

General Affairs Council conclusions on Common Strategies (26/27 February 2001)

Caption: Conclusions from the 2331st meeting of the General Affairs Council on 26 and 27 February 2001, concerning Common Strategies on how to improve the effectiveness of the Union's external action.

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**2331st Council meeting
- General Affairs -
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[...]

Common strategies – Council conclusions

The Council welcomed the report of the Secretary General/High Representative on Common Strategies as a valuable contribution to its considerations of how to improve the effectiveness of the Union's external action.

Common Strategies are an important instrument in promoting the Union's interests in a more coherent way. However their potential should be further developed and greater efforts are needed to improve their implementation.

With a view to making more efficient use of existing and future common strategies, the Council agreed that the following guidelines should apply:

- Common Strategies should be expected to bring clear added value, identified in advance, including the improvement of coherence and co-ordination of external policies, both bilateral and multilateral.
- Common Strategies should be more focussed on clearly identified issues and themes. They should cover specific, well defined and verifiable policy objectives. The SG/HR and the Commission should play central roles in this regard.
- Common Strategies should aim at enhancing the coherent use of all appropriate means and resources available to the Union, the Community and the Member States including subsequent implementation through common positions and joint actions adopted by QMV.
- Progress in the implementation of verifiable objectives should be measured regularly and necessary adjustments should be made. Within its overall responsibility, the Council will in particular ensure a close monitoring of the implementation, including an annual review in January, drawing on the contributions of the SG/HR and the Commission, both of whom should play an active role in the implementation.

The Council looks forward to further recommendations from the SG/HR and the Commission on how to improve the implementation of existing common strategies.

[...]