

European Parliament resolution of 13 December 2012 on the annual report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2011 and the European Union's policy on the matter (2012/2145(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), to the European Convention on Human Rights, to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and to other key international human rights treaties and instruments,
- having regard to the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2011 adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 25 June 2012,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 April 2012 on the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World and the European Union's policy on the matter, including implications for the EU's strategic human rights policy¹,
- having regard to the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (11855/2012) as adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 25 June 2012,
- having regard to the Council Decision 2012/440/CFSP of 25 July 2012 appointing the European Union Special Representative for Human Rights,
- having regard to the Joint Communication of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 12 December 2011 entitled 'Human Rights and Democracy at the Heart of EU External Action – Towards a more effective approach' (COM(2011)0886),
- having regard to the European Union Human Rights Guidelines,
- having regard to its position of 8 July 2010² on the European External Action Service,
- having regard to United Nations General Assembly resolution 65/276 of 3 May 2011 on Participation of the European Union in the work of the United Nations,
- having regard to the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000 (A/Res/55/2) and the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0126.

² OJ C 351 E, 2.12.2011, p.454.

- having regard to its resolution of 17 November 2011 on EU support for the ICC; facing challenges and overcoming difficulties³, and its resolution of 19 May 2010 on the first Review Conference of the Rome Statute of the ICC held in Kampala, Uganda, 31 May–11 June 2011⁴, as well as the pledges made by the EU on this occasion⁵,
- having regard to Council Decision 2011/168/CFSP of 21 March 2011 on the International Criminal Court⁶, and the revised action plan of 12 July 2011 to follow up on the Council Decision on the International Criminal Court,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 December 2011 on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy⁷,
- having regard to the Joint Communication by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commission to the European Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 8 March 2011 entitled ‘A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean’ (COM(2011)0200),
- having regard to the Joint Communication of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commission of 25 May 2011 entitled ‘A new response to a changing Neighbourhood’ (COM(2011)0303),
- having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions on the European Neighbourhood Policy adopted on 20 June 2011 at its 3101st meeting,
- having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions on the European Endowment for Democracy adopted on 1 December 2011 at its 3130th meeting, and the Declaration on the establishment of a European Endowment for Democracy agreed by COREPER on 15 December 2011,
- having regard to its recommendation of 29 March 2012 to the Council on the modalities for the possible establishment of a European Endowment for Democracy (EED)⁸,
- having regard to its resolution of 7 July 2011 on EU external policies in favour of democratisation⁹,

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0507.

⁴ OJ C 161 E, 31.5.2011, p.78.

⁵ <http://www.icc-cpi.int/NR/rdonlyres/18B88265-BC63-4DFF-BE56-903F2062B797/0/RC9ENGFRASPA.pdf>

⁶ OJ L 76, 22.3.2011, p. 56.

⁷ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0576.

⁸ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0113.

⁹ OJ C 291 E, 4.10.2011, p. 171.

- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions from 25 October 2011 entitled “A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility”,
- having regard to its recommendation to the Council of 2 February 2012 on a consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures, when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders¹⁰,
- having regard to the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur of 16 May 2011 (A/HRC/17/27) on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which underlines the applicability of international human rights norms and standards on the right to freedom of opinion and expression to the internet as a communication medium,
- having regard to the communication of 12 December 2011 by the Commissioner for the Digital Agenda on the ‘No Disconnect Strategy’,
- having regard to the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur of 28 July 2011 (A/66/203) on the situation of human rights defenders,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly Resolution of 21 December 2010 (A/RES/65/206), Moratorium on the use of death penalty,
- having regard to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 September 2012 on alleged transportation and illegal detention of prisoners in European countries by the CIA¹¹,
- having regard to the interim report of the UN Special Rapporteur of 5 August 2011 on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, solitary confinement, including psychiatric clinics (A/66/268),
- having regard to United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960 on women, peace and security,
- having regard to the Report on the EU indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UN Security Council UNSCRs 1325 & 1820 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted by the EU Council on 13 May 2011,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 1 December 2011 on Common Security and Defence Policy,

¹⁰ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0018.

¹¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0309.

- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 13 October 2011 entitled ‘Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change’ (COM(2011)0637),
 - having regard to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol,
 - having regard to the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 7 April 2011 of the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence,
 - having regard to the United Nations resolutions on the rights of the child, most recently its resolution of 4 April 2012,
 - having regard to the UN Human Rights Council Resolution of 17 June 2011 on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity,
 - having regard to the European Union’s accession on 22 January 2011 to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), being the first UN human rights convention ratified by the European Union as a ‘regional integration organisation’,
 - having regard to the draft UN Principles and Guidelines on effective elimination of discrimination based on Work and Descent published by the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/11/CRP.3),
 - having regard to observations and recommendations on caste discrimination by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Treaty Bodies and UN Special Procedures, noting in particular the Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance of 24 May 2011 (A/HRC/17/40),
 - having regard to the Council Conclusions of 21 February 2011 on intolerance, discrimination and violence on the basis of religion or belief, and having regard to United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/167 on combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatisation of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief,
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Development and the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (A7-0377/2012),
- A. whereas the treaties commit the European Union to base its external action on the principled foundation of democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity,

the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law;

- B. whereas justice, rule of law, accountability for all crimes including the most serious crimes of concern to the international community, fair trials, and an independent judiciary are indispensable elements in the protection of human rights and the pillars of sustainable peace;
- C. whereas democracy and the rule of law are the best safeguards of human rights and fundamental freedoms, non-discrimination in all its forms, tolerance vis-à-vis individuals and communities, and equality for all;
- D. whereas the lessons learned from the Arab Spring events must continue to provide impetus for the EU to review, improve and ensure coherence between its policies on, inter alia, human rights defenders, international humanitarian law, human rights dialogues with third countries and civil society, including NGOs and grassroots movements, and social media;
- E. whereas the EU is bound to help countries with which it has signed international agreements, including trade agreements, to implement all these fundamental principles, and in particular by ensuring strict compliance with the human rights and democracy clauses in said agreements;
- F. whereas internet access is a key enabler of access to information, free expression, press freedom, freedom of assembly, and economic, social, political and cultural development; whereas human rights need to be protected and promoted by the EU, both offline and online;
- G. whereas violations of freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, perpetrated by governments and non-state actors alike, are increasing in many countries of the world, resulting in discrimination and intolerance both against certain individuals and against religious communities, including minorities and non-believers;
- H. whereas the role of women and their full participation in the political, economic and social spheres is essential, especially in postwar peace-building processes, democratic transition negotiations and conflict resolution, reconciliation and stabilisation processes;
- I. whereas the Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, and the EU's policy on the matter, should not only be a reflection and review of past achievements and flaws, but should also serve to inspire the EU's human rights and democracy strategy and action plan; whereas each successive Annual Report should, ideally, tangibly and regularly contribute to improving the EU's human rights policy in the world;

The 2011 EU Annual Report

1. Welcomes the adoption of the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in 2011; welcomes the fact that the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative (VP/HR) was able to present the Annual Report in the June plenary of Parliament and thereby return to the normal practice;
2. Notes the positive steps taken in recent years to develop the Annual Report, but stresses the potential for further improvement;
3. Believes that the Annual Report should be an important tool in communicating the EU's work in this field and should help raise the visibility of the EU's actions; invites the VP/HR, when drafting future Annual Reports, to consult actively and systematically with Parliament, and to report on the way that Parliament's resolutions have been taken into account;

General considerations

4. Welcomes the adoption of the EU strategic framework for human rights on 25 June 2012; urges the EU institutions to work together to ensure its timely and proper implementation in order to credibly meet the EU treaty commitment to pursue external policies based on human rights, democratic values and the rule of law in a principled and unfaltering manner by avoiding double standards;
5. Urges the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and Parliament to maintain and honour EU's role as a leading defender of human rights by cooperating closely in implementing a coherent, ambitious and effective EU human rights policy in the world based on this strategic framework, making use of our development aid and opportunities offered by EED;
6. Recommends that the Council and the EEAS carry out a mid-term assessment of the new human rights package, particularly of the Action Plan; insists that Parliament be extensively consulted and regularly informed and that civil society be integrated in this process;
7. Welcomes the mandate of the thematic EU Special Representative (EUSR) on Human Rights and the planned creation of a Brussels-based Council Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM); looks forward to their close co-operation with Parliament, in the first case also in line with the provisions of Article 36 of the TEU;
8. Expects COHOM to enhance co-operation with the Council Working Party on Fundamental Rights (FREMP) to address the issue of consistency between the EU's external and internal human rights policy; underlines the importance of having within the European Union coherent, consistent and exemplary policies in line with fundamental values and principles in order to maximise the European Union's credibility globally and the effectiveness of EU human rights policies and to show genuine respect for the universality of human rights;
9. Welcomes the positive impact on coherence of EU internal and external policies of the EU's exercise of its legal personality created by the Lisbon Treaty to ratify the

