its Member States have a particular responsibility to also share and promote universal values beyond their borders. This is not only a legal commitment<sup>23</sup> but also a *moral responsibility*. Pope John Paul II underlined this by saying that “*Europe cannot close in on itself. It cannot and must not lose interest in the rest of the world. On the contrary, it must remain fully aware of the fact that other countries, other continents, await its bold initiatives, in order to offer to poorer peoples the means for their growth and social organisation, and to build a more just and fraternal world*” and thus “*to build peace within its borders and throughout the world*”<sup>24</sup>.

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20 Cf. Article 2 of the *Treaty on the European Union (TEU, 2007)*: “*The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.*”

21 Cf. COMECE, *A Europe of Values – the ethical dimension of the European Union* (2007), <http://bit.ly/1QzcXfK>.

22 <http://bit.ly/1TEvW7l>.

23 Cf. in particular Article 21(1) *TEU* and Article 21 (2) (c) *TEU*.

24 Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa* (2003), 111, <http://bit.ly/1S4272f>.

### 3. FOR AN AUTHENTIC EUROPEAN 'PEACE POLICY'

(18) If the European Union wants to truly live up to its vocation for peace and pursue an *authentic peace policy*, its policies and actions must be guided by its founding values. This will require strengthening the links between internal and external policy instruments, which in the light of the current complex security challenges appears to be indispensable. To achieve greater policy coherence and consistency, the responsibilities between various institutional actors will need to be coordinated more systematically and structural divisions between political guidance and financial resources be addressed more effectively.

(19) An authentic European peace policy based on values will also help to overcome the divisions between Member States that sometimes tend to give preference to their particular national interests before the European and global common good. Promoting common values and addressing the threats to them is a common and shared European responsibility.

(20) The founding values of the European Union find their expression in a political and personal attitude of dialogue. The diverse historical and cultural experiences in the different European societies will enrich our perception of today's challenges as long as we carefully develop a culture of mutual listening and understanding. Especially when dealing with conflicts, such an attitude perceiving seemingly opposing perspectives as a chance to deepen the understanding of problems is indispensable. In order to deal with our particular diversities in a constructive way we have to pay sufficient respect to these soft skills. Otherwise this diversity will most likely become a growing obstacle for the European project. This project is not just a way of thinking. First of all it is a way of being.



## 4. THREE PILLARS OF THE EUROPEAN PEACE POLICY

### Pillar 1: Pre-emptive Peacebuilding

(21) It is not only a duty in terms of international law but also an ethical imperative to avoid the use of force in conflict situations whenever possible. The first pillar of a peace policy must thus be to prevent situations in which the only choice is between principally unacceptable violent alternatives. Non-violence, however, does not mean passivity. On the contrary, pre-emptive peacebuilding requires forward-looking and broad-based action stepping in at a very early stage where the seeds of a potentially violent conflict can be transformed and managed in a sustainable way, thus preventing future use of force from a long-term perspective. The European Union's *comprehensive approach* as a “*general working method and a set of concrete measures and processes*”<sup>25</sup> constitutes a good basis for this concept and it needs to be implemented in full.

### Particular cases of needed pre-emptive peacebuilding

(22) A policy seeking to address and prevent the **threat of fundamentalist terrorism** should first acknowledge the fact that this is not only a security, but also cultural and social challenge, which is not limited by national boundaries. Reactive responses with force alone will be far from sufficient to solve this problem in a sustainable way. Measures of acute prevention, such as cutting international financial flows for terrorist purposes or better information sharing and increased intelligence cooperation among Member States and with third-countries with due respect for human rights may be effective in stopping the symptoms of this threat. It is more important, however, to go deeper and address the social, political and religious roots of the radicalisation of particularly young people, many of them European citizens, who are often lacking a sense of co-ownership of European society and have poor future prospects. In this respect, education, integration and social policies will have to be better taken into account, and synergies with migration policies and development cooperation will have to be created. The role of religious leaders and the value of dialogue between cultures and religions should also be given due recognition and support. Moreover, the provisions of Article 17 (3) of the *Treaty on the Functioning of the EU* (2007) provide an appropriate instrument for dialogue and exchange of perspectives,

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<sup>25</sup> Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach, 12 May 2014, <http://bit.ly/1RsbWp8>.

opinions and experience between the European Union and the Churches and religious communities.

