



The European Union at the United Nations

“ *L'Union européenne et la Commission, nous restons très attachés au système multilatéral ce qui veut dire onusien. Nous appuyons des deux mains et deux pieds les réformes que le Secrétaire général a proposées pour ce qui concerne le fonctionnement des Nations Unies.*

President Juncker, 16 May 2018

Guided by the [EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy](#), the EU strives for a strong UN as the bedrock of a rules-based global order. Its commitment to effective multilateralism, with the UN at its core, is a central element of the EU's external action. This commitment is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty which provides that *“The Union ... shall promote multilateral solutions to common problems, in particular in the framework of the United Nations.” (Article 21-1 TEU) and that “The Union ... shall work for a high degree of cooperation in all fields of international relations, in order to (...) preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.” (Art. 21-2)*

The EU has been stepping up its engagement in multilateral institutions to ensure that common solutions can be found to achieve global ambitions and to tackle global challenges. On the vast majority of global governance issues, the EU works closely with the UN and in the UN. The United Nations is both a key EU partner and an indispensable global forum to coalesce around the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to promote peacebuilding and sustaining peace, to tackle crises and violent conflicts as well as to address climate change.

“ *The European Union is today the point of reference for all those that are investing in peace, multilateralism, free and fair trade, sustainable development, fight against climate change, human rights and democracy, social economy – in a rules-based global order.*

High Representative/ Vice-President Federica Mogherini, 11 May 2018

HOW DOES THE EU WORK AT THE UNITED NATIONS?

Cooperation between the EU and the UN system, including the UN Secretariat and the various UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, spans across all policy areas.

The UN General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN. The added value of the EU is to coordinate among its 28 Member States to present a unified position.

In 2011, the UN **General Assembly** adopted [Resolution A/65/276](#) upgrading the observer status allow the EU to present common positions, make interventions, present proposals and participate in the general debate each September. As an observer with enhanced status, enabling EU representatives to speak on behalf of the EU and its member states in the UN. Since then it is also the President of the European Council who delivers the EU statement in the General debate, and no longer the rotating Presidency, bringing EU representation in New York in line with Lisbon Treaty provisions. The EU has obtained a special “full participant” status in a number of important UN conferences.



The EU coordinates its voting within the UN General Assembly's six main committees and other bodies and agencies such as the Economic and Social Council. To this end, almost 800 coordination meetings have been held this year at the EU Delegation in New York to develop a common EU stance and speak with one voice. Article 34 of the Lisbon Treaty also stipulates that EU members on the UN Security Council must act in concert and foster the interests of the EU. In 2018, the EU has so far delivered 17 statements in the UN Security Council and 66 in other UN fora, including those at high-level events and meetings.

WHAT ARE THE EU'S PRIORITIES AT THE UNITED NATIONS?

From boosting EU-UN political partnership, reinforcing joint action on conflict prevention to a renewed partnership in development, EU-UN cooperation is both stronger and more important than ever. The ground-breaking trilateral African Union-EU-United Nations cooperation, launched at the 5th African Union-EU Summit in Abidjan, paved the way for enhanced cooperation not only on migration, but on the wider agenda.

For the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, the EU will focus on peace and conflict prevention, a common positive agenda with the promotion and protection of human rights at the heart of multilateralism, as well as an expanding global engagement on issues such as climate action, the environment, migration, counterterrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In the coming year, the EU and the UN will stand together to promote a rules-based global order grounded in international law, dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights. Together, the EU and the UN will continue to engage as a positive force for change.

Global Security Provider

The EU has been enhancing its capacity to act as a security provider, its strategic autonomy and ability to cooperate with partners. These goals are best served when we are not alone and in an international system based on rules and on multilateralism. In this context, the EU and the UN agreed to reinforce cooperation between missions and operations in the field. Women, Peace and Security has been identified as the first of eight new joint priorities to reinforce the EU-UN Strategic Partnership on Peace Operations and Crisis Management for 2019-2021.



The EU is fully supportive of the Women, Peace and Security agenda which it continued to implement domestically as well as externally. 2017 also marked the launch of the Spotlight Initiative, a new partnership of the EU and UN to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. As a founding member of the Champions of Youth group in the UN, the EU will continue its investment into youth and peacebuilding and accelerate the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda.

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Major contributor

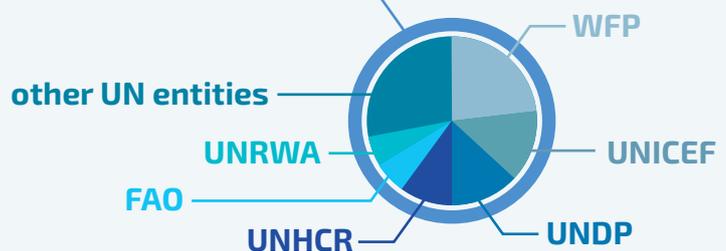
Collectively, the EU and its Member States are the single largest financial contributor to the UN system. The level of the **contributions of the 28 EU Member States amounts to almost 30% of the regular UN budget and more than 31% of the UN peacekeeping budget.** In addition, the EU and its Member States also provide about a quarter of all the voluntary contributions to UN funds and programmes. The European Commission alone contributed €2.96 billion to support UN external assistance programmes and projects in 2017.

In the 5-year period from 2014 to 2017, the EU committed **€10.83 billion** of the EU budget to the UN – out of which **23.52%** went to the WFP, **14.77%** went to UNICEF, **12.73%** to UNDP and **10.23%** to UNHCR, **6.8%** to FAO and **6.01%** to UNRWA – the UN Relief and Works agency for Palestine.

FUNDING COMMITMENTS WITH THE UN



€ 10.83 billion



UN Reform is moving ahead

The best way to preserve and reinforce the credibility of the UN system is making it more effective. The EU's priority is to uphold, strengthen and reform the UN and to empower the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to deliver on his reform proposals.

The EU welcomes the elaboration of the three mutually reinforcing UN reform tracks: peace and security, development, management. The EU will continue its political and diplomatic outreach to build a coalition in support of UN reform to accompany the start of implementation in 2019. The EU will continue to strive for clarity, transparency, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability as key principles guiding UN action.