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities (UNCPRD) in December 2010; calls for a similar approach to be taken to other international human rights treaties and conventions; calls for the Council and Commission to take a proactive approach in this area in order to address the negative effects of the piecemeal signature and ratification among EU Member States of other important external treaties and conventions;

10. Urges the VP/HR, the EEAS, the Council and the Commission, for the sake of efficiency, to ensure coherence and consistency between the various external financial instruments and existing or planned EU benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation activities and methodologies regarding human rights and democracy situations in third countries, including: the human rights and democracy sections in the enlargement and neighbourhood policy progress reports; the assessment of the ‘more for more’ human rights and democracy principle set out for the European Neighbourhood Policy; the planned inclusion of human rights in impact assessments carried out for legislative and non-legislative proposals and for trade, partnership and association and cooperation agreements, both regional and bilateral; the Commission plan to introduce human rights assessment in the deployment of EU aid modalities (in particular regarding budget support); the strengthened implementation of the monitoring mechanism to scrutinise respect for human rights conventions in the GSP+ countries; the aim of systematising the follow-up use of EU Election Observation Mission reports; and the EU Council’s emphasis on benchmarking as well as on continued and systematic consideration of aspects relating to human rights, gender and children affected by armed conflict in the lessons-learned documents of the CSDP missions;
11. Welcomes the adoption of human rights country strategies for individual countries to implement policies in the most appropriate and effective way; recognises the key role played by the local EU delegations in developing and following up on the country strategies tailored for the specific circumstances, but stresses the coordinating responsibility of the EEAS in ensuring the coherent application of EU human rights policy priorities set out in the human rights strategic framework and in the EU Guidelines; stresses the importance of completing the network of focal points on human rights and democracy in EU Delegations and CSDP missions and operations; urges the VP/HR and the EEAS and the Member States to adopt as best practice the method of working on human rights issues locally through human rights working groups formed among EU delegations and embassies of EU Member States; urges also that regular contacts be maintained with civil society representatives, human rights defenders and members of national parliaments; supports the EEAS aim to provide training on human rights and democracy for all EEAS, Commission, EU delegation and CSDP mission staff, and for the staff of European Union agencies – FRONTEX in particular – that have relationships with third countries; asks for great attention to be paid, in particular, to protecting human rights defenders; takes the view that human rights country strategies should be mainstreamed in the EU’s CFSP, CSDP, trade and development policies, both in geographic and thematic programmes, to ensure greater efficiency, effectiveness and coherence;

EU action in the United Nations

12. Welcomes EU efforts to support and revitalise the human rights work within the UN system, including the conclusion of the review of the UN Human Rights Council in 2011; stresses the continued importance of supporting the independence of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the role of the thematic and country-specific UN Special Rapporteurs on human rights, and looks forward to their close cooperation with the newly appointed EU Special Representative for Human Rights; emphasises the significance of the European Union accession of 22 January 2011 to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as the first UN human rights convention ratified by the European Union as a legal entity;
13. Stresses the importance of, and strong support for, the EU's active participation in the work of the UNHRC by means of co-sponsoring resolutions, issuing statements and participation in interactive dialogues and debates;
14. Welcomes the leadership shown by EU Member States to support the credibility of the UN human rights system by jointly extending a standing invitation to all UN Special Procedures on Human Rights, by initiating a UN Human Rights Council (HRC) Special Session on Libya, where the historic recommendation of Libya's suspension from the HRC was made, and by taking the lead in efforts that led to the establishment of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the human rights situation in Syria;
15. Recognises the EU's potential for outreach and creative coalition-building as exemplified by EU action which paved the way to the passing of the landmark HRC resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity, which was supported by states from all regions, and the consensus-building in Geneva and New York regarding the need to fight religious intolerance and protect freedom of religion or belief whilst avoiding a potential detrimental effect on other core human rights, such as freedom of expression;
16. Reiterates its opposition to the practice of regional groups arranging uncontested elections to the Human Rights Council;
17. Recommends following up on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations by including them systematically in EU human rights country strategies as well as in human rights dialogues and consultations;
18. Recalls the need for sufficient funding to keep the regional offices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) open;
19. Recalls the adoption by the UN General Assembly of Resolution 65/276 on the participation of the EU in the work of the UN, recognising it as a modest start to the greater endeavour of upgrading the role of the Union in the human rights work of that organisation;

EU policy on international criminal justice, the fight against impunity and the International Criminal Court (ICC)

20. Regrets that selective justice frequently manifests itself in new and transitional democracies under the guise of the rule of law and war on corruption; regrets that selective justice has become little more than a means to seek political revenge and to settle accounts with political dissenters by intimidating and marginalising opposition, media workers and human rights defenders, especially in the run-up to elections; remains concerned about the crime allegations and politically motivated charges against members of the opposition in Ukraine, and urges the Ukrainian authorities to put an end to the ongoing harassment of the opposition which is a serious obstacle in the country's efforts to guarantee rule of law and democratic values;
21. Regrets that, despite many calls from international bodies to Russian authorities, no progress has been made in the investigation of Sergei Magnitsky death; urges, therefore, the Council to impose and implement an EU-wide visa ban on officials responsible for the death of Sergei Magnitsky and to freeze any financial assets they or their immediate family may hold inside the EU;
22. Remains disappointed about the proceedings against Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev, which proceedings are perceived internationally as being of a political nature;
23. Celebrates the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC); welcomes its ratification by Cape Verde and Vanuatu; recognises the ICC as a mechanism of 'last resort', which is responsible for the enforcement of justice for the victims of crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes, as laid down by the principle of complementarity in the Rome Statute;
24. Reiterates its strong support for ICC in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern; calls on the EU and its Member States to continue their political, diplomatic, logistical and financial backing of the ICC and other international criminal tribunals, including the ad hoc international tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon;
25. Welcomes the inclusion in the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy of reference to the need to fight vigorously against impunity for serious crimes, not least through a commitment to the ICC, and the understanding that it is the primary duty of states to investigate grave international crimes, promote and contribute to strengthening the capacity of national judicial systems to investigate and prosecute these crimes;
26. Welcomes the commitments made in the Council Decision 2011/168/CFSP on the ICC, adopted on 21 March 2011, and the subsequent Action Plan adopted on 12 July

2011, and recommends that the EU and its Member States ensure their implementation through effective and concrete measures to promote the universality and integrity of the Rome Statute, to support the independence of the Court and its effective and efficient functioning and to support the implementation of the principle of complementarity; calls on the EUSR for human rights to implement the actions related to the ICC contained in the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy;

27. Recognises the efforts of the Commission to establish an 'EU Complementarity Toolkit' aimed at supporting the development of national capacities and generating political will for the investigation and prosecution of alleged international crimes, and stresses the importance of thorough consultations with the Member States, Parliament and civil society organisations in order to finalise the toolkit;
28. Reiterates its recommendation that the Rome Statute be added to the package of international treaties on good governance, and that the rule of law be ratified by third countries admitted to the System of Generalised Preferences Plus (GSP+); supports consistent inclusion of an ICC clause in EU agreements with third countries; calls for the mainstreaming of the ICC in all EU foreign policy priorities, by, in particular, systematically taking into account the fight against impunity and the principle of complementarity;
29. Stresses the importance of strong EU action to anticipate and thereby avoid or condemn instances of non-cooperation, such as invitations of individuals subject to an ICC arrest warrant and failure to arrest and surrender such individuals; calls again on the EU and its Member States to comply with all the requests by the Court to provide assistance and cooperation in a timely manner, to ensure, inter alia, the execution of pending arrest warrants; reaffirms the need for the EU and its Member States, with the help of the EEAS, to put in place a set of internal guidelines outlining a code of conduct for contact between EU/Member State officials and persons wanted by the ICC;
30. Expresses its deep concern over the outcome of the budget discussions of the 10th session of the Assembly of State Parties (ASP) on 12-21 December 2011, which threatened to leave the Court underfunded; deeply regrets that some European States Parties to the Rome Statute push for the adoption of a zero growth budget/lower budget, and that the Assembly did not agree to provide the Court with sufficient resources to effectively fulfil its judicial mandate and deliver justice in a robust, fair, effective and meaningful manner; calls on the Member States to show robust support for the functioning of the Court at the ASP, and reject the proposals for a zero nominal growth of the Court's budget as this would undermine its ability to deliver justice and to respond to new situations;
31. Emphasises that the EU's support to the fight against impunity should cover a number of initiatives that include, among others: increased efforts to promote wider ratification and implementation of the Rome Statute and of the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities (APIC) in order to make the Court truly global and

universal; enhanced efforts to secure full cooperation with the Court, including through enacting relevant national legislation on cooperation and concluding framework agreements with the ICC for the enforcement of the Court's sentences, the protection and relocation of victims and witnesses, etc, in order to facilitate adequate and timely cooperation with the Court; and determined political and diplomatic support, in particular with regard to the execution of pending arrest warrants;

