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## **High time for civil turn-around of the EU Foreign and Defense Policy**

***Left Parliamentarians GUE/NGL MEP Sabine Lösing, PODEMOS MP Pablo Bustinduy and DIE LINKE MP Sevim Dağdelen attended the Inter-Parliamentary Conference for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in Valetta on the 26th - 28th of April 2017.***

***This Inter-Parliamentary Conference is convened with the aim of scrutinising EU Foreign Affairs and Defence Policy with national and European Parliamentarians from all political groups and all Member States.***

On their return from the conference the left MPs commented:

“From our point of view, it is high time to admit that the EU's foreign and military policy in the last years has turned out to be a complete failure. An honest evaluation of this policy should lead to the conclusion that only a complete turn-around can be meaningful.”

“Instead, Federica Mogherini emphasized in her speech in Malta the need for a powerful EU with hard power - that means military capacity. She stressed several times that European citizens want such a defensive EU. To our questions, when EU citizens voted or at least discussed the fact that EU budgetary resources are spent on military projects - which would be a violation of Article 41 (2) of the EU treaty - , and when EU citizens decided that development aid is used for military purposes, she failed to answer. The lack of self-criticism is extremely worrying. It is high time to start a truly new, civil era of EU foreign and security policy, and there needs to be an open debate about the use of EU funds for military purposes.”

The leftist delegates did not support the joint conclusion, because of the demands such as the expansion of the military-industrial complex, the consolidation of the European Defense cooperation and of the EU-NATO cooperation, the misappropriation of development aid as well as all attempts to finance the military from the EU budget. Since it was not possible to change the approach and content of the joint conclusion an alternative conclusion was drafted.

The left MPs call for the abolishment of the focus on military ‘solutions’ and to stop the increase of the EU defence budget. Instead the alternative conclusion recalls that a drastic revision of the EU external policy is needed, in particular its strategy towards the Southern and Eastern neighbourhood promoting employment and education and not the enforcement of neoliberal reforms, serving mainly the interests on the European side. Furthermore, the document stresses for a change of the European Union and to focus on civilian and peaceful crisis management, based on dialogue and balance of interests.

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[the Alternative Conclusion on INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE FOR THE COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY \(CFSP\) AND THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY \(CSDP\)](#)