(23) In order to address **regional instabilities**, it is important to reinforce the EU early-warning systems so that emerging conflicts and conflict risks can already be assessed and identified at an early stage and appropriate confidence-building measures and actions developed. In this respect, the role of EU diplomacy, in particular EU delegations in third countries, should be upgraded and strengthened. Following a bottom-up approach, civil society organisations and Church institutions with their European and worldwide networks, often in ecumenical partnerships, have made a particular contribution to the early identification of potential conflicts and taken initiatives for peace mediation and peacebuilding. Another way of pre-emptively mitigating geopolitical tensions, the policy instrument of strategic partnerships should be revived and cooperation with regional and international organisations, such as the League of Arab States, African Union and its sub-regional organisations, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations (UN), should be fostered. Once the early recognition and prevention of risks fails and a crisis emerges, it is a first imperative to search for a political solution. This process should be primarily based on a regional approach involving all key actors of the region concerned and duly taking into account the interests and needs of the affected population in compliance with international law. Based on its previous experience, the EU is well equipped here to assume the role of a mediator in cooperation with other actors, either through the EU High Representative or a designated Special Representative.

(24) With regard to addressing the plight of **migrants and refugees** the policy of pre-emptive peace also plays a major role. It is necessary to avert at the earliest stages the flight of refugees and departures of migrants as a result of poverty, violence and persecution<sup>26</sup> by developing a responsible global approach to migration policy. To this end, political settlement of conflicts should be actively promoted, links between migration and development policies be strengthened and cooperation with the countries of origin and transit be fostered<sup>27</sup>. New forms of partnership with host countries delivering opportunities for both host communities and refugees and migrants could be created<sup>28</sup>. The EU and its Member States must be committed to complying with the international obligations concerning human rights and the protection of refugees and displaced people. They must show solidarity with the

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26 Cf. Pope Francis, *Message for the world day of migrants and refugees* (2016), <http://bit.ly/1IZU2DG>.

27 Cf. COMECE, *I was a stranger and you made me welcome...* (2015), <http://bit.ly/1n5OXFl>.

28 Cf. El Hassan bin Talal, *Europe and the future of international refugee policy* (2016), <http://bit.ly/1SCwE6A>.



needy as well as among each other within their possibilities and with respect to the common good<sup>29</sup>.

### Reconstruction and reconciliation

(25) Another important element of pre-emptive peacebuilding is **post-conflict management and reconciliation**. Prevention of future conflicts and of further escalation in violence will hardly be possible without transforming the relationships between states, communities and individuals that have been torn apart. “*There is no peace without reconciliation and no reconciliation without truth and justice*”<sup>30</sup>. Initiatives of transitional justice that aim at coming to terms with the legacies of widespread human rights abuses should therefore envisage holding the perpetrators accountable and claiming restitution, which are indisputably important elements in post-conflict situations; but in order to achieve a successful transformation to a peaceful society, these initiatives must also find their expression in revealing the truth and in the empowerment of victims<sup>31</sup>. In transformation periods it is crucial that effective state structures be rebuilt and just living conditions be created, thus also ensuring the right of return of displaced persons and refugees to their communities. The EU has adopted a number of aspirational documents<sup>32</sup> in respect to post-conflict management, which now need to be consistently implemented and integrated into the wider EU crisis-response framework. It is to be recalled that the role of the EU and other international actors with regard to these transformation processes must be purely supportive and remain impartial, as the main responsibility for a peaceful transformation lies with the regional authorities with the broad participation of the local population.

(26) Since the damage caused by violent conflicts is not only material but also cultural, psychological and moral, the long-term process of *reconciliation* which may take several generations, needs to be an integral part of the transformation. Holistic healing of the wounds of the past and restoring mutual confidence must start from the bottom, with active involvement of civil society organisations and Churches engaging in a process of forgiveness between affected communities and individuals as far as possible. Reconciliation requires above all strategic, active and reliable patience. Practical solidarity with the victims of violence, injustice and conflict has to be the fundamental guideline on this way along with education to peace and dealing with the past through narrative discourse.

29 Cf. Footnote no.25; and Catechism, 2241.

30 German Bishops’Conference, *Gerechter Friede* (2000), 67, <http://bit.ly/1003UC9>.

31 Cf. *ibid.*

32 Cf. *EU Concept for Support to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration* (2006), <http://bit.ly/1SzPbk4> and *EU’s Policy Framework on support to transitional justice* (2015), <http://bit.ly/1j776QE>.

