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MISSION REPORT

following the mission to New York and Washington D.C., USA 27 - 31
October 2019

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Human Rights and
Subcommittee on Security and Defence

Members of the mission:

David McAllister	(PPE) (Leader of the mission)
Željana Zovko	(PPE)
Radosław Sikorski	(PPE)
Arnaud Danjean	(PPE)
Kris Peeters	(PPE)
Isabel Wiseler-Lima	(PPE)
Tonino Picula	(S&D)
Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz	(S&D)
Sven Mikser	(S&D)
Maria Arena	(S&D)
Isabel Santos	(S&D)
Javier Nart	(Renew)
Nathalie Loiseau	(Renew)
Urmas Paet	(Renew)
Irina Von Wiese	(Renew)
Sergey Lagodinsky	(Verts/ALE)
Jérôme Rivière	(ID)

Introduction

A delegation led by AFET Chair David McAllister (EPP, DE) and comprising of 17 MEPs, among whom SEDE Chair Nathalie Loiseau (RE, FR) and DROI Chair Maria Arena (S&D, BE) visited UN headquarters in New York and met with US Congress and high level officials from the US administration in Washington D.C.

The first part of the mission to the UN Headquarters in New York was part of the regular political dialogue with UN components and agencies and was a continuation of the long-standing tradition of sending an annual joint AFET/DROI delegation to the UN General Assembly in New York in order to assess the implementation of EU priorities by the UN General Assembly, and prepare the annual European Parliament Recommendation to the Council of the EU on priorities for the UN General Assembly, UN action and the role of the EU in the UN system.

The second part of the ad-hoc delegation in Washington D.C. allowed Members to engage in deep and fruitful discussion with US counterparts on bilateral as well as regional and global foreign affairs of transatlantic relevance. It was the first official AFET/ SEDE/ DROI delegation of the 9th legislative term, showing the significance attached to transatlantic partnership and the will of Parliament to set a positive tone for transatlantic cooperation.

Summary account of meetings

Members expressed great support for the process of reforms initiated by UN Secretary General António Guterres, which would allow the possibility to address swiftly crises and prevent conflict. In this regard, Members expressed support for the ongoing reflection on ways to reinforce the UN Security Council and its capacity to deliver on crisis and conflict resolution.

Members emphasized the importance of rules-based multilateralism and the need to pursue consensus amongst the international community and avoid fragmentation. They also praised the very good efforts of the EU and its Member States to remain a cohesive and effective group in the UN system and in the UNSC with one message and policy stance on behalf of the EU. They also encouraged the efforts of the EU and its Member States to reach out to like-minded States in the UN System.

In Washington, DC, the delegation met with Members of US Congress and Administration to map out the future of transatlantic relations and to set the tone for a positive and fruitful interaction during the next parliamentary term.

Meetings at the 116th US Congress reconfirmed across-the-board support for deep and productive transatlantic cooperation on a number of foreign policy issues.

Meetings at the State Department, the National Security Council, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the US Trade Representative Office revealed that despite some differences, cooperation between the EU and the US is crucial and mutually beneficial on a number of fronts, such as energy and information security, defence, the promotion of human rights and democratic values across the world, and trade, including on China. Meetings showed pronounced interest in deeper foreign policy dialogue on both sides, with particular reference to the Western Balkans, the Middle East, and Venezuela.

New York

At the United Nations Members held consultations (in chronological order) with the President of the 74th UN General Assembly, Mr **Tijjani Mohammed Bande**, the UN Secretary General **António Guterres**, Assistant-Secretary-General (ASG) for Europe, Central Asia and Americas, **Miroslav Jenča**, ASG for Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, **Khaled Mohamed Khiari**, ASG for Rule of Law & Security Institutions, **Alexandre Zouev**, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, **Vladimir Voronkov**, ASG for Strategic Coordination **Voler Tuerk**, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in conflict **Pramila Patten**, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Relief Coordinator **General Mark Lowcock** and **Fabrizio Hochschild**, Special Advisor to the Secretary General for the 75th Anniversary.

In parallel on 28 October, AFET met the UN Special Envoy for Climate Action **Michael Bloomberg**, DROI met **Dr Agnes Callamard** the UN Special Rapporteur for Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, while SEDE discussed with Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, **Ms Izumi Nakamitsu** and Deputy & Political Director, UN Peacebuilding Support Office, **Ms Barrie Freeman**.

Members also held consultations with the **Permanent Representatives of the EU and of EU Member States** that are currently on the **UN Security Council** or will be. The Delegation held meetings with Deputy Permanent Representative of the US to the UN, **Ambassador Jonathan R. Cohen** & US Ambassador for UN Management and Reform, **Ms Cherith Norman Chalet**, and with the Indian Permanent Representative to the UN **Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin**.

In parallel on 29 October, AFET met the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN, **Olof Skoog**, DROI met the Chair of the Third Committee (Human Rights/ Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues), **Ambassador Christian Braun**, and with **Ambassador Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve** (Belgium) in his capacity as Chair of the UN Security Council Working Group on conflict and children, while SEDE met the Chair of UNGA's 1st Committee on Disarmament & International Security **Sacha Llorenty Soliz** and **Ambassador Juergen Lauber** (Switzerland), Chair of the open-ended working group on ICT and International Security.