32. Underlines, further to the Arab Spring, the importance of developing a coherent and nuanced EU policy on transitional justice in addition to the reinforcement of the independence of the judiciary, including the linkage to the ICC as a court of last resort, to help countries in transition address the past human rights violations, fight against impunity and avoid recurrence of human rights violations;

33. Stresses that the digital collection of evidence and dissemination of images of human rights violations can contribute to the global fight against impunity; considers that assistance is needed in making materials admissible under international (criminal) law as evidence in court proceedings;

EU action in international humanitarian law (IHL)

34. Welcomes the inclusion, for the first time, of a dedicated section on IHL in the 2011 Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy and the EU's efforts to ensure accountability by documenting any abuses of IHL and supporting accountability mechanisms, as well as its pledges to combat enforced disappearances, continue support for the ICC, work towards further participation in the principal IHL instruments, promote respect for fundamental procedural guarantees for all persons detained in armed conflict, and support international instruments seeking to address humanitarian hazards of explosive remnants of war, cluster munitions, improvised explosive devices and anti-personnel landmines;

35. Regrets, however, that overall awareness and implementation of EU guidelines on promoting compliance with international humanitarian law remain markedly lower compared with other guidelines; calls on the EU to give more political prominence, and devote more resources, to the implementation of these guidelines, especially by ensuring that IHL is mainstreamed in crisis-management operations, and by proactively fighting impunity and ensuring individual responsibility;

36. Recalls that in order to avoid human rights breaches in the first place, respect for international law must be at the core of any EU strategy aiming to enhance human rights and democracy in the world, particularly in its relationships with those partners that are parties to an armed or frozen conflict; recalls the need to end any EU support to parties to a conflict, whether financial, logistical or tactical, including through the supply of weapons, munitions or any other type of military equipment, as laid down in the EU Common Position on arms exports;

37. Further emphasises the need to ensure that the issue of the fight against impunity for crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide is addressed more systematically in the EU's bilateral relations with relevant countries, including by raising it in public statements, and that the EU addresses impunity more consistently at multilateral level, for instance at the UN General Assembly and Human Rights Council;
38. Reiterates its commitment to the principle of the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P), stressing the importance that the international community, including the EU, assumes responsibility for addressing gross human rights violations in third countries when the governments of these countries are unable or unwilling to protect their own citizens; stresses that this action of the international community implies humanitarian intervention and appropriate diplomatic pressure and, only as a last resort, the collective use of force, under the auspices or authorisation of the UN; urges the EU to actively engage and promote the urgent reform of the UN Security Council, so as to avoid the obstruction of R2P;
39. Commends, in this context, the actions of the European Union and the several EU Member States which took the lead in preventing further violence against civilians in Libya during the course of 2011 , but regrets the lack of a concerted response at EU level;
40. Is deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Libya, notably regarding the conditions of detention and the treatment of detainees held by various militias without effective and serious control by the Interim Government over these brigades, and requires increased alertness and sustained assistance by the international community, as stated by the High Commissioner for Human Rights before the UN Security Council on 25 January 2012;
41. Notes the efforts made by the European Union and the international community in Syria but regrets that those efforts have not translated into an improvement of the situation on the ground; expresses again its deep concern over the situation in Syria, especially regarding the continuing human rights and humanitarian emergency; condemns in the strongest terms the widespread brutal repression and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian regime against its population, including children and women; calls on the Syrian authorities to bring an immediate end to human rights violations and to comply with their obligations under international human rights law in order to allow a peaceful and democratic transition; reiterates its strong support for the UN-Arab League Special Envoy, and urges the UN Security Council to take necessary steps to end the massacre of civilians and to refer to the ICC those responsible for the grave war crimes and human rights violations in Syria;
42. Welcomes the new EU Aid Volunteers initiative that, in the initial programme period of 2014-2020, will create opportunity for some 10 000 Europeans to participate worldwide in humanitarian operations in areas where aid is most urgently

needed and to demonstrate European solidarity by providing practical assistance to communities struck by natural or man-made disasters;

43. Argues that private military and security companies (PMSCs) should be held accountable for any violations of human rights and humanitarian laws committed by their personnel; calls on the EU and the Member States, in light of the widespread use of PMSCs, to step up their efforts to find a credible regulatory solution to avoid legal loopholes in terms of accountability;

European Neighbourhood Policy and the Arab Spring

44. Emphasises the significance of the 2011 uprisings in the Arab world both as an expression of the desire for freedom, justice and dignity and as a major challenge to EU policy in the region and beyond; recognises that the EU has stepped up its political engagement in both the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood, but stresses the need to learn from past policy mistakes and chart a new policy aligned with respect of human rights and support of democratic values;
45. Welcomes the new emphasis in EU policy towards the Southern Neighbourhood on mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law; calls for consistency in EU's human rights policy approach to the South and the East; underlines the need to avoid in the East the same kinds of policy mistakes that were made in the South prior to the Arab Spring of 2011;
46. Recalls its resolutions of 25 November 2010 on the situation in Western Sahara¹² and of 18 April 2012 on the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World and the European Union's policy on the matter, including implications for the EU's strategic human rights policy¹³; expresses its concern at the deterioration of human rights in Western Sahara; calls for the fundamental rights of the people of Western Sahara, including freedom of association, freedom of expression and the right to demonstrate, to be respected; demands the release of all Sahrawi political prisoners; demands the opening of the territory to independent observers, NGOs, and the media; reiterates its support for the establishment of an international mechanism to monitor human rights in Western Sahara; supports a fair and lasting settlement of the conflict, on the basis of the right to self-determination of the Sahrawi people, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions;
47. Underlines the importance of the role of women, and of their full participation in political and economic decision-making, especially in post-war peace-building processes, democratic transition negotiations and conflict resolution, reconciliation and stabilisation processes, in terms of the goal of increasing awareness and attention with a view to eliminating the discrimination suffered by women in the democratisation processes under way in many third countries;

¹² OJ C 99 E, 3.4.2012, p. 87.

¹³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0126.

48. Reiterates its view that the ‘more for more’ approach should be based on clearly defined criteria with specific, measurable, achievable and transparent time-bound benchmarks; calls on the EEAS and the Commission to implement this approach systematically in the Neighbourhood Policy progress reports;
49. Welcomes the enhanced EU outreach to civil society, and emphasises the need for civil society to contribute more systematically and regularly to the elaboration of human rights country strategies and assessments required for a proper implementation of the new ‘more for more’ approach in EU policy;
50. Welcomes also activities undertaken under the Eastern Partnership initiative in promoting human rights, democracy, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law in partner countries; calls on the European Union to use the transitional experience of its own Member States of moving from authoritarian to democratic regimes, and to translate the lessons learned from these experiences into concrete, results-oriented programmes in the Union’s Eastern partner countries; urges the EU to take a more active and coherent stance while promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law in partner countries;
51. Regrets, however, that the Eastern Partnership policy at times remains open to misinterpretations, becoming rather a policy of all-permissiveness and forgiveness, and of double standards that are frequently applied with regard to the Eastern partner countries;
52. Remains extremely concerned at the lack of democracy, rule of law, fundamental freedoms and the respect for human rights in Belarus, the only European Neighbourhood country not to fully participate in the Eastern Partnership and the work of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, especially in the aftermath of the presidential elections in December 2010 and the subsequent violent crackdown on protesters and political opposition, including trials of activists in 2011 which did not conform to international standards and saw disproportionately harsh sentences handed down; commends the EU’s unity in response to the expulsion of EU diplomats from Belarus in February 2012; urges the Union and all of its Member States to remain coherent and consistent in their policies towards Belarus, and to keep up the pressure on the political regime, including through sanctions, among others against enlisted officials, while reaching out to civil society through such tools as enhanced visa facilitation and increased education, training and other exchange opportunities; expresses strong concern over Ales Bialiatski’s imprisonment since 4 August 2011; regrets the actions of the Polish and Lithuanian officials who allowed Ales Bialiatski to be arrested through the forwarding of banking information, and calls for utmost efforts by all actors in the EU to prevent a repetition of such mistakes;
53. Urges the EU to apply the same consistent approach towards human rights abuses in all third countries, both partner countries and countries with which the EU has a less-developed relationship; insists that the EU be vocal in pointing out and condemning human rights violations whenever and wherever they occur, regardless of the level or

strategic importance of partnership with the country concerned; emphasises that the EU should use financial aid and economic relations as a leverage mechanism to ensure the commitment to the universal values of human rights of all its partners;