## Pillar 2: Peace through Justice

(27) For the Magisterium of the Church, peace is “*an enterprise of justice*”<sup>33</sup> and it is fashioned by transformational efforts towards an order “*with a more perfect form of justice among men*”.<sup>34</sup> Basing the peace policy on the pillar of achieving *peace through justice* implies the adoption of an *integral concept of security*, often also referred to as *human security*<sup>35</sup>. Guided by the premise that “*everything is closely interrelated*”<sup>36</sup>, such an approach must take into account every aspect of the global crisis and promote human, socio-economic and environmental development as essential drivers of peace. This requires placing *human dignity* at the very centre with the aim of creating conditions for an environment where all human beings, especially the most needy and marginalised, can live a dignified life, where everyone has the possibility of reasonable growth, where wealth is distributed in an equitable manner and creation safeguarded. The principle of *sustainability* implies that the notions of *solidarity* and of the *common good* be not only applied with regard to the present but also be extended to future generations<sup>37</sup>.

### Human justice

(28) A peaceful society cannot be built up without respect for and promotion of **human rights**. In the light of serious violations of human rights, numerous cases of torture and abuse, unfair trials or restrictions of fundamental freedoms and marginalisation of vulnerable members of society, in particular women, children, elderly and people with disabilities all around the world, the European Union must be an active promoter of human justice through a coherent use of all its internal and external human rights policy instruments.

(29) Given that in many countries of the world, religious minorities, including Christians<sup>38</sup>, are suffering because of their religion, face discrimination or even persecution, the EU should particularly promote the universal right to **religious freedom** in all its dimensions at the public and private, individual, collective

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33 *Gaudium et Spes*, 78; Cf. also Isaiah 32,17.

34 Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Populorum progressio* (1967), 76, <http://bit.ly/1EVoK1z>.

35 Cf. UN Trust Fund for *Human Security*, *Human Security in Theory and Practice* (2009), <http://bit.ly/21SP9ub>.

36 *Laudato Si'*, Chapter IV.

37 Cf. *Laudato Si'*, 158, 159.

38 According to reports (Cf. Report of the Pew Research Center: *Religious Hostilities Reach Six-Year High* (2014), <http://pewrsr.ch/17SycoN>), Christians appear to be the largest group of religious belief to be persecuted in the world.



and institutional levels<sup>39</sup>, and fully apply and further elaborate its respective legal instruments<sup>40</sup>.

(30) Human justice cannot be achieved without fostering trustworthy state structures and creating conditions where human rights can be respected. The EU could to this end better use and integrate into its external actions the instruments of other policy fields, such as the Enlargement Policy or European Neighbourhood Policy, that could provide appropriate fora for **political dialogue** and promotion of universal values, while respecting the diversity and identity of the partners.

### Socio-economic justice

(31) The policy of **development assistance and cooperation** can be one of the major instruments for promoting socio-economic justice. Following the recent adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*<sup>41</sup>, it is important that the European Union promote the concept of sustainable development in all its dimensions – economic, social and environmental - and commit itself to initiatives that do not merely seek to provide aid or assistance, but aim at truly empowering third-countries and their inhabitants to become agents of their own development<sup>42</sup>, including good governance and the fight against corruption. The instruments of EU development policy should, however, “*respect the values of local populations and, in any case, not prove detrimental to the fundamental and inalienable right to life of the unborn*”<sup>43</sup>. Particular attention should be paid to the problem of agricultural land grabbing, “*which not only deprives farmers of an essential asset, but directly undermines the sovereignty of countries*”<sup>44</sup>. In this respect, the EU should promote small-scale agriculture practices as a coherent, efficient and sustainable approach to fight against hunger. As regards the funding for development, EU Member States should keep their promise to devote 0.7% of their Gross National Income to development aid and to commit 0.15% to 0.2% to the poorest countries<sup>45</sup>. With a view to increasing the efficiency of development cooperation, a better coordination with other aid providers, including Churches, religious communities and various

39 Cf. COMECE, *Religious Freedom – pillar of the human rights policy in the external relations of the European Union* (2010), <http://bit.ly/1mC5ZLt>.

40 In particular the *EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief* (2013), <http://bit.ly/1mG4gnz>.

41 Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, <http://bit.ly/1Y3D3sN>.

42 Cf. *Ecclesia in Europa*, 111.

43 Cf. *Overcome Indifference and Win Peace*.

44 Pope Francis, *Address to participants in the 39th session of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations* (11 June 2015), <http://bit.ly/20syUzI>.

