A human rights manifesto for the European Union

The respect for human rights and the rule of law is at the heart of the European Union’s identity and the values it stands for. The Union shall ensure that its actions and policies respect these values, and pursue actions and policies that contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights in the world.

1. Respect the dignity and the rights of all persons on the territory of the Union, including asylum seekers.

2. Promote the respect of human rights by governments of third countries.

3. Strengthen the controls on arms exports from the territory of the European Union.

4. Create effective and democratic structures which reflect the priority given to the protection of human rights.

5. Encourage commercial firms based on the territory of the European Union to promote human rights.

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The European Commision adopted the Amsterdam Treaty on 7 February 1997. The Treaty entered into force on 1 May 1998. The Amsterdam Treaty, which entered into force in 1998, considerably modified Chapter IV of the Maastricht Treaty, which contains the principles of the rule of law and collective security. It clearly states that EU Member States shall act in union in all the areas of Union policies and in accordance with the objectives of the Union.