



WEB CONFERENCE

The EU in International Diplomatic Relations: Challenges and Opportunities

Kick-off Conference EUDIPLO Jean Monnet Network

www.eudiplo.eu

Friday 20 November 2020

Objectives of the conference

The main aim of the conference is to examine the internal and external constraints for the European Union (EU) to enhance its capacities as an international diplomatic actor. Although the Union delegations and the European External Action Service (EEAS) have celebrated their tenth anniversary, there are still a number of constraints for the EU in acting as a diplomatic actor and overcoming the barriers of the 'Westphalian' setup of international diplomatic relations.

These constraints may be due, on the one hand, to the current allocation of competences between the EU and its Member States in the field of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and/or to the reluctance of the Member States to let the European Commission and the EEAS function as diplomatic actors. On the other hand, the EU's institutional set up may also hinder the way the EU works in the field of international relations. There may be frictions and competition between the Council, the Commission and the High Representative over which institution or organ takes the lead in acting in the field of international diplomacy. At the same time, members of the European Parliament may carry out 'diplomatic activities' that run in parallel with that of the executive. At the same time, there are external constraints hampering the EU's ambitions. For example, given the '*sui generis*' nature of the EU, international law may pose limits to the organization when it seeks to exercise a diplomatic role in the international arena, in addition to those imposed by Member States. Furthermore, third States and international organizations may still display a certain unease toward dealing with the EU as a non-state body and may prefer to deal with individual Member States.

Despite these difficulties, it is possible to identify at least a couple of cases that demonstrate the ways in which the EU has successfully acted as a global and regional diplomatic actor, both in the bilateral and in the multilateral arenas. Apart from a critical appraisal the conference will assess the changes that affect the EU's activity in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy and examine means to strengthen the EU's diplomatic role.

Preliminary programme

09:30 - 09:45 | Welcome and presentation of EUDIPL0

Prof. Dr. **Ramses Wessel**, Professor of European Law, University of Groningen, Coordinator of EUDIPL0

Prof. Dr. **Sara Poli**, Professor of European Law, University of Pisa

09:45 - 10:05 | Keynote address

Ms. **Federica Mogherini**, Rector of the College of Europe, former High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission

10:05 - 11:30 | Panel 1: Overcoming Constraints to EU Diplomatic Actorness

Moderator: Prof. Dr. **Ramses Wessel**

Internal constraints: the horizontal relations between EU institutions

Dr. **Elena Lazarou**, European Parliament Research Service

Internal constraints in vertical relations with EU Member States

Dr. **Sanderijn Duquet**, KU Leuven / Permanent Representation of Belgium to NATO

International law constraints

Prof. **Eileen Denza**, University College London

Questions and Debate

11:45 - 13:15 | Panel 2: The EU as a Global and Regional Diplomatic Actor

Moderator: Prof. Dr. **Sara Poli**, Professor of EU law, University of Pisa

The EU as a global diplomatic actor: the case of Iran

Dr. **Riccardo Alcaro**, Istituto d'Affari Internazionali

Potential and limitations of the EU as mediator in the dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo

Prof. Dr. **Vladimir Medovic**, Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics and Engineering Management, Novi Sad

"What Role for the EU in the current Eastern Mediterranean crisis?"

Dr **Claudia Cinelli**, assistant Professor, Law Department, University of Pisa

Questions and Debate

Lunch Break

14:15 - 15:45 | Panel 3: The EU in Multilateral Diplomacy

Moderator: Prof. Dr. **Christine Kaddous**, Jean Monnet Chair *ad personam*, Université de Genève

Ambassador **Walter Stevens**, Head of the EU Delegation to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva

Ambassador **João Aguiar Machado**, Head of the EU Mission to the World Trade Organization in Geneva

Ambassador **Birgitte Markussen**, Head of the EU Delegation to the African Union

Questions and Debate

16:00 - 17:30 | Panel 4: The EU in Bilateral Diplomacy

Moderator: Prof. Dr. **Jan Wouters**, Jean Monnet Chair *ad personam* EU and Global Governance, Director of the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, KU Leuven

Ambassador **David O'Sullivan**, Former Head of the EU Delegation to the United States

Ambassador **Bart Ouvry**, Head of the EU Delegation to Mali

Ambassador **Stella Zervoudaki**, Former Head of the EU Delegation to Chile

Questions and Debate