Members discussed with UN interlocutors the ongoing **reform process** and measures to overcome the UN financial crisis. In this regard, Members expressed support for the **ongoing reflection on ways to reinforce the UN Security Council** and its capacity to deliver on crisis and conflict resolution.

Among the **thematic and geographic topics** that came up in the discussions were Syria, Yemen, Libya, Egypt, Israel and Palestine, Africa and the African union, Ukraine and the Western Balkans, peace-keeping, EU-UN partnership in crisis affected countries, counterterrorism, climate change, human rights.

The importance of Parliament's role in fostering productive EU-UN relations was underlined and Members pledged to increase cooperation with the UN by placing UN issues high on their committees' agendas.

Washington D.C.

During their visit to Washington D.C., the delegation met with:

In Congress, AFET met with **Senators Tim Kaine, Ron Johnson and Jeanne Shaheen**, as well as **Congressman Jim Costa**. SEDE met with **Senators Thom Tillis and Mike Rounds**, as well as **Congressman William Keating**. DROI met with **Congresswomen Ayanna Pressley, Veronica Escobar, Ann Wagner, Debbie Dingell**.

In parallel on 30 October AFET and SEDE met **Deputy Senior Director John Erath and Director Markus Thoni** of the National Security Council, while DROI held an exchange of views with **think-tanks on human rights**.

At the State Department the delegation met with **Clark Price**, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, **Elliott Abrams**, Special Representative for Venezuela, **Michael Murphy**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs and **Sam Parker**, Senior Adviser on Iran.

The delegation met leading think-tanks at the Atlantic Council, including the Center for American Progress, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Albright Stonebridge Group.

On 31 October, SEDE went to **Norfolk**, while AFET held meetings with **Jeanette Manfra**, Assistant Director for Cybersecurity at the Infrastructure Security Agency, some Members managed to get in for a meeting at the US Treasury, **David Weiner**, Deputy Assistant US Trade Representative, **Jan Surotchak** Senior Director at the International Republican Institute, **Carl Gerschman**, President of the National Endowment for Democracy, **Gonzalo Koncke**, Chief of Staff of the Organisation of American States. DROI continued at the State Department with **Joel Maybury**, Acting Director of the Office of Global Women's Issues, **Knox Thames**, Special Advisor for Religious Minorities and **Robert Destro**, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour. DROI also met with representatives of **the Venezuelan opposition (MPs Julio Borges, Miguel Pizarro, Jose Guerra and Juan Andres Mejia)**.

The visit took place against the backdrop of the ongoing impeachment procedure in Congress, which created some stirs in the scheduling of meetings with Senators and Congressmen/women. Nevertheless, the delegation met a total of five Senators and six Members of Congress, with whom they exchanged valuable ideas on the course of transatlantic cooperation on a number of foreign policy issues of mutual relevance such as China, the Western Balkans, Russia, Syria, the Middle East. The meetings on the Hill showed almost unanimous support for EU-US partnership but many of the interlocutors criticised the EU for not opening negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania.

Meetings at the State Department, the National Security Council, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the US Trade Representative Office were very productive and informative and showed that despite the differences in approaches in some areas, cooperation between the EU and the US is very much desirable on a number of key foreign policy issues, notably concerning the Western Balkans, the Middle East, Iran, Russia and Latin America, in particular Venezuela. Both parties underlined the importance of transatlantic partnership in addressing new global challenges linked to cybersecurity, humanitarian crises and energy security.

The Delegation held enriching exchange of views with leading think tanks and organisations active in the field of foreign policy, such as the International Republican Institute, the National

Endowment for Democracy, the Organisation of American States, the Atlantic Council, the Center for American Progress, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Albright Stonebridge Group. They discussed topics ranging from transatlantic cooperation in foreign policies, to the possible outcome of next year's presidential elections.

DROI exchanged ideas with renowned human rights organisations, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the Center for International Environmental Law, Amnesty International and the Death Penalty Representation project.

SEDE visited Norfolk to discuss EU-NATO cooperation.

Conclusions

It was the first official AFET/ SEDE/ DROI delegation of the 9th legislative term, showing the significance attached to transatlantic partnership, EU-UN relations and the will of Parliament to set a positive tone for transatlantic cooperation and to uphold the principles of multilateralism.

The delegation to UNGA was very timely in view of the preparations for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the UN. It was also the first one, where Parliament was received by the US permanent representation to the UN at Ambassador level, which was a good sign for EU-US cooperation on multilateralism.

The visit to Washington D.C. showed that transatlantic partnership is very much a priority on both sides of the Atlantic, even though differences in foreign policy approaches do exist on important topics. Meetings both on the Hill and with US Administration revealed that trade is still high on US agenda. When it comes to foreign policy, areas where cooperation in the future could be strengthened and could deliver tangible results are cyber and energy security, Venezuela, China and the Western Balkans. Overall, the need to reinforce even further collaboration between the European Parliament and the US Congress was once again reemphasized, especially on foreign policy issues.

The mission debriefing took place on 18 November 2019 in the Foreign Affairs Committee. Mission findings will feed into annual EP recommendation to the Council on the priorities that the EU should put forward ahead of the United Nations General Assembly and reflections on the future of transatlantic cooperation.