45 Cf. Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 26 May 2015, <http://bit.ly/1IQQzww>.

other faith-based organisations working in the field should be ensured. To this end, it might be advisable to develop EU Guidelines on how these faith-based organisations can be better included in EU development cooperation mechanisms<sup>46</sup>.

(32) **International trade** policy can be another driver for promoting socio-economic justice. It must not merely seek European economic self-interest and the interests of big corporations but also take into account the needs of developing countries which should be gradually integrated into the world economy. In the light of the notion that “*trade should benefit people, not just markets and economies*”<sup>47</sup>, attention must be paid to risks of market liberalisation that might harm their domestic economy, such as a significant loss of revenues as a consequence of the elimination of custom duties or threats posed to local producers by unequal competition with cheap subsidised European imports. The EU should continue to promote an effective and fair multilateral trade system within the World Trade Organisation with a special and differential treatment of developing countries but also advance its approach to the modernisation of global trade policy through bilateral and regional agreements. It is equally important that the EU adopt fair and ethical trade schemes and maintain policy coherence without conceding on its values and human rights, which should be reflected in each bilateral or multilateral partnership. In this respect, better implementation of the *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (2011)<sup>48</sup> should be ensured.

(33) Moreover, unequal distribution of income and wealth in a globalised world, not least through unfair **taxation systems**, can have dismal socio-economic consequences. The EU and its Member States should thus become a leading example and actively promote, including at the global level (within the framework of G20, OECD, UN), the adoption of binding rules on the activities of multinationals and actions to combat tax evasion and tax avoidance, to effectively close secretive tax havens and to ensure more transparency in tax matters<sup>49</sup>.

## Environmental justice

(34) Following the adoption of the *Paris Climate Agreement*<sup>50</sup>, the EU and its Member States must keep their **ecological commitments**, especially as regards

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46 According to the example of *UNDP Guidelines on Engaging with Faith-based organisations and religious leaders* (2014), <http://bit.ly/1SzPsnh>.

47 Note of the Holy See, *Ethical Guidelines for International trade* (2003), <http://bit.ly/22KLFbs>.

48 <http://bit.ly/18WbEUy>.

49 Cf. Concerted Action of the Conference of European Justice & Peace commissions, *Growing Economic Inequality and Taxation – A Challenge for Europe and the World* (2016) <http://bit.ly/1PkW46h>.

50 Paris Agreement (2015), <http://bit.ly/1RTdUSq>.



the targets of reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and promoting initiatives of *de-carbonisation, de-materialisation and re-naturalisation*<sup>51</sup>. The EU will have to step up its efforts to adapt to the anticipated consequences of climate change and offset its multiplier effects and the potential for conflict. This will require not only technical solutions but also the provision of help to people in affected regions, particularly in poor countries, by way of education and training to better anticipate and adequately respond to natural disasters and mitigate their consequences.

(35) Closely linked to environmental justice is the problem of **energy** supplies. Not only questions of emissions and pollution, but also of price volatility and unequal access to energy resources which can have major implications for development and peace, as they affect food security, health and environment in general. It is therefore necessary that at the European as well as the international level provisions be taken for ensuring an improved management of energy resources and regulating their extraction and trade. To this end, the European Union should make progress in the efforts of building an *Energy Union*. It should also conclude bilateral or regional agreements with third-countries and engage in cross-border research programmes in order to enhance energy efficiency in non-fossil energy sources and reduce energy dependence.

### Pillar 3: Peace through Security

(36) The Social Teaching of the Church<sup>52</sup> condemns “*the savagery of war*” as “*the failure of all true humanism*” and imposes on States the obligation “*to do everything possible to ensure that the conditions of peace exist, not only within their own territory but throughout the world*”. However, “*as long as the danger of war persists*” the right to a lawful self-defence cannot be denied “*once all peace efforts have failed*”<sup>53</sup>. For such a case it is also legitimate to possess adequate means in compliance with the “*principle of sufficiency*”. The use of military force may thus only be considered as an exception to the rule and must be strictly conducted within the framework of international law. Along with calls for a reform of the United Nations system, the concept of *Responsibility to Protect* (“*R2P*”) has gained renewed international attention. It should, however, be remembered that *R2P* does not only involve military intervention but above all efforts of prevention and rebuilding<sup>54</sup>. Reiterating the words of Pope John Paul II that “*war is not always inevitable, but it is always a*

51 Cf. COMECE, *The time for conversion is now...* (2015), 15, <http://bit.ly/1ZNKOUK>.

52 Compendium, 497, 500, 508; and Catechism, 2308.

53 *Ibid.*

54 Cf. German Commission Justitia et Pax, *Die Schutzverantwortung der Internationalen Gemeinschaft* (2015), <http://bit.ly/1MT4xZR>.

