

# Sheet 10

## THE LISBON TREATY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION'S EXTERNAL ACTION

### 1) PROGRESSING TOWARDS A UNIQUE EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Lisbon Treaty includes major innovations providing the Union with the **means to develop coherence and unity for its foreign policy**.

#### WITH THE LISBON TREATY

- The Lisbon Treaty creates the post of **High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy** (position occupied by Catherine Ashton) which merges the positions of High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Commissioner for External Relations.



He/She becomes one of the Commission's Vice-Presidents and also reports to the Council.

- His tasks comprise:
  - **representing the European Union abroad;**
  - **chairing the Foreign Affairs Council**, which brings together all of the European Union Foreign Ministers.
- He/She has a **European Diplomatic Service** at his disposal.



This fosters the **development of a common external policy** as well as the **coherence and unity** of the **European Union's external action**.

### 2) PROGRESSING TOWARDS AN INCREASE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION'S INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE

The present lack of legal status on the part of the European Union limits its ability to influence and its capacity to speak with one voice in the international arena.

#### WITH THE LISBON TREATY

It **provides the European Union with "legal status"**.



This will enable it to **increase the role it plays in the international arena** and to promote **its values and interests**, both with regard to foreign trade, development policy and humanitarian aid as well as the creation of international standards that regulate globalisation.

#### **Legal Status**

Legal status implies the ability to sign contracts, notably to be part of an international convention or to be a member of an international organisation.

### 3) PROGRESSING TOWARDS A EUROPEAN DEFENCE POLICY

The Lisbon Treaty provides **major progress** in terms of the "common security and defence policy" and heralds a vital step **towards the development of European defence**.

#### WITH THE LISBON TREATY

- It introduces the "**mutual defence clause**".



If one of the European Union Member States is attacked the others are obliged to provide it with help.

- It also introduces a "**solidarity clause**".



This means that the Union and each of its Members has to provide assistance by all possible means to a Member State affected by a human or natural catastrophe or by a terrorist attack.

- It also **extends the Union's potential in terms of the fight against terrorism, conflict prevention missions, post-conflict stabilisation missions**, etc.

- It introduces "**permanent structured cooperation**" open to all States who commit to **taking part in the main European military equipment programmes and to providing combat units that are available for immediate action** to the European Union.



These States are therefore prepared **to fulfil the most demanding military missions on behalf of the European Union** particularly in response to requests made by the United Nations.

- It confirms the existence of the **European Defence Agency** with a view to developing a real European arms policy and to co-ordinating work to equip the various national armed forces. This is a major innovation.



The Lisbon Treaty **extends the Union's field of activity to industrial and trade issues in the area of armament**.

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