

# Foreign Affairs and Human Rights



**Dr Charles Tannock MEP**  
Foreign Affairs and Human Rights  
Spokesman

## Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament

Increasingly, UK foreign policy whether we like it or not has an EU dimension, especially when we are working through the UN structures and the G20 or involved in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations. The challenges we in Britain face are challenges that other European countries and our major economic partners globally face too – for example, fighting terrorism and international crime, managing migration flows, defending external borders, mitigating climate change, and solving environmental challenges, energy security, arms control, nuclear proliferation and managing international development aid. Gone are the days when diplomacy was just about state-to-state bilateral relations, we are now also agenda setting at a supranational and multilateral level. Today, foreign policy is a broad umbrella shaped by many interests that often coincide but sometimes conflict.

## Conservative Party's Foreign Policy Priorities:

- Committing to the transatlantic alliance
- Deepening of alliances beyond Europe and North America, particularly with friends in South Asia, the Gulf and Latin America
- Reforming older institutions such as the UN and making effective use of new ones such as G20
- Upholding our own values abroad

## Our work this year in the European Parliament

This year has seen an important number of developments in Foreign Affairs at the EU level:

### Ensuring financial accountability in the Union's external funding

The European Parliament plays an important role as a controller of the Union's budget. Moreover, the rules of all external financial instruments also have to be decided by agreement with the Parliament. This year marks an important year in external financing as in December 2011 the Commission published its legislative package of external financial instruments for the period 2014-2020. This new package of proposals represents an overhaul of external financing and includes; The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument

(ENPI), the Pre-Accession Assistance Instrument (IPA), the Instrument for Stability (IfS), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the Instrument for Cooperation with Industrialised Countries (ICI). Negotiations on these dossiers are currently underway and your Conservative MEPs are working to ensure that these financial instruments deliver value for money and attain measurable goals that they are intended to achieve, such as crucial economic development to stabilise countries that border with the EU and the encouragement of democratic governance in transitional countries, with appropriate conditionality regarding fighting corruption and upholding human rights and democracy.

### Overseeing the continuing development of the EEAS and the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy

Following the approval of the European External Action Service created by the Treaty of Lisbon which

Conservatives opposed, Charles has been engaging pragmatically with the service that has been put into operation, and also exercising democratic oversight over the service by questioning heads of delegation from Tunisia, Algeria and the African Union, among others, to ensure that only the most qualified staff are appointed as heads of delegations throughout the world and, once appointed, are carrying out sufficient progress in implementing union foreign policy



*Charles in Addis Ababa with HE Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia with whom he discussed human rights concerns in Ethiopia and the issue of neighbouring Somaliland independence*

effectively. Furthermore, your Conservative MEPs have continued their dialogue with the High Representative and Vice President (HR/VP) for Foreign Policy in order to ensure that EU foreign Policy is consistent with that of Union and British interests. For example, Charles Tannock has publicly discussed issues such as the resumption of Middle East Peace talks, the politically motivated incarceration of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Julia Timoshenko and whether the EU's foreign delegations are delivering value for money.

### **Conservative MEPs provide direction for Regional Strategies**

Throughout the world the EU continues to develop a regional approach to its foreign policy. This year Charles Tannock has been assigned as the Parliament's Rapporteur for assessing the EU's regional approach to the Horn of Africa. The Horn of Africa, comprised of 8 countries, faces a plethora of problems; civil war, famine, failure of unstable governments, organised crime and piracy, to name but a few. Such problems not only have a number of dire consequences for those countries but also for the wider world, such as stifling the economic development of the region as a whole, creating corridors across Africa for the smuggling of illegal goods and providing breeding grounds for terrorist networks. Furthermore global and British trade continues to be affected by Piracy activities emanating from the region, mitigation effects of which currently cost the international community an estimated £5 billion per year. As Rapporteur, Charles is responsible for providing the European Parliament's report which will assess the underlying causes of the region's problems and how they can be best addressed. Set for adoption by the entire Parliament towards the end of this year, the report will be sent to the Council in order to clearly communicate the Parliament's priorities when it comes to developing a regional approach for the Horn of Africa. Similarly Charles as Rapporteur for Montenegro which is now negotiating for EU membership means Charles has also taken a more regional approach and takes an interest in stabilising the Western Balkans, and has worked hard to resolving the name question for the Republic of Macedonia as well as monitoring Croatia's accession to the EU expected shortly.

### **Defending Human Rights**

Charles is also the Spokesman for Human Rights for the Conservatives in the European Parliament. Human Rights are at the very core of the EU's values and its work, and through his work in the Parliamentary Committees and Delegations as well as the drafting of numerous resolutions, speeches and articles, Charles has worked to defend human rights and promote democracy throughout the world. Just some of the issues on which Charles has worked include the defence and promotion of human rights in the emerging democracies of the Arab Spring, Human trafficking in Sinai, the defence of the rights of journalists around the world, the rights of the LGBT community, the



*Charles at the Northwood HQ of EU anti-piracy operation ATALANTA with David Campbell Bannerman MEP and operational Commanders*

rights of ethnic and religious minorities within Africa and the Middle East, and the ongoing fight for proper democracy and human rights in countries as diverse as China, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Burma and Iran.

### **Ensuring Trade agreements project British and European values worldwide**

Article 218 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ensures that the Parliament has to provide consent when association or trade agreements are made with countries throughout the world. Conservative MEPs scrutinise these agreements to ensure that they project British and European values such as respect for Human Rights and democratic principles. For example, the trade agreement reached with Peru and Colombia this year contains a number of important elements which help to secure the goals of the EU's external action. Article 1 of this agreement refers to respect for democratic principles, fundamental human rights and the principle of the rule of law as 'essential elements' of the agreement. Charles is very keen on EU Free Trade Agreements (FTA's) both with Latin American democracies but also supports the one being negotiated with India and eventually the USA as key policy objectives which will benefit the UK.

### **NATO PA**

Charles is also a First Vice Chairman of the European Parliament Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Through its work and activities, the Assembly increases awareness and understanding of the key issues affecting the security of the Euro-Atlantic area, and supports national parliamentary oversight over defence and security. The assembly more importantly strengthens the relationship and communication between the United States and its European allies. Charles is particularly keen to avoid duplication of EU CSDP and NATO efforts in new areas of overlap like cybersecurity, climate change, food security as well as traditional military missions like EU Atalanta and NATO Operation Shield both operating off the Horn of Africa. 🇪🇺 🇬🇧