*defeat for humanity*<sup>55</sup>, we refer to the traditional doctrine that requires very strict conditions on any resort to military force: the approval by a legitimate *authority*<sup>56</sup>, the existence of a *just cause*<sup>57</sup>, *proportionality of means*, *reasonable prospects of success and exhaustion of all non-military means of influence*<sup>58</sup>. Moreover, during armed conflicts, the precepts of international humanitarian law must be fully respected<sup>59</sup> and humanitarian assistance be provided based on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence<sup>60</sup>.

(37) There have been calls recently for a credible preparedness of the European Union to counter threats of a military nature as part of its comprehensive approach. The European Council<sup>61</sup>, the President of the European Commission<sup>62</sup> as well as the European Parliament<sup>63</sup> have referred repeatedly to the need to increase the effectiveness and operationality of the **Common Security and Defence Policy** (CSDP), to pool and share defence capabilities, promote defence-related research and deepen the integration of Europe's defence industry. Reference has been made to already existing instruments that have not been fully used yet, such as setting up a permanent structured cooperation among willing Member States under Article 46 of the *Treaty on the European Union* or the deployment of *EU Battle Groups*.

(38) In the light of the increased vulnerability of the EU attributable to uncoordinated national defence budget cuts, some think tank reports<sup>64</sup> have also called for a more effective bundling of Europe's defence capabilities and a stronger integration of Europe's defence industry, which could avoid duplications and lead to significant savings<sup>65</sup> in the longer term as regards military spending. These appear to be convincing arguments for expressing a cautious support for deepening the common security and defence dimension of the European project.

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55 Pope John Paul II, *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (3 January 2003), <http://bit.ly/1XaTHpQ>.

56 This is according to international law the attacked state in the case of self-defence and the UN Security Council with regard to measures under Chapter VII of the *UN Charter*.

57 "Gross and systematic violations of human rights" are generally regarded as a just cause.

58 Catechism, 2308-2309.

59 Cf. Compendium, 504 ff.

60 Cf. Caritas Europa, *Bridging the gap between policy & practice* (2011), <http://bit.ly/1P020PO>.

61 Cf. Conclusions of the European Council of 19/20 December 2013, <http://bit.ly/1bg6ZH6>.

62 Cf. Jean-Claude Juncker, *A New Start for Europe: My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change, Political Guidelines for the next European Commission* (2014), <http://bit.ly/1zNBeDJ>.

63 Cf. European Parliament resolution of 21 May 2015 on financing the CSDP, <http://bit.ly/1OAFafW>.

64 Cf. CEPS, *More Union in European Defence* (2015), <http://bit.ly/1Xd3YoX>; EPSC, *In Defence of Europe* (2015), <http://bit.ly/1OzwpqI>.

65 According to the study of the European Parliamentary Research Service, *Mapping the Cost of Non-Europe, 2014-19* (2014), at least 26 billion euro per year could be saved in the area of security and defence policy, cf. <http://bit.ly/1gpJkvp>. These resources could then be allocated to peacebuilding purposes, including development aid.

(39) European politics present a different picture. Some Member States are rather reluctant to accept the politically sensitive implications of loss of sovereignty or limitations on their strategic interests. Thus, if the EU wants to increase its capacity to act more autonomously and independently in the security domain, the way forward will need to be based on a *step-by-step approach*. Despite the joint responsibility for tackling the common security challenges, the involvement of Member States will have to remain strictly on a voluntary basis.

(40) Any intensification of European security and defence cooperation should be conducted in dialogue and coordination with other security actors, notably the United Nations and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)<sup>66</sup>, in order to avoid any unnecessary duplications and to ensure better complementarity in full compliance with international law<sup>67</sup>.

(41) When intensifying defence cooperation among Member States, particular attention should be paid to ensure that this does not reinforce an armament dynamic in Europe and globally. Therefore, it is highly desirable that these processes are accompanied by an overall **disarmament** strategy, including nuclear disarmament, with a view to gradually transforming military industrial capacities into peaceful production and systematically reducing the military arsenals on the European continent and worldwide under strict and effective international control and with due consideration of the global security situation. The European Union and its Member States must stimulate with greater determination international efforts towards a rigorous, transparent and non-discriminatory implementation of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and further measures of nuclear disarmament in line with the international commitments<sup>68</sup> and the *Charter of the United Nations*<sup>69</sup>, with the objective of achieving total elimination of nuclear weapons<sup>70</sup> and general and complete disarmament. The relaunching of the *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe*<sup>71</sup> could constitute an important step in this context.