EU policies to support democratisation and elections

54. Emphasises the mutually reinforcing nature of human rights and democracy, as it is through respect for human rights that societies create the free political space needed for peaceful democratic contestation; welcomes in this regard the increased EU focus on democracy support as illustrated by the recently established European Endowment for Democracy;
55. Underlines that a longer-term approach covering the whole election cycle is required to appropriately follow up on the reports and recommendations of the EU Election Observation Missions; stresses the importance of drawing up realistic and achievable recommendations and of ensuring that these recommendations are monitored – and become part of the political dialogue and assistance offered – by the EU delegations; considers that Parliament’s standing delegations and the joint parliamentary assemblies should also play an enhanced role in following up these recommendations and analysing progress with regard to human rights and democracy; encourages EU election observation missions (EOMs) to reinforce their coordination with other international election observation missions so as to improve the coherence of EU action in this respect; stresses that the EU needs to invest in the training of local observers in order to build sustainable and autonomous electoral processes in third countries; outlines the fact that the transition to democracy, as well as progress in promoting human rights, calls for long-term strategies and may not yield visible results in the short term; encourages, therefore, the Commission and the EEAS to monitor more than one election cycle in detail by deploying EU EOMs to countries that move from authoritarian regimes to democratic regimes or that register serious lapses in their progress towards democracy;
56. Reiterates its call on the Council and the Commission to develop a coherent, long-term strategy in relation to each EU election observation mission, followed up by an assessment of democratic progress two years after the mission, with due involvement of the concerned election observation Chief Observer, to be debated during Parliament’s annual human rights debate with the VP/HR; recalls the commitment of the VP/HR to focus, in election observation missions, on the participation – both as candidates and as voters – of women and national minorities as well as of persons with disabilities;
57. Emphasises that the EU must engage with political parties, so as to allow stakeholders to share tools and techniques that can be used to develop stronger ties to the public, mount competitive electoral campaigns and perform more effectively in the legislature; underlines that democratisation is a process which must also engage citizens, grass roots movements and civil society; believes, therefore, that the EU should finance programmes that foster civic participation, voter education,

organisation of advocacy actions, freedom of the press and of expression, and that generally ensure political oversight and help citizens exercise their rights;

58. Considers that equitable participation of women in politics and government is essential to building and sustaining democracy; stresses, therefore, that EU programmes in the field of human rights and democratisation should consider, as a priority, the engagement and build-up of capacities of women in legislatures, political parties and civil society as leaders, activists and informed citizens; takes the view that the EU must continue to support and encourage women to run for political office and participate meaningfully in every facet of civic and political life; points out that the full participation of women in politics is not limited to statistical objectives regarding the number of candidates and elected officials, and that ensuring gender equality entails both taking the problems of women's rights into consideration in policymaking and ensuring the free and effective participation of women in all aspects of public, political and economic life;
59. Recalls that building legitimate democratic foundations, a properly functioning civil society and a democratic, rights-based community is a long-term process that needs to be built up from below and requires national, regional, local and international support;
60. Welcomes the creation of the Democracy Support Directorate within Parliament and the broadening of the mandate of its Election Coordination Group (ECG), which has now become the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DSECG); expects Parliament's democracy support activities, including the political groups, to be further enhanced, not least via its Office for the Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy and its Election Observation Unit;

Human rights dialogues and consultations with third countries

61. Recognises the potential inherent in comprehensive human rights dialogues with third countries, especially if they are effectively combined with the implementation of the human rights country strategies; emphasises that the dialogues should not, however, be instrumentalised in order to marginalise human rights discussions at other, higher levels of political dialogue such as summits; urges, likewise, that human rights considerations be central to relations with third countries;
62. Recommends that human rights country strategies be made public; stresses that public strategies would provide visibility to the EU's commitment to human rights in third countries and provide support to those struggling to exercise and protect their human rights;
63. Stresses that it is important that the EU uses these dialogues to raise individual cases of concern, particularly for prisoners of conscience who have been imprisoned for practising the peaceful right to freedom of speech, assembly and religion or belief, and calls upon the EU to effectively follow up these cases with the countries in question;

64. Reiterates its concern, however, with the persistently disappointing lack of progress in a number of human rights dialogues, and the lack of transparent benchmarks to genuinely assess improvements or deterioration in human rights; notes the continued EU difficulties to negotiate improved modalities for its human rights dialogues in particular with China and Russia; calls on the newly appointed EUSR for Human Rights to take the lead in these and other human rights dialogues and to pursue a new, result-driven approach in this regard through ongoing cooperation with Parliament ;
65. Stresses the fact that, while the Chinese authorities have take some steps in the right direction, the human rights situation in China continues to deteriorate and is marked by widening social unrest and the tightening of control and repression of human rights defenders, lawyers, bloggers, and social activists, as well as by targeted policies aimed at marginalising Tibetans and their cultural identity; urges the Chinese authorities to engage seriously with the Tibetan people in order to assess the underlying causes of the self-immolations of Tibetan monks and nuns, to cease harassing and intimidating Tibetans who exercise their rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association, to end all use of unnecessary excessive force in facing protestors, to investigate all instances of human rights violations, and to allow independent monitors into areas of protest;
66. Reiterates its call for the need to appoint an EU Special Representative for Tibet who would be responsible for the defence of human rights and, among other topical issues, the right to freely practice one's religion and culture in China;
67. Remains disappointed that there has been no systematic involvement of Parliament in the assessment of human rights dialogues, including those with Russia and China; calls for Parliament's access to these assessments to be formalised, and recalls that the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Dialogues state that 'civil society will be involved in this assessment exercise';
68. Reiterates that the situation for and promotion of women's rights, gender equality and efforts to combat violence against women must be taken into account, in a systematic manner, in all human rights dialogues conducted by the EU with third countries with which cooperation or association agreements have been signed;

EU sanctions and the human rights and democracy clauses in EU agreements

69. Welcomes the commitment in the EU Human Rights Action Plan to develop a methodology to improve the analysis of the human rights situation in third countries in connection with the launch or conclusion of trade and/or investment agreements; calls on the EU to ensure that the granting of GSP+ status is firmly linked to a country's ratification and implementation of key international human rights instruments, enabling a regular evaluation of such obligations, paying particular attention to the respect of freedom of expression, assembly, association, and religion or belief, and the rights of minorities, women and children; stresses in particular the need for transparency in defending immigrants' human rights;

70. Welcomes the EU's efforts to include a human rights and democracy clause in all EU political framework agreements, but reiterates its call for all contractual relationships with third countries – both industrialised and developing, and including sectoral agreements, trade and technical or financial aid agreements – to include clearly worded conditionality and clauses on human rights and democracy, without exception; considers that the current threshold in Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) schemes that could trigger action on the human rights clauses is high but should be adjusted to each country concerned; notes the new GSP reform proposal from 2011 which suggests that the consultation procedure should be widened and which contains provisions to ease investigations of human rights violations in the GSP Committee; expresses, in this regard, deep concern about the deteriorating human rights situation in Cambodia where land grabbing has led to increasing poverty and to the violation of human rights clauses which are part of agreements in force between EU and Cambodia; warns that the lack of consistency in the implementation of the human rights clause can undermine the credibility and effectiveness of the EU's conditionality policy;
71. Welcomes the measures undertaken and plans developed in 2011 by EU institutions and Member States aimed at creating a more coherent and coordinated policy as regards corporate social responsibility (CSR), i.a. in support of human rights in the world, and the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights from 2011;
72. Stresses the importance of anchoring CSR in free trade agreements with third or developing countries in order to promote human rights and social and environmental standards; suggests including a comprehensive human rights chapter, in addition to social and environmental chapters, in all future free trade agreements; calls as well on the Commission to use free trade agreements to promote the four core labour standards, namely the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced labour; the abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in the area of employment; stresses also that the monitoring and enforcement mechanisms of the GSP+ scheme should be further strengthened;
73. Reiterates that the consistent application of the human rights clause of agreements is fundamental in relations between the European Union and its Member States and third countries; stresses the importance of reviewing how Member States have cooperated with the apparatus of repression in the name of countering terrorism; underlines, in this respect, the need for the newly revised European Neighbourhood Policy to focus on providing support for security sector reform and, in particular, to ensure a clear separation of intelligence and law enforcement functions; calls on the VP/HR, the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, the EEAS, the Council and the Commission to step up their cooperation with the Committee for the Prevention of Torture, and with other relevant Council of Europe mechanisms, in the planning and implementation of counter-terrorism assistance projects with third countries, and in all forms of counter-terrorism dialogues with third countries;

