



# CFSP

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## An analysis of Serbia's alignment with the European Union's foreign policy declarations and measures in 2019: Semi-annual Review

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# **An analysis of Serbia's alignment with the European Union's foreign policy declarations and measures in 2019 – semi-annual report<sup>1</sup>**

In the period from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019, the European Union published a total of 48 foreign policy declarations with which partner countries were requested to comply. The EU requests harmonization from candidate countries, potential candidate countries, members of the European Economic Area that are outside of the EU (all EFTA countries besides Switzerland), and countries in the Eastern Partnership. The Republic of Serbia aligned with 29 of the 48 declarations, or 60%. Bearing in mind that Serbia's alignment percentage for all of 2018 was 52%, and only 44% for the first half of 2018, there is a trend of growth in Serbia's alignment. However, it should be kept in mind that Serbia actually did not align with more resolutions in the first half of 2019 (19 resolutions) than it did in 2018 (18 resolutions), because the EU issued 16 more declarations in total.

Of the declarations that Serbia did not align with, seven relate to Russia's involvement in the Ukrainian crisis, four are devoted to the dramatic situation in Venezuela, two concern Myanmar/Burma, and one declaration each is related to Iran, Belarus, Guatemala, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Syria, and sanctions against persons suspected of using chemical weapons.

Of the seven declarations about the situation in Ukraine, six concerned either the extension or expansion of already existing restrictive measures against entities and individuals from Russia and Ukraine. Finally, the latest declaration condemns Russia's annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, including last year's arrests of Ukrainian soldiers in the Kerch Strait, the construction of the Kerch Bridge, breaches of international law in violation of free passage through the Kerch Strait, and the militarization of the Crimean peninsula. The declaration also emphasizes the EU's refusal to recognize elections held by the Russian Federation in the Crimean peninsula and condemns the rampant violations of human rights, most egregiously affecting the Crimean Tatars, in the area.

Four of the remaining declarations (two concerning Myanmar, and one each regarding Syria and the use of chemical weapons) are indirectly related to Russia.

The Myanmar/Burma declarations extended restrictive measures, including the restriction of arms exports and the prohibition of military cooperation, in connection with the situation in the Rakhine State and the violence against members of the Rohingya Muslim minority that began in August 2017. As we have concluded in previous reports, the most likely explanation for Serbia's non-compliance with these declarations is the support provided by Russia, China and other countries to the regime at the end of 2017. This support culminated in their opposition to the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Rohingya initiated by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The declaration on Syria, with which Serbia did not comply, explicitly condemns the actions of the Syrian Army in Idlib and East Asia, which were supported by Russia and resulted in the destruction of camps, schools and medical institutions previously established for IDPs, which caused more than 230 dead and created 330,000 refugees. It is important to note that Serbia aligned itself with the other two declarations on the issue, which concern the extension of already existing restrictive measures towards Syria.

The declaration on the use of chemical weapons extends the list of persons suspected of use of such weapons and subject to restrictive measures, in accordance with the decision of the

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<sup>1</sup>) The analysis covers all EU foreign policy declarations seeking the alignment of third countries, made publicly available on EU Council's webpage [consilium.europa.eu](http://consilium.europa.eu).

EU Council 2018/1544 in October of last year. With this declaration, the EU began to apply restrictive measures against Syrian citizens and the Center for Scientific Research in Damascus, as well as against four Russian nationals who were designated as perpetrators or organizers of the attack on March 4, 2018 in Salisbury, Great Britain.

Other instances of Serbia's nonalignment might be related to the issue of Kosovo's independence. Both Guatemala and Iran do not recognize the independence of Kosovo. Serbia failed to align with a declaration regarding Iran that extends restrictive measures that were introduced in 2011, with which Serbia also did not agree in 2011. Serbia also did not align with a declaration concerning the rule of law and human rights violations in Guatemala. However, Serbia joined a declaration condemning Guatemala's unilateral withdrawal from the UN International Compact of 2006, which established the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), an independent UN body to provide support to the public prosecutor's office and police for the investigation of sensitive cases.