(42) Gaps in **arms export control** may constitute a serious risk for peace and

66 Twenty-two EU Member States are also members of NATO.

67 According to the *UN Charter* (cf. Art 24 and Chapter VII), the UN Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

68 In particular the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT, 1968), <http://bit.ly/1nsiLVV>.

69 Cf. Art 26 of the *UN Charter* (1945).

70 Cf. Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, *Statement of the Holy See at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons* (9 December 2014), <http://bit.ly/1sflHrV>.

71 *CFE Treaty* (1990), <http://bit.ly/1nCMX85>.

security, human rights and sustainable development<sup>72</sup>. In this regard, more effective and coherent regulatory frameworks need to be developed at European<sup>73</sup> and international levels. The EU and its Member States must remain committed to promoting the universalisation and full implementation of the *Arms Trade Treaty*<sup>74</sup> and further strengthening the existing European instruments<sup>75</sup>. In this respect, particularly the reporting and transparency commitments should be enhanced and efforts in the prevention of illicit flows of small arms stepped up.

(43) With regard to **defence-related research and technology**, caution is also called for. The allocation of resources for these purposes should comply with the requirements of *proportionality* and *adequacy*. Whereas adequate means to address new vulnerabilities, in particular in the cyber realm, should be developed, the EU should not promote research in ethically problematic technology and weapons, including lethal autonomous weapons or any other weapon inflicting “*massive and indiscriminate destruction*”<sup>76</sup>. Attention must also be paid to the dangers of misuse of “*dual-use technologies*” that besides their civilian purposes can also be used for military ends<sup>77</sup>. In this respect, an EU Common Position defining specific guidelines for defence-related research and technology could be developed. As far as armed drones are concerned, the EU should lead efforts towards an international agreement ensuring transparency and accountability of their use. It should also work for an international ban on lethal autonomous weapons<sup>78</sup>.

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72 Cf. European Parliament resolution of 17 December 2015 on arms export: “[...] *developments in the last two years have shown that weapons sometimes end up in the hands of terrorists or repressive regimes or of countries where children might be recruited or used in hostilities, or of regimes which have dubious relations with international terrorism or an aggressive domestic and foreign policy*”, <http://bit.ly/1PsMWxL>.

73 Cf. *ibid.*: “[...] *EU Member States exported arms with a total value of EUR 36,7 billion in 2013, including EUR 26 billion to third countries [...]; EU Member States accounted for 30 % of overall arms exports to third countries; and it can hardly be claimed that these trade flows are in the direct security interests of the EU*”.

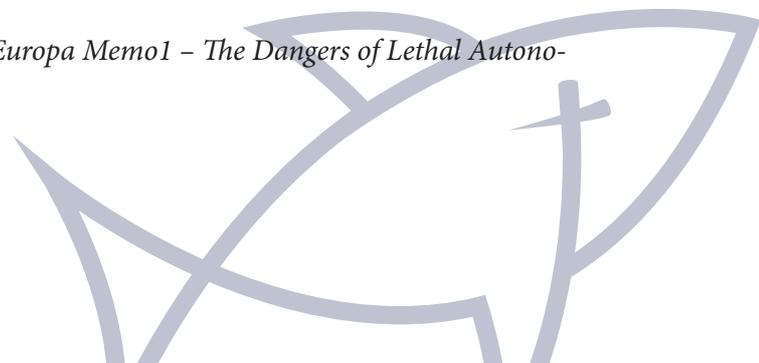
74 *The UN Arms Trade Treaty* (2013), <http://bit.ly/1A1oobb>.

75 In particular the *EU Common Position of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment*, <http://bit.ly/1A1pSlC>.

76 *Gaudium et Spes*, 80.

77 With regard to potential risks of misuse of synthetic biology resources and a general ethical assessment of this technology cf. COMECE Reflection Group on Bioethics, *Opinion on Synthetic Biology* (2016), <http://bit.ly/1QrGypk>.

78 Cf. Bernhard Koch, Niklas Schörnig, *Justitia et Pax Europa Memo1 – The Dangers of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems* (2015), <http://bit.ly/1IYk7Za>.



