

Workshop on the Future of the European External Action Service and EU Foreign Policy and Security Policy

On 24 March 2011 Chatham House and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation held the second of three workshops on the European External Action Service. The second meeting was held under the title: 'The EAS: Partnerships and Priorities for a new European Diplomacy'.

One of the main accomplishments of the EU's Lisbon Treaty was the decision to create a European External Action Service (EEAS). The EEAS was conceived in order to assist the EU to deliver a more comprehensive set of external policies that would draw upon the EU's multi-layered areas of competence and capability, to include development assistance, trade policy, and foreign and security policy. The Lisbon Treaty brings these competences together into one EU civil service under the leadership of Catherine Ashton, formerly the EU's Trade Commissioner.

The past year since the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty has been spent trying to develop the legal basis, working practises and staff structure for the EEAS.

This is the background upon which the second workshop on the future of the European External Action Service and EU Foreign and Security Policy took place. The four sessions 'The State of Play: The Emerging Shape on the EAS', 'The EAS and the EU's Strategic Partnerships', 'The EAS and the Changing European Neighbourhood' and 'Diplomatic Innovation in the EAS' framed the analysis and discussions on a number of key concerns. Amongst those were the competing competences of the EU institutions, the impact of strategic relationships and partner-

ships on the EU's neighbouring states, the challenging diplomatic environment in which EEAS operates, as well as Middle Eastern perceptions of EU foreign policy in the wake of the recent events in the Middle East and Northern Africa.

The meeting addressed central opportunities and concerns of the European External Action Service and the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. Contradictions of EEAS and the Foreign and Security Policy were discussed, and ideas of how to overcome some of the contradictions were raised. While the post of High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, supported by the structure of the EEAS, will help strengthen and unify the Union's external action, other provisions, such as the composition and status of the External Action Service, are still discussed.

On 3-4 May 2011, a third meeting on the future of the European External Action Service and EU Foreign and Security Policy will be held in Brussels and will conclude the workshop series. A joint paper displaying a summary of the meetings and concrete recommendations will be published in June 2011.

Impressum

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