74. Emphasises the importance of continuing the work on global practices relating to secret detentions in the context of countering terrorism; stresses that combating terrorism can under no circumstances be used as a justification for violations of human rights, whether in third countries or in the EU; draws attention, in this respect, to the adoption of its resolution of 11 September 2012 entitled ‘Alleged transportation and illegal detention of prisoners in European countries by the CIA: follow-up to the European Parliament TDIP Committee report at the request of the Member States and implementation of its recommendations’;
75. Insists on the importance for the EU to fully abide by and implement its international obligations, policies and foreign policy instruments, such as the torture guidelines and human rights dialogues, so that it can be more credible in its call for the rigorous implementation of human rights clauses in association agreements, and to urge its major allies to respect their own domestic and international laws;
76. Recommends, in order to enhance the credibility of the human rights clause and the predictability of EU action, that the clause be further developed to include political and legal procedural mechanisms to be used in the event of a request for the suspension of bilateral cooperation on the grounds of repeated and/or systematic human rights violations in breach of international law;
77. Calls on the European Union to ensure that all trade agreements it signs with third countries include clauses which promote social cohesion, ensure respect for social, environmental and labour standards and the sound management of natural resources, in particular land and water; notes that the EU is developing a human rights monitoring mechanism to be included as part of new partnership and cooperation agreements, and other trade agreements, with a number of countries; stresses that these monitoring mechanisms are not ambitious enough and not clearly defined, compromising the EU’s treaty commitment to the promotion of human rights and democracy in the world; is particularly concerned in this regard about the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Uzbekistan and the pending PCA with Turkmenistan;
78. Reiterates its recommendation that the EU adopt a more consistent and efficient policy on EU sanctions and restrictive measures, providing clear criteria for when these are to be applied and what type of sanctions should be applied, and including transparent benchmarks for their lifting; calls on the Council to ensure that there are no double standards when deciding on restrictive measures or sanctions and that these are applied regardless of political, economic and security interests;
79. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address violence against women and the gender-related dimension of human rights violations internationally, in particular in the context of the bilateral association and international trade agreements in force and those under negotiation;

Freedom of expression (social media/digital freedoms)

80. Notes that the Arab Spring demonstrated how the new global information and communication architecture is not only creating new channels for freedom of expression but also enabling new forms of political mobilisation that bypass traditional methods; points out, in this context, that rural areas are often inadequately connected to modern communication technologies; calls on the EU institutions and the Member States to harness the positive potential of the new technologies in EU foreign policy while stressing that only organised groups disposing of a clear and coherent political agenda shall be granted financial assistance; calls on the EU institutions and the Member States to address the danger of internet censorship and repression; welcomes the launch, in December 2011, of the 'No Disconnect Strategy' to develop tools that allow the EU, in appropriate cases, to assist civil society organisations or individual citizens to circumvent arbitrary disruptions to access to electronic communications technologies, including the internet;
81. Recognises that increasing dependence on information and communications technology infrastructure is likely to create new vulnerabilities and security concerns internationally; recalls, however, that many of the decentralised characteristics that make the internet a cyber-security concern are also the very reasons that it is a powerful tool for human rights defenders living under repressive regimes; stresses, therefore, the importance of a comprehensive Digital Freedom Strategy with a clear human rights dimension, including an impact assessment on human rights consequences, in the development of policies and programmes relating to cyber security, the fight against cyber crime, internet governance and other EU policies in this area; calls in this regard on the Commission and the EEAS to take a proactive approach and to mainstream the aspect of cyber security in its interaction with third countries;
82. Stresses that the repression and control of citizens and businesses involves a growing technological component, through the blocking of content and the monitoring and identification of human rights defenders, journalists, activists and dissidents, as well as through the criminalisation of legitimate expression online and the adoption of restrictive legislation to justify such measures; recommends that the promotion and protection of digital freedoms should be mainstreamed, and reviewed annually, so as to ensure accountability and continuity in all EU external actions and financing and aid policies and instruments; calls on the Commission and Council to unequivocally recognise digital freedoms as fundamental rights, and as indispensable prerequisites for enjoying universal human rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and access to information, and for ensuring transparency and accountability in public life;
83. Welcomes the commitment of the EU Human Rights Action Plan to develop new public guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline, including the protection of bloggers and journalists, human rights defenders and opposition-parties;
84. Stresses the importance of encouraging an independent free press and media, which are crucial actors in preserving the rule of law and fighting corrupt practices;

85. Notes with concern the worrying trend of increased attacks and intimidation against journalists and media workers in the world; calls for a stepping up of EU efforts to promote their safety in dialogues with the Union's partners and other countries;
86. Is gravely concerned about developments which restrict the freedom of expression and assembly for reasons based on misconceptions about homosexuality and transgenderism; recalls that laws and proposals to such effect are inconsistent with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which precludes discriminatory laws and practices based on sexual orientation; calls on the VP/HR and the Special Representative for Human Rights to raise these concerns systematically;
87. Deplores the use of EU-made technologies and services in third countries to violate human rights through censorship of information, mass surveillance, monitoring and the tracing and tracking of citizens and their activities on (mobile) telephone networks and the internet; is concerned by reports of certain EU companies cooperating with authoritarian regimes in providing them with free unlimited access to their networks and databases under the excuse of following the local law, as was the case with the EU-based company TeliaSonera in several former Soviet countries; is convinced that European companies and their subsidiaries and subcontractors should play a key role in the promotion and dissemination of social standards worldwide, and they should therefore act in accordance with European values and never compromise human rights in their efforts to expand their markets abroad;
88. Welcomes Council decisions to ban the export of certain information technologies and services to Syria and Iran, and urges the EU to consider these cases as precedents for future restrictive measures against other repressive regimes; strongly supports the proposal to include human rights violations in the EU dual-use export control system as a reason for which non-listed items may be subject to export restrictions by Member States; draws attention, in this context, to its position to adopt Regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 428/2009 setting up a Community regime for the control of exports, transfer, brokering and transit of dual-use items;

EU support to civil society and human rights defenders

89. Emphasises the development of a strong and vibrant civil society as a key factor allowing for democratic progress and improved protection of human rights; stresses that the mobilisation of civil society was at the root of the historic changes of the Arab Spring;
90. Acknowledges EU efforts to step up support to civil society organisations; values particularly the ability of the European Union to engage directly with civil society through the EIDHR, the Civil Society Facility and the EED; regrets, however, that EU does not have a stronger systematic policy to persuade partner countries to abolish undue legal and administrative restrictions that limit the universal rights of assembly and association; calls for such policy guidelines be developed;

