

CONCORD PUBLIC STATEMENT

Time for a visionary EU global strategy to address the root causes of global challenges and promote sustainable development

In June this year the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, will present an *EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy* (the EU Global Strategy) to guide the EU's global actions amidst a rapidly-evolving global context. This strategy also comes at a time where Europe itself is facing a deep identity crisis, creating a temptation to promote 'quick fix' solutions endangering the EU's core values and international commitments. CONCORD therefore urges the drafting team to seize this opportunity to reinforce the importance of the European project, and to adopt a long-term vision rooted in human rights and the promotion of sustainable development within and outside of the EU.

CONCORD calls on the EU Global Strategy to:

Address the root causes of today's global challenges, especially inequality, through a gender and human rights-based approach, together with a human-centered understanding of security and development finance

- **A root-cause analysis is the only approach to durably address today's interconnected global challenges:** crisis management of symptoms (e.g. conflicts, forced displacement, migration) is not an option.
- **Rising inequality and power imbalances within and outside of Europe must be addressed as cruxes of today's challenges:** the EU Global Strategy must prioritise countries and vulnerable groups (especially women and girls) which have been left furthest behind; ensure at a minimum that its policies do not impact negatively on the ability of partner countries to address inequality in their contexts; and promote economic and social rights for all, in line with ILO conventions. Moreover, the EU Global Strategy must be fully aligned with the EU's new Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2016-2020.
- **People and planet must come first:** human rights, well-being and planetary boundaries must underpin the EU Global Strategy. A human-centered understanding of security, based on protecting people from daily causes of insecurity, must replace the narrow vision based on national interests and security of territory – in line with Art. 21 of the TEU and Art. 208 of the Lisbon Treaty. Similarly, a human-centered understanding of development focusing on fostering well-being and tackling the multiple dimensions of poverty must replace the current model of GDP growth.

Affirm the EU's commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and to ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD)

- **The objectives and principles of the 2030 Agenda must be explicitly endorsed:** given the universal and interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda – as such applicable to all EU Member States – the EU Global Strategy must integrate all the objectives and principles of the agenda (e.g. the four dimensions of sustainable development, the commitment to 'leave no one behind', gender equality).
- **Climate change must be mainstreamed:** the EU Global Strategy should cement the EU's ambition to tackle climate change and continued support for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- **PCSD must be ensured:** the EU Global Strategy must outline how the EU will carry forward PCSD given that the EU has accepted a binding obligation to be accountable for the impacts of its policies on the world's poorest (Art. 208 of the Lisbon Treaty). Trade and investments agreements merit particular attention, and the EU Global Strategy should shift away from the current exploitative model of GDP-based growth causing negative impacts on livelihoods and natural resources.

Address the deteriorating space in which civil society operates in many countries

- **Political and financial support for independent civil society:** shrinking space for independent civil society has been perceptible for some time, both outside and within Europe, and must be addressed. The EU Global Strategy should therefore commit the EU to fostering an empowered independent civil society, and to prioritising financial support for non-profit organisations.

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