## CONCLUSION

(44) The European Union has not only a historical and legal, but also a moral responsibility to contribute to building peace in the world. The primary task of an authentic European peace policy should be the promotion of pre-emptive peace and the transformation of violent conflicts through means of justice. The common security and defence dimension of the European integration project should, however, not be neglected either, along with efforts to create conditions for and promote disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, in Europe and worldwide. The European Union with its wide range of policy instruments, internal and external, is well equipped to be at the forefront of peacebuilding efforts. However, in order to increase its impact, the joined-up use of all its instruments should be coordinated more effectively.

(45) Naturally, this commitment to peace applies to the immediate and wider neighbourhood of the European Union. If the EU wants to become a stronger player on the global scene, it is necessary that it assume its responsibilities for its own environment in the first place.

(46) Nevertheless, the European Union cannot ignore its commitments and engagement with the wider world. Many of the challenges to peace are global and require a global approach. In order to find appropriate solutions at all levels, there is a need for an effective “*global governance*” and a “*true world political authority*”<sup>79</sup> which must be regulated by law and take account of and allow for adequate participation of different cultures with due respect for the principle of *subsidiarity* and *solidarity*, seeking “*to establish the common good and to make a commitment to securing authentic integral human development inspired by the values of charity in truth*”<sup>80</sup>. The EU should be committed to promoting a comprehensive reform of the United Nations system to enhance regional representation and for the better integration of European policies with UN peacekeeping, humanitarian and development initiatives<sup>81</sup>. In view of the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council in maintaining international peace and security, a review of its way of working should also be envisaged. A reform should ensure that its composition reflects the new world realities and is not dominated by particular state interests.

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<sup>79</sup> *Laudato Si'*, 175.

<sup>80</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate* (2009), 67, <http://bit.ly/1904obk>.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. European Parliament resolution of 24 November 2015 on the role of the EU within the UN, <http://bit.ly/1OaPBYM>.

(47) The security environment of the European Union has become increasingly unstable and volatile because of numerous longstanding and newly emerging challenges to peace. The time has now come for the European Union to truly live up to its vocation to promote peace in the world and to play a more significant role on the world stage.

(48) However, as peace on earth is not born out of structures but has to be sown by people, peacebuilding must start “*from the bottom and from afar*”<sup>82</sup>. Thus it is everybody’s task and responsibility to work for peace by combating resignation and overcoming indifference<sup>83</sup>. For believers, prayer is an important contribution to peace. Christians pray in a special way to Jesus Christ, the “*Prince of Peace*”<sup>84</sup>, who has declared: “*Blessed are the peacemakers*”<sup>85</sup>. Peace requires foremost a transformation of our hearts. This begins with “*the education to peace, and above all, by being witness of peace starting from one’s own self*”, and thus contributing to creating a “*mentality and a culture of peace*”<sup>86</sup>. And then [...] “*judgment will dwell in the wilderness, and justice abide in the garden land. The work of justice will be peace; the effect of justice, calm and security forever [...]*” (Isaiah 32, 16-17).

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82 Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, *Closing remarks on the occasion of the International Seminar on Disarmament, Development and Peace. Prospects for integral disarmament* (11-12 April 2008).

83 Cf. *Overcome Indifference and Win Peace*.

84 Isaiah 9,5.

85 Matthew 5,9.

86 Pope Benedict XVI, *Blessed are the Peacemakers* (2013), <http://bit.ly/1VIKXGq>.



## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT:

### Peace Diplomacy

1. Better coordinate responsibilities between various institutional actors and address more effectively the structural division between political guidance (European External Action Service) and financial resources (European Commission) with the objective of strengthening links between EU internal and external policy fields and ensuring more policy coherence and consistency.
2. In order to strengthen early prevention of violent conflicts, reinforce the EU early-warning systems, upgrade and foster the role of EU diplomacy, in particular EU delegations, and develop adequate confidence-building measures and actions.
3. Revive the policy instrument of strategic partnerships and foster cooperation with regional and international organisations, such as the League of Arab States, African Union with its sub-regional organisations, OECD, OSCE and the United Nations.
4. Assume the role of mediator, represented either by the EU High Representative or a designated Special Representative, to reach a political solution to an emerging or escalating crisis in cooperation with all regional key actors, duly taking into account the interests and needs of the affected population and in compliance with international law.
5. In the aftermath of conflict support local society in rebuilding effective state structures and creating just living conditions, holding the perpetrators of human rights abuses accountable, and above all in revealing the truth and empowering the victims; the long-term process of reconciliation and mutual forgiveness needs to be an integral part of the transformation, involve civil society organisations and Churches and encompass education to peace and narrative discourse as essential tools for dealing with the past.