91. Reiterates its support for the implementation of the concept of democratic ownership in EU development cooperation, and considers the role of civil society crucial in that context; emphasises the need for all EU staff to work closely with civil society in the countries of their posting; outlines the fact that a closer cooperation with the civil society would considerably contribute to drawing up feasible and realistic human rights country strategies, tailored to the priorities of these countries;
92. Regrets that persecution and marginalisation of human rights defenders remain a widespread tendency all over the world, particularly in China and Russia, and in all other countries that still mistakenly regard high human rights standards as an imposition by the EU and the UN and by global human rights organisations; regrets that the fate of disbarred lawyers and politically persecuted journalists and media workers in China is regarded as an internal affair; notes the restrictions of democratic space;
93. Welcomes the EU co-sponsored UN General Assembly Third Committee resolution of November 2011 on human rights defenders, and the public support given by the EU to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and relevant regional mechanisms to protect human rights defenders;
94. Supports the plans to establish a voluntary European initiative to provide temporary shelter to human rights defenders in need of urgent relocation from their countries of origin under the EIDHR; stresses that this initiative should be carried out in a manner that will complement the shelter schemes which already exist;
95. Notes that it is the human rights defenders working in remote areas and conflict zones that are the most exposed to threats and dangers, and in least contact with EU staff; urges all EU delegations to develop local human rights strategies for maintaining regular contacts with human rights defenders on the ground and for providing them with necessary assistance and protection, as required by the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders (HRDs);
96. Stresses the importance for the EU to take proactive action (reaction and support to HRDs under threat; observation of trials brought against HRDs; prompt, vocal and visible reaction to restrictions to the freedoms of expression, association and assembly) and systematically to provide HRDs and/or their families with information on actions undertaken on their behalf, as prescribed in the EU Guidelines on HRDs; calls, in this context, for a reinforcement of the EIDHR mechanism aimed at providing urgent protection measures with human rights defenders in danger or at risk;
97. Regrets that its call to enhance visibility of the annual Sakharov Prize is not taken on board as the Sakharov Prize is only mentioned in a declarative manner in the section on the European Parliament in the Annual Report; underlines once more that a proper follow-up by the EEAS is needed on the well-being of the candidates and laureates, and on the situation in their respective countries; reiterates its call on the EEAS and the Commission to stay in regular touch with the candidates and laureates

of the Sakharov Prize to ensure continuous dialogue and monitoring of the situation of the human rights situation in the respective countries, and to offer protection to those suffering persecution; calls on the EEAS to include the Sakharov Prize in the section on human right defenders in the Annual Report on Human Rights;

98. Calls on the Commission and Council to support, train and empower human rights defenders, civil society activists and independent journalists, to ensure their security and freedom online and to assert the fundamental rights of free expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of association online;

EU action against the death penalty

99. Reiterates its unfaltering stance against the death penalty in all cases and circumstances, and strongly supports EU efforts to pass a strong resolution on the death penalty moratorium at the 67th session of the UN General Assembly, also with a view to gaining momentum in the run-up to the World Congress against the Death Penalty; underlines the fact that the EU is the leading actor in and the largest donor to the fight against death penalty;
100. Calls on Member States to refrain from marketing or promoting equipment that is prohibited under the Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 of 27 June 2005 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; calls for regular and updated control of exports of drugs manufactured by EU pharmaceutical companies which might be used in the execution of death sentences in third countries; welcomes, in this context, the Commission's 2011 decision to amend Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 to strengthen export controls on certain drugs capable of being used in capital punishment; welcomes the proactive steps taken by certain EU pharmaceutical companies to halt exports to third countries where there is a foreseeable risk of such drugs being used for executions; urges more EU pharmaceutical companies to take similar steps; calls on the Commission to establish a catch-all clause in Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 that would, inter alia, require prior export authorisation of any drug capable of being used for torture or executions;
101. Welcomes the assessment by human rights organisations that the use of the death penalty in 2011 broadly confirms the global trend towards abolition; welcomes Thailand's abolition of the death penalty for offenders under 18; regrets, however, that there was a significant increase in executions in Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia; expresses serious disappointment at the refusal of China to disclose credible information about its use of death penalty and executions that, according to Amnesty International, number in the thousands; welcomes the abolition of the death penalty in the US state of Illinois but regrets that the United States continues to execute people despite being the only G8 country to do so in 2011; recalls with concern that Belarus is the only European country to continue use the death penalty; urges the EU and its Member States consistently to bring this issue up as a matter of priority in their dialogues with these countries;

102. Declares that the EU, which has in the past been successful in fighting the death penalty in specific cases, should take a more decisive stand and call on the institutions and the Member States to maintain and step up their commitment to this cause and their political will, in order to see the death penalty finally abolished worldwide;

Torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment

103. Welcomes the adoption of the updated Guidelines on EU policy towards third countries on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; recalls, however, that the challenges of awareness-raising and implementation have to be overcome to achieve genuine advances in EU policy;

104. Welcomes the extension in the updated guidelines of the groups requiring special protection to persons facing discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as the commitment to urge third countries to provide domestic procedure for complaints and reports that are gender and child-sensitive; regrets, however, that EU's coordinated efforts to counter torture do not address its gender dimension in a more comprehensive manner, mainly due to a lack of substantive information on all forms of torture and ill-treatment;

105. Stresses the importance of linking EU guidelines with the implementation modalities of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), with particular attention to the National Preventive Mechanisms;

106. Points out that the definition of slavery provided by the UN is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised; deplores the fact that modern forms of slavery survive, including within the EU; calls, therefore, on the Commission to pursue a much stronger policy on this subject, particularly with regard to domestic staff, the socio-professional group most affected by these forms of slavery;

107. Regrets that the political abuse of psychiatry still remains a painful problem in a number of countries which have a history of using violent psychiatric methods in support of antidemocratic regimes trying to intimidate and stop dissenting segments of society and individuals; emphasises with concern that this tendency goes hand in hand with vague and elusive forms of torture, including psychological terror and degrading conditions of prisons;

108. Calls attention to the significance of the report of the UN Special Rapporteur of 5 August 2011 (A/66/268) on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, focusing on the effects of solitary confinement, including the use of that method in psychiatric clinics; expresses serious concern over the evidence from different countries that psychiatric hospitals are being used as de facto detention centres; calls on the VP/HR, the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, the EEAS and the Commission to pay appropriate attention to this problem;

109. Expresses concern over the future operation of rehabilitation centres for torture victims; calls on the EEAS and Commission services to work across the dividing line of external and internal policies to ensure that administrative competency lines do not endanger EU support to rehabilitation centres, both outside and inside the Union;
110. Regrets that human rights violations still remain a painful problem in the occupied areas of Cyprus; notes that thousands of refugees, who have been forced to abandon their homes and properties, are being denied by the Turkish military forces to live in their homeland until today; notes further that families and relatives of missing persons are still denied the right to have answers regarding the fate of their loved ones, as Turkey does not facilitate access to the military zones or to archives containing relevant investigation reports by the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus;

Discrimination

111. Insists that the political dialogue on human rights between the EU and third countries must cover a more inclusive and comprehensive definition of non-discrimination, inter alia on the basis of religion or belief, sex, racial or ethnic origin, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity;
112. Underlines that for the EU's foreign policy to be credible and coherent in the field of fundamental rights, equality and anti-discrimination, the Council should adopt the directive on equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, and enlarge the application of the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia to cover other targeted groups, such as LGBT persons;
113. Requires the Member States to vigorously oppose any attempt to undermine the concept of universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights and to actively encourage the UNHRC to pay equal attention to the question of discrimination on all grounds, including gender, gender identity, race, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief; Strongly regrets that homosexuality remains criminalised in 78 states, including five in which it is subject to the death penalty; calls on these states to decriminalise homosexuality without delay, to free those imprisoned on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity and not to execute them; calls on the EEAS to make full use of the LGBT Toolkit to protect the rights of LGBTI people; calls on the Council to work towards binding guidelines in this area; calls on the EEAS and Member States to assist LGBTI human rights defenders in countries where they are at risk, and calls on the VP/HR and the EU Special Representative on Human Rights to continue making clear the European Union's firm commitment to equality and non-discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in the world, including by launching and supporting initiatives at bilateral, international and UN level on these matters; repeats its call on the Commission to issue a roadmap for equality on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity;

114. Calls on the Member States to grant asylum to people fleeing persecution in countries where LGBTI people are criminalised, on the basis of applicants' well-founded fears of persecution, and relying on their self-identification as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex;
115. Reasserts that the principle of non-discrimination, including on grounds of sex and sexual orientation, is a fundamental element in the ACP-EU partnership;
116. Underlines the ratification by the EU of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the adoption of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, in particular area of action 8; condemns all forms of discrimination based on disability, and calls for all states to ratify and implement the UNCRPD; points out that the EU also needs to monitor the implementation of the UNCRPD on its own territory; calls on the EU and its Member States to promote the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities established in 2006 within the framework of the UN both within and outside the European Union;
117. Condemns the continued human rights violations committed against people suffering from caste-based discrimination, including the denial of equality and access to justice, continued segregation and caste-induced barriers to the achievement of basic human rights; requests the Council, the EEAS and the Commission to take joint action on caste-based discrimination, including in EU human rights communications, frameworks and country-based strategies and dialogues, wherever appropriate, and to promote the draft UN Principles and Guidelines for the elimination of discrimination based on Work and Descent as a guiding framework to eliminate caste discrimination, and work for their endorsement by the UN Human Rights Council;
118. Requests the VP/HR and the Special Representative for Human Rights to give full recognition to caste discrimination as a cross-cutting issue of human rights and poverty with severe implications, in particular for women;
119. Is pleased that the United Nations Human Rights Council's driving principles on extreme poverty and human rights are based on the interdependence and indivisibility of all human rights, as well as on the principles of the participation and empowerment of people living in extreme poverty; emphasises the indissociability of extreme poverty and human rights: on the one hand, people living in extreme poverty are often also deprived of their civil, political, economic and social human rights; on the other hand, in the fight against extreme poverty an approach based on human rights is essential if the situation is to be understood and combated; urges the Council to support this approach with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission;
120. Notes with concern that indigenous people are in particular danger of being discriminated against, and that they are especially vulnerable to political, economic, environmental and labour-related changes and disturbances; notes that most live below the poverty threshold and have little or no access to either representation,

political decision-making or justice systems; is particularly concerned about reported widespread land-grabbing, forced displacement and human rights abuses resulting from armed conflict;

