

Directorate-General for the Presidency
Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments
Legislative Dialogue Unit

Lively interparliamentary debate on EU-UK relations after Brexit, the future of Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

AFET ICM, 2nd April 2019



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In keeping with its tradition of hosting colleagues from national Parliaments, the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) invited Members of EU national Parliaments to attend a half-day long interparliamentary committee meeting (ICM) on 2 April 2019 in the morning at the European Parliament in Brussels. The meeting was very well attended with 41 MEPs and 25 MPs from 19 national Parliaments from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland (both Chambers), Portugal, Romania (both Chambers), Slovenia, Spain and the UK.

The meeting, which was the last AFET ICM in this legislature, focussed on three important aspects of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP):

Following the opening remarks of Mr David McAllister, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, an exchange of views was held on the future of the CFSP, including a debate on the last AFET annual report on the CFSP. The main items discussed were the challenges the EU faces nowadays, the positions of Member States towards qualified majority voting in the Council on CFSP and the EU's need to focus on displaying a stronger leadership in terms of foreign security policy. Moreover, the interventions also focused on topics as how illegal immigration affects the different EU Member States, the importance of keeping the UK close to CFSP in the future and on the EU-NATO cooperation.

The second panel of the ICM was organized on the EU's future relations with the UK after Brexit, with the participation of EU Chief Negotiator, Mr Michel Barnier. He stated: "I trust we can complete these Brexit negotiations in a positive way, in order for the EU to square up to the numerous challenges that are becoming even more serious for us: climate change, the economy, technological warfare, migration and European defence."

In the third panel, the way forward for the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Enlargement Policy was debated with European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Mr Johannes Hahn. The main topic discussed were the EU accession of the Western Balkans in order to export stability and foster reforms. The Commissioner also emphasised the importance of the existence of rule of law at both international and national level.

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