### Human Rights

6. Actively promote human rights through a coherent use of all internal and external human rights policy instruments; ensure that universal values and human rights are reflected in each bilateral or multilateral partnership of the EU.

7. Fully integrate into human rights policy priorities the universal right to religious freedom in all its dimensions (public and private; collective and individual, and institutional).

## Migration and Mobility

8. Duly implement the *Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)* and the *European Agenda on Migration*; actively promote political settlement of conflicts, strengthen links between migration and development policies, foster cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and create new forms of partnership with the host countries delivering opportunities for both host communities and refugees and migrants, while fully complying with the international obligations concerning human rights and the protection of refugees and displaced people.

## Counter-Terrorism

9. In tackling fundamentalist terrorism combine measures of acute prevention with long-term preventative measures, in particular by contributing to peaceful settlement of conflicts, and countering radicalisation by creating synergies between education, integration and social policies and with the policies of migration and development cooperation.

## Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid

10. Support initiatives promoting sustainable development, while respecting the dignity of every human being, the cultural diversity and the values entrenched in the societies of third-countries; promote small-scale agriculture practices as a coherent, efficient and sustainable approach to fight against hunger; uphold the commitment of EU Member States to devote 0.7% of their Gross National Income to development aid and to commit 0.15% to 0.2% to the poorest countries.

11. Develop EU Guidelines on how faith-based organisations and other development and humanitarian aid providers can be integrated in EU development cooperation and humanitarian aid mechanisms under full involvement of Churches, religious communities and other faith-based organisations in the elaboration, implementation and assessment of the relevant documents.

12. Provide humanitarian assistance to crises-affected regions based on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence as enshrined in the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*.



## International Trade and Economy

13. Pursue a trade policy that aims at promoting just and equal trade relationships with third-countries and ensures a special and differential treatment of developing countries; adopt fair and ethical trade schemes.

14. Promote at the European as well as global level the adoption of binding rules on the activities of multinationals and actions to combat tax evasion and tax avoidance, to effectively close secretive tax havens and to ensure more transparency in tax matters.

## Climate and Energy

15. Keep the commitments to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving energy efficiency and the share of renewable energy in line with the *EU 2030 climate and energy framework*, the *2050 low-carbon economy roadmap* and the *Paris Climate Agreement*; promote efforts in *de-carbonisation, de-materialisation and re-naturalisation*.

16. Develop at the European as well as international level provisions for ensuring an improved management of energy resources and regulating their extraction and trade; make progress in the efforts of building an *Energy Union*; conclude bilateral or regional agreements with third-countries and engage in cross-border research programmes in order to enhance energy efficiency in non-fossil energy sources and reduce energy dependence.

## Security and Defence

17. Assess the possibilities for a more effective bundling of defence capabilities and deepening security and defence cooperation among Member States with due consideration of potential risks and benefits and in full compliance with international law.

18. Develop an overall disarmament strategy, including nuclear disarmament, with a view to gradually transforming military industrial capacities into peaceful production and systematically reducing the military arsenals on the European continent and worldwide under strict and effective international control and with due consideration of the global security situation; stimulate international efforts towards a rigorous, transparent and non-discriminatory implementation of IAEA safeguards and further measures of nuclear disarmament; promote the relaunching of the *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty)*.

19. Promote the universalisation and full implementation of the *UN Arms Trade Treaty*; strengthen the existing European instruments, in particular the *Common Position of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment*, including by enhancing the reporting and transparency commitments and stepping up efforts in the prevention of illicit flows of small arms.

20. Elaborate an EU Common Position defining specific guidelines for defence-related research and technology; develop adequate means to address new vulnerabilities, in particular in the cyber realm; promote efforts towards an international agreement ensuring transparency and accountability of the use of armed drones; work for an international ban on lethal autonomous weapons.

## Role of Churches and Religious Communities

21. Recognise and take into consideration the role of Churches and religious communities in promoting peace, in particular with regard to early conflict prevention, counter-radicalisation, provision of development and humanitarian aid, post-conflict management and reconciliation; intensify dialogue between the European Union and Churches and religious communities under the provisions of Article 17 (3) of the *Treaty on the Functioning of the EU*.

## International Order

22. Promote a comprehensive reform of the United Nations system, including the Security Council, in order to enhance regional representation and ensure a better integration of European policies with UN peacekeeping, humanitarian and development initiatives.



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