



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

PERMANENT SECRETARY

*Nº 54-13-59*

H.E. JONATHAN ALLEN  
AMBASSADOR  
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND  
SOFIA

*7 January, 2013*

**Re: Call for Evidence for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Foreign Policy Report**

Your Excellency,

Please let me express the gratitude of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria for introducing us to the Balance of Competences Review, conducted by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and to the scope of the Foreign Policy Report, in particular.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs examined with great interest the initiative, considering it an important step towards improvement of the functioning of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. We also deem the initiative useful in the light of the attempts to improve the coordination and interaction between the European External Action Service and the Member States.

The forthcoming 2013 EEAS Review should be viewed as an opportunity to jointly analyse the functioning of the EEAS where follow-up should be given, based on the lessons learnt during the first two and a half years. This process should clearly be guided by the Member States. The upcoming revision of the functioning and organization of the EEAS is of major importance to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and an opportunity for cooperation with the FCO in this important joint exercise. We are also very much looking forward to collaborating with the FCO on matters related to the 2013 process on EU defence capabilities development, launched by the European Council, and the reflection on a possible European Security Strategy update, oriented towards 2014.

Allow me to highlight some of the initial elements of the Bulgarian assessment on these topics:

The 2013 EEAS Review is to be directed towards the improvement of the effectiveness and functioning of the EEAS and towards better coordination of EU external affairs through a comprehensive approach, while at the same time national competences should be preserved. The leading role of the Member States in policy shaping and decision making at all stages of the CFSP/CSDP implementation process should be emphasised.

The Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs appreciates the institutional performance of the EEAS and the High Representative. We welcome the constant efforts towards transparency, predictability and equal treatment of all Member States. Mutual trust and confidence-building remain essential. We reckon that working methods under the Permanent Chairmanship are steadily improving. There is potential for maximising the relations with all the Strategic Partners. The good practices, exercised through the European Neighbourhood Policy and other relevant instruments, should be preserved. Enlargement, Defence, Emergency and Crisis Response, Humanitarian Aid and Development Policy should also remain high on the EU foreign policy agenda.

With regard to external coordination, we see potential for better coordination and further cooperation with relevant regional organisations. Enhanced external coordination is essential in the context of UN bodies, as well. The Republic of Bulgaria, in particular, aims at close EU coordination at the international fora.

Bulgaria commends the perspective of a long-term and consistent cooperation focusing on development of CSDP capabilities in the light of the process launched by the European Council for the year ahead. To this purpose, we believe that a defence capabilities review process should take place in 2013 .

In the context of the ongoing reflection on the ESS, oriented towards 2014, the objective of a possible ESS update should be to bring added value to the European Union's action as a global political player. It should reflect in a pragmatic way the new challenges and the lessons learnt and focus on how to put strategic priorities into practice. As we deem the regional approach in prioritising important, the expertise of different Member States should be better utilised. Matching ambition with adequate resources would be of key importance, therefore it would be crucial to further seek synergies among national, regional and multilateral efforts.

I would like to wish you success with your work regarding the Balance of Competences Review. We, in the Ministry, are looking forward to the final assessment of the Foreign Policy Report. We consider the initiative as an important,

but internal for the FCO, task. Despite not providing any formal contribution to the Report, the Ministry is open to further exchange of views, as well as cooperation on the priority topics of the Report, both on bilateral and EU level.

Sincerely yours,

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Ivan SIRAKOV  
Permanent Secretary

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