Interestingly, Serbia did not align with a declaration extending restrictive measures towards Belarus that were first introduced in 2012, with which Serbia initially agreed. This is a clear departure from the previously established practice. Serbia's decision is probably related to Belarus's refusal to recognize the independence of Kosovo, but also to military cooperation with the country, which plans to deliver several MiG29 combat aircraft to Serbia.

The final declaration that Serbia did not align with extends the 2011 restrictive measures against Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbia did not initially agree with these measures, in accordance with its previous practice to disagree with declarations and measures concerning the conflict in former Yugoslavia. This declaration, however, only established the system for which restrictive measures would be implemented. The list of persons and entities receiving restrictive measures (which according to the EU would destroy the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina and undermine the Dayton Peace Agreement) has never been published.

As can be seen from the above examples, in the vast majority of cases, Serbia did not comply with declarations aimed at the entities and/or citizens of countries that did not recognize Kosovo. It should be noted, however, that by accepting the EU accession negotiating framework and, therefore, the content of Chapter 35, Serbia committed itself to normalizing relations with Pristina. The final result of this process, a binding legal agreement on normalization, should solve the challenges that Serbia is facing and open the way to EU membership. Nonetheless, Serbia believes that this does not prevent foreign policy actions aimed at preventing further recognition of Kosovo's independence, the abrogation of some recognitions, and the prevention of Pristina's entry into international organizations such as UNESCO and Interpol.

Finally, it should be noted that during this period, Serbia has aligned itself with EU declarations that had proven problematic in past years, such as declarations related to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zimbabwe.

## Alignment of other states with the European Union's foreign policy declarations and measures in the first half of 2019

In this first half of 2019, Serbia is much less aligned with EU declarations than its fellow candidate countries Montenegro, North Macedonia and Albania. Only Bosnia and Herzegovina has a slightly lower percentage. The same trend holds true with countries of the European Economic Area - Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, the last two of which have recorded a lower decline in compliance than in the previous year. From the countries of the Eastern Partnership, only Moldova has a higher percentage of compliance than Serbia.

<b>State</b>	<b>Alignment Percentage</b>
Serbia	60%
North Macedonia	83%
Montenegro	100%
Iceland	92%
Albania	100%
Bosnia and Hercegovina	55%
Turkey	20%
Lichtenstein	75%
Norway	79%
Moldova	77%
Armenia	42%
Georgia	52%
Ukraine	60%
Azerbaijan	0%

ANEX

**LIST OF THE EU'S FOREIGN POLICY DECLARATIONS  
IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2019**

**Alignment with the EU's foreign policy declarations and measures**

No	Name of declaration	date	Ser.	Mac.	Mont.	Icel.	Alb.	B&H	Lich.	Nor.	Mold.	Arm.	Geor.	Ukra.	Azer.	Turkey
1	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the new mandate of President Maduro	01.10.2019	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the unilateral decision by the Government of Guatemala to withdraw from the CICIG Agreement with the United Nations	01.11.2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
3	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on latest developments in Venezuela	01.23.2019	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
4	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the situation in Venezuela	01.26.2019	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
5	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain third countries with Council Decision concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine	02.06.2019	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
6	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries with Council Decision concerning restrictive measures against Myanmar/Burma	02.07.2019	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
7	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries with Council Decision concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine	02.12.2019	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No









<b>33</b>	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Egypt	04.16.2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>34</b>	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Ukraine	04.17.2019	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>35</b>	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine	04.17.2019	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>36</b>	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine	04.17.2019	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>37</b>	Declaration by the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the European Union on Sudan	04.17.2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
<b>38</b>	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	04.25.2019	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>39</b>	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the latest developments in Venezuela	04.30.2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>40</b>	Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the full activation of the Helms-Burton (LIBERTAD) Act by the United States	05.02.2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
<b>41</b>	Declaration by the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the European Union on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day, 3 May 2019	05.02.2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes



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