121. Calls on the Commission and the Council to promote ‘climate refugee’ as an official, legally recognised term (indicating a person forced to flee his or her home to seek refuge abroad as a consequence of climate change), as is not yet recognised in international law or in any legally binding international agreement;
122. Emphasises the importance of the right to citizenship as one of the most fundamental rights, since in many countries only full citizens are granted the possibility fully to enjoy and exercise their basic human rights, including the rights to public security, wellbeing and education;
123. Emphasises that traditional national minorities have specific needs that differ from those of other minority groups, and there is a need to safeguard the equal treatment of these minorities with regard to education, healthcare, social services and other public services, and to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, the full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority;

Women and children in armed conflict situations

124. Appreciates the focused attention given to the challenge of the implementation of women, peace and security-related resolutions in the EU policies, as evidenced in the Report on the EU indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 & 1820, adopted by the EU Council on 13 May 2011; welcomes the political action taken by the EU to ensure the prolonging of the mandate of the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative on children and armed conflict at the UN General Assembly; shares the view expressed in the Council conclusions of 1 December 2011 on Common Security and Defence Policy that continued and systematic attention to aspects relating to human rights, gender and children affected by armed conflict should be a key consideration in all phases of the CSDP missions;
125. Believes that, in order to ensure the effective participation of women where they are currently under-represented in political or civil society bodies, it is important to provide training and support modules, both for European staff dealing with gender issues and for the women on the ground, so as to enable them to make an effective contribution to the peace and conflict resolution processes;
126. Recognises that concrete progress in improving the situation of women and children in armed conflict situations is often dependent on achieving clear and unified accountability structures in military and security services under civilian control; urges, therefore, the relevant EU institutions to seek and implement more effective methods to carry out security sector reforms in conflict and post-conflict countries, with strong emphasis on women’s and children’s rights, inclusion and empowerment

in that context; calls on the EEAS and the Commission to take this into account in the programming and implementation of external assistance instruments addressing security sector reform, including the importance of women's empowerment in post-conflict reconstruction;

127. Calls for the disarmament, rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers as a core element in EU policies that aim at strengthening human rights, child protection and the replacement of violence with political conflict-resolution mechanisms;
128. Expresses its deep concern regarding the Great Lakes region of Africa, where rape is a weapon of warfare to eradicate whole population groups;

Women's rights

129. Urges the EU to enhance its action to end the practices of female genital mutilation (FGM), early and forced marriages, honour killings, forced and gender-selective abortion; insists that these policies should be essential elements in EU approach to development cooperation; stresses the importance of adequate access to medical means, and of information and education about sexual and reproductive health and rights, to the wellbeing of women and girls in all countries;
130. Notes that there continues to be insufficient attention given to sexual and reproductive rights violations that undermine efforts towards fulfilling the Cairo Programme of Action commitments adopted at the 1994 United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), and to addressing discrimination – including gender discrimination and inequality – in population and development strategies; underlines that progress on reproductive health has been limited in some contexts by violations such as child, early and forced marriage and failure to enforce a legal minimum age of marriage, coercive practices such as forced sterilisation or FGM, as well as denial of autonomy to women and girls to make decisions about their sexual and reproductive health free of discrimination, coercion and violence; Calls for the Cairo Programme of Action to be implemented in its human rights and development policy aspects, to promote gender equality and women's and children's rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights;
131. Urges the EU and its Member States to ensure that the ICPD+20 operational review process results in a comprehensive review of all aspects related to the full enjoyment of sexual and reproductive rights, that it reaffirms a strong and progressive approach to sexual and reproductive rights for all that is consistent with international human rights standards and increases the accountability of governments to achieve the agreed objectives; calls, in particular, on the EU and its Member States to ensure that the review process is conducted in a participatory manner and that it provides opportunity for different stakeholders, including civil society as well as women, adolescents and young people, to participate in a meaningful manner; recalls that the framework for such a review must be based on human rights and have a specific focus on sexual and reproductive rights;

132. Recalls the UN Human Rights Council Resolution 11/8 entitled ‘Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights’, which affirms that the prevention of maternal mortality and morbidity requires the effective promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls, in particular their rights to life, education, information and health; stresses that the EU must therefore play an important role in contributing to the decline of preventable complications occurring before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth;
133. Calls on the EU to work closely with UN Women both bilaterally and at international, regional and national level to enforce women’s rights; stresses, in particular, the need not only to promote health education and appropriate programmes for sexual and reproductive health and rights, which are a prominent part of the EU’s development and human rights policy towards third countries, but also to ensure that women have fair access to public health care systems and adequate gynaecological and obstetric care as defined by the World Health Organisation.
134. Urges the Commission and the EEAS to give specific attention to female genital mutilation (FGM) as part of an overall strategy for combating violence against women, including the development of an EU plan of actions on FGM pursuant to the due diligence principle; encourages the EEAS and the Member States to continue to address the issue of FGM in their political and policy dialogues with partner countries where the practice is still perpetrated, and to include in these dialogues human rights defenders already working on ending the practice, along with girls and women directly affected by the practice, community leaders, religious leaders, teachers, health workers, and government officials both at local and national level; stresses the need for the EEAS to develop a specific toolkit on FGM as part of its actions to implement the EU strategic framework on human rights and democracy;
135. Underlines that progress on reproductive health has been limited in some contexts by violations such as child marriages, early and forced marriage and the failure to enforce a legal minimum age of marriage, coercive practices such as forced sterilisation or FGM;
136. Welcomes the commitment of several Member States to combat violence against women, domestic violence and FMG, in particular its cross-border aspects; reiterates the need for coherence on EU internal and external policies on these issues, and urges the Commission to make it a priority to end violence against women and girls, as well as femicide, and, through the allocation of appropriate financial resources, to support targeted and innovative programmes both within the EU and in third countries; encourages the EU and its Member States to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence;
137. Welcomes the adoption of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, and the introduction of a new strategy by the Commission entitled ‘The EU

Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016’; points out that trafficking in human beings is a complex transnational phenomenon rooted in vulnerability to poverty, lack of democratic cultures, gender inequality and violence against women; emphasises the need to place greater emphasis on the gender dimension in dialogue with third countries on this issue; calls, finally, on Member States that have not yet ratified the UN ‘Palermo’ Protocol on Trafficking in Persons and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings to do so as soon as possible;

138. Emphasises the crucial role played by women in the political life of the Southern Neighbourhood; welcomes election results that have resulted in a considerable increase in the number of women in political fora;
139. Calls on the Council, the Commission and Member States to promote, in particular, the ratification and implementation by the Members States of the African Union the African Union Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa;

Rights of the child

140. Recalls the specific commitment made in the Lisbon Treaty to focus on children’s rights in EU’s external policies; points out that the near-universal adoption of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child provides a particularly solid international legal foundation to pursue progressive policies in this area; recommends that the rights of the child should be taken into account in all EU policies and actions; calls, therefore, on those countries that have not yet ratified the Convention to do so and to enforce it and its optional protocols as soon as possible;
141. Draws attention to the serious problem that exists in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa of children being accused of witchcraft, with grave consequences ranging from social exclusion to infanticide, and to the ritual murder of children as forms of sacrifice; notes that the state has a responsibility to protect children from all forms of violence and abuse and, consequently, urges the HR/VP, the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, the Commission and the EEAS to pay particular attention to the protection of children from all forms of violence and to the fate of these children in the human rights dialogues with the governments of the countries concerned and in the programming of the external financial instruments;
142. Calls on the EEAS and the Commission to safeguard, in the context of the Union’s external policies, the rights of children during criminal proceedings by establishing their need for specific protection, in recognition of their vulnerability to secondary and repeat victimisation, and to give primary consideration to the child’s best interest, as stipulated in Directive 2012/29/EU on Minimum Standards on Victims’ Rights;
143. Welcomes the Commission Communication ‘An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child,’ integrating both internal and external policy objectives in a single policy document; recalls the commitment of VP/HR in the Commission Communication

