

## MEETING WITH CHARLES TANNOCK MEP, UKREP, 12 FEBRUARY 2013

1. The Balance of Competences Foreign Policy Report team held a meeting with **Dr Charles Tannock MEP, Conservative Spokesman for Foreign Affairs, European Parliament**, at UKREP in Brussels on 12 February. This is a record of the discussion, agreed with Dr Tannock, to be submitted as evidence to Foreign Policy Report.
2. Key points:
  - **UK National Interest:** “Overall CFSP is in the national interest”. “In foreign policy terms it would be a historic mistake of the UK to leave the EU”.
  - **EU Interest:** “If the UK left the EU the EU would lose out very badly. The UK is connected internationally in a way that no other country is except France”.
  - **Where the EU adds value for the UK in foreign policy:**
    - Sanctions on e.g. Iran.
    - CSDP training missions e.g. training AMISOM troops in Uganda or EUTM. NATO was not interested in doing this. There was a useful role for the EU to play
    - CSDP EUNAVFOR ATALANTA anti-piracy mission had been successful. NAM country navies e.g. India had been pulled in which for NATO was more problematic
    - EDA. The UK needed access to other EU markets. There was no advantage in pulling out
    - European Arrest Warrant
    - EU Trade Agreements
    - EU enlargement – clearly a great success
    - External Energy Security. Transnational infrastructure projects could clearly be of huge benefit to help reduce EU and UK energy dependence.
    - The EU’s role in international organisations where the EU could speak with one voice.
  - **Current Division of Competence in Foreign Policy:** “in CFSP every sovereign nation has the right to act unilaterally when it wants to”. Unanimity in Foreign Policy made sense. Variable geometry might be better for economic policy. It generally made sense for the EU to speak on behalf of Member States in international organisations – other than the Security Council of which it was not a member – as the positions of EU Member States as liberal democracies will in most cases be largely the same on foreign policy questions.
  - **Institutional Architecture:** The EEAS and HR/VP were reactive, rather than pro-active. Costs should be monitored. There was debate about whether

the HR/VP should have a formal deputy. The current ad-hoc arrangements - particularly the use of the Presidency Foreign and Europe Ministers – were preferable. Parliament had acquired new powers under Lisbon over the EEAS budget and staff regulations which had led to it organising “confirmation hearings” for senior EEAS nominations. It also had new powers to vet trade agreements at an early stage. This was positive as it led to more transparency.