‘Human Rights and Democracy at the Heart of EU External Action’ to focus on the rights of the child as one of three campaign priorities; stresses, however, the importance of translating these commitments into budgeted actions and monitoring their efficient implementation;

144. Calls on a consistent inclusion of the rights of the child in EU Human Rights Country Strategies in line with the Lisbon Treaty commitment; supports the plans to make further advances in developing rights-based approaches to development cooperation as stated in the EU human rights strategy action plan; emphasises the urgency to do so in the case of children’s rights in order to ensure longer-term sustainable progress; reiterates that girls are particularly vulnerable in certain countries;
145. Stresses the need to combat all forms of forced child labour, child exploitation and trafficking; calls for the better implementation of existing national and international rules that foster awareness of child abuse in the labour market; emphasises the fact that children and adolescents should participate only in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling;

Freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief

146. Stresses that the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief is a fundamental human right¹⁴, encompassing the right to believe or not to believe and the freedom to practice theistic, non-theistic or atheistic beliefs alike, either in private or public, alone or in a community with others; stresses that the enjoyment of this right is fundamental to the development of pluralistic and democratic societies; calls on the EU systematically to defend the right to freedom of religion or belief for all, in accordance with UN human rights conventions, in political dialogues with third countries;
147. Condemns any intolerance, discrimination or violence on the grounds of religion or belief wherever and to whomever it occurs, whether directed at religious people, apostates and non-believers; expresses its profound concern about the increasing number of such acts in various countries, perpetrated against religious minority representatives as well as against those modest voices in majority religious traditions promoting pluralist and diverse societies based on mutual respect between individuals; expresses worry about the impunity for such violations, the bias on the part of the police and judiciary systems in dealing with such matters, and the lack of appropriate victim compensation schemes, that is evidenced in many countries in the world; notes that, paradoxically, the events of the Arab Spring, which were expected to bring about a pro-democratic transformation, in many cases rather brought about the deterioration of the freedoms and rights of religious minorities and, therefore, strongly condemns all acts of violence against Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other religious communities; recognises the growing need in a number of countries for

¹⁴ European Parliament resolution of 20 January 2011 resolution on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion, OJ C 136E, 11.5.2012, p. 53.

conflict transformation and reconciliatory efforts, including inter-faith dialogue at various levels; urges the EU and VP/HR, the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, the Commission and the EEAS to address discriminatory and inflammatory content in, e.g., the media, as well as obstacles to the free profession of faith in EU dialogues with third countries concerning human rights; considers that in third countries where religious minorities are faced with violations of their rights, such problems cannot be solved by isolating them from the surrounding societies in order to protect them, thereby creating ‘parallel societies’;

148. Is particularly concerned by the situation in China, where individuals who practise their religion outside officially sanctioned channels, including Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and Falun Gong practitioners, systematically face persecution; calls on the Chinese Governments to put an end to its campaign of ill-treatment and harassment of Falun Gong practitioners, who face long prison terms as punishment for exercising their right to freedom of religion and belief, and are subjected to ‘re-education through labour’ aimed at forcing them to renounce their spiritual beliefs, notwithstanding China’s ratification of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; urges China to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), as it has promised; urges the Chinese authorities to suspend and subsequently amend, through genuinely consultative processes with Tibetans, those policies that have the most negative impact on Tibetan Buddhism, culture and tradition; is deeply concerned about the situation as regards freedom of religion in Cuba, in particular the increased persecution of both leaders and followers of Catholic and Protestants churches;
149. Stresses that international human rights law recognises freedom of thought, conscience, religion, belief and political affiliation regardless of registration status, so registration should not be a precondition for practising one’s religion or exercising one’s right to political affiliation; points out with concern that in China all individuals wishing to practice a religion, including the five official religions – Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism – are required to register with the Government, and must operate under Government-controlled management boards, and that this interferes with their religious autonomy and restricts their activity; notes further with concern that unregistered religious groups, including house churches and Falun Gong practitioners, face different forms of ill-treatment that restrict their activities and gatherings, including confiscation of property and even detention and imprisonment;
150. Welcomes the fact that freedom of religion or belief is included as a subject matter in the training provided to the EU staff; strongly reiterates its call for an ambitious toolkit to advance the right to freedom of religion or belief as part of EU external policy; welcomes, in this context, the EU’s commitment to develop guidelines on freedom of religion or belief in accordance with section 23 of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy; notes that these guidelines should be in line with EU Human Rights country strategies and include a checklist on the necessary freedoms pertaining to the right of freedom of religion or belief, in order to assess the situation in a given country, as well as a methodology to help identify infringements of

freedom of religion or belief; stresses the need for Parliament and civil society organisations to be involved in the preparation of these guidelines; encourages the EU to ensure coherence between the new guidelines and the priorities listed in EU human rights country strategies; stresses the importance of mainstreaming freedom of religion or belief in the EU's development and other external policies;

151. Urges the EU to respond proactively to the increased use of apostasy, blasphemy and anti-conversion laws and to the role they play in increasing religious intolerance and discrimination; emphasises that international law includes the right to have, adopt and change a religion or belief; invites the VP/HR and the EU institutions to take action against unacceptable practices by applying pressure on those third countries, with a particular focus on those EU partners that still carry out such practices, to ensure that they are eliminated; encourages the EU to speak out against the use by governments of such laws and to support the right of individuals to change religion, in particular in those countries where apostasy is punishable by death;
152. Stresses the importance of the protection of freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, including atheism and other forms of non-belief, under international human rights conventions, and insists that such freedom should not be undermined by the application of blasphemy laws used to oppress and persecute those of a differing religion or belief; underlines that while blasphemy laws are often promoted with the pretext of reducing social tensions, in reality they only contribute to an increase in such tensions and to the rise of intolerance, in particular towards religious minorities; recalls, in this regard, that in a number of countries the prohibition, confiscation and destruction of both places of worship and religious publications, and prohibition of the training of clergy, are still common practice; urges the EU institutions, in their contacts with the relevant governments, to counter such violations; calls for a firm stance against the instrumentalisation of blasphemy laws for the purpose of persecuting members of religious minorities;
153. Stresses the importance of mainstreaming freedom of religion or belief in EU development, conflict prevention, and counterterrorism policies; welcomes inclusive efforts of intercultural and interfaith dialogue and cooperation at various levels, involving community leaders, women, youth and ethnic minority representatives, in fostering societal cohesion and peaceful societies; welcomes the EU's commitment to presenting and promoting the right to freedom of religion or belief within international and regional fora including the UN, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and other regional mechanisms, and calls for a constructive dialogue with the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) on moving away from terminology related to combating defamation of religions; encourages the EU to continue tabling its yearly resolution on freedom of religion or belief at the UN General Assembly;
154. Welcomes the Joint Statement by the VP/HR, the OIC Secretary General, the Arab League Secretary General and the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security of 20 September 2012 reaffirming the respect for all religions and the fundamental importance of religious freedom and tolerance, while at the same time fully recognizing the importance of freedom of expression; condemns any advocacy

of religious hatred and violence, and deeply regrets the loss of human lives as result of the recent attacks on diplomatic missions; expresses its condolences to the families of the victims;

155. Notes that freedom of religion or belief is inter-related with issues pertaining to recognition, equal citizenship and equal enjoyment of rights in a given society; encourages the EU to work for equality and equal citizenship as a matter of priority for representatives of marginalised or discriminated groups in society; stresses, moreover, the importance of supporting initiatives and enabling funding for civil society and human rights defenders in their efforts to combat discrimination, intolerance and violence on the grounds of religion or belief;
156. Urges the EEAS to develop a permanent capacity within its structure to monitor and analyse the role of religion or belief in contemporary societies and international relations, and to mainstream the issue of freedom of religion or belief across the geographical and thematic directorates and units; encourages the EEAS to report to Parliament on an annual basis on progress on freedom of religion or belief in the world;
157. Stresses the importance of supporting initiatives of and enabling funding for civil society and human rights defenders in their efforts to combat discrimination, intolerance and violence on the grounds of religion or belief; believes that EIDHR Country-Based Support Schemes should prioritise funding for protecting and promoting freedom of religion or belief in countries where the EU country strategy has identified this right as a priority issue;

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158. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission; the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative on Human Rights, the European External Action Service, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the candidate countries, the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the governments of the countries and territories referred to in this resolution.