

The Foreign and Security Policy Working Group's proposal for a foreign and security policy guideline

Finland will strengthen its position in the weakened security situation.

Foreign and security policy aims to strengthen Finland's international position, to secure Finland's independence and regional integrity as well as to improve the security and welfare of people in Finland. Taking note of global interdependencies, Finland will promote international stability, peace, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and equality.

The Government takes into account that the security situation in Europe and the Baltic Sea region has deteriorated, particularly as a result of the Ukraine crisis. Finland will pursue an active foreign policy, strengthen the national defence capability and deepen international security and defence policy cooperation.

The Nordic countries, the European Union – also as a security community, NATO partnership, the OSCE and the UN form the framework for Finland's international cooperation. In addition, Finland will maintain good bilateral relations with other countries.

The Government will contribute to the security and stability of the Nordic region and the Baltic Sea region and strengthen Nordic cooperation. Defence cooperation with Sweden will be intensified. Estonia and the other Baltic States are important partners for Finland both in the EU and bilaterally.

Finland will be active in making effective use of the Arctic region and in Arctic cooperation. In all activities in the Arctic region, the requirements set by sustainable development will be taken into consideration.

The improvement of relations between Russia and the EU would reinforce the security and economy of Europe as a whole. This cooperation must be based on respect for international law and international commitments.

Russia is an important neighbour for Finland. Finland complies with the European Union's common positions on Russia and also maintains diverse bilateral relations.

The Government will strengthen extensive trans-Atlantic cooperation at both bilateral and EU levels.

Finland preserves its national leeway in its foreign and security policy decisions.

Finland is a militarily non-allied state which is engaged in a practical partnership with NATO and it maintains the option to seek NATO membership.

The Government will prepare a Report on Finnish Security and Defence Policy and, in connection with its preparation, assess the effects of Finland's possible NATO membership. In addition, it will prepare a defence report defining defence policy guidelines for the maintenance, development and exercise of defence capability.

Finland's defence is based on general conscription and defence of the entire territory of the nation. Finland will ensure a credible defence in all circumstances. Finland will uphold its national technological know-how related to a broad spectrum of key military capabilities, sufficient security of supply and the defence industry. The Government will raise the defence appropriations in accordance with the proposal of the parliamentary working group report on long-term defence challenges, published in 2014 (*Puolustuksen pitkän aikavälin haasteet*). The Government will decide on the replacement of the Navy's battle vessel capability and launch a project to replace the capability of Hornet aircraft.

The Government will make sure that a sufficient number of military refresher courses are organised. In addition, the preconditions for voluntary exercises and reservists' independent training will be secured.

The Government will specify legislation related to defence cooperation and international assistance so that it meets the needs of international cooperation.

Growing risks and new threats demand a new kind of preparedness and contingency planning. The Government will strengthen the comprehensive concept of security nationally, in the EU and in international cooperation. This applies, in particular, to new and large-scale threats, such as the defence against hybrid attacks, cyber attacks and terrorism. The Government will strengthen the internal foundations of external security. The Government will propose a statutory base for foreign intelligence and telecommunications intelligence. It will also draft more detailed legislation on the acquisition of land areas and properties significant from the point of view of comprehensive security as well as on dual nationality. In connection with that preparation, attention will be paid to the materialisation of fundamental and human rights.

Finland will continue active participation in international crisis management. The Government will stress the importance of coordination of military and civilian crisis management, development cooperation, humanitarian aid and mediation.

Finland will bear global responsibility and strengthen its security by promoting – in cooperation with international partners – sustainable development, peacebuilding and the status of women and girls in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1325. In all cooperation, the Government will emphasise human rights, democracy and good governance. In its international activities, the Government will pay special attention to the prevention of serious threats to humankind, such as climate change, poverty and shortage of food, water and energy.

In Finland's development policy, the Government will place greater emphasis on strengthening developing countries' own business activity and tax bases. The Government will take steps to improve effectiveness, productivity and measurability of development cooperation. In the longer term, the aim is to raise, in accordance with the UN goals, the level of Finland's development cooperation contribution to 0.7% of gross national income, even though savings will be directed at development funding during the term of government.

The Government will pay attention to the further development of external economic relations and, in international cooperation, promote an open, rules-based free trade and global economy. Strengthening of the WTO's operations and development of free trade with the EU's transatlantic and Asian partners are key priorities. In external economic relations, the emphasis will be on the promotion of exports. Particular focus will be placed on the internationalisation of small and medium-sized companies and measures aimed at attracting investment to Finland, for example by promoting Team Finland services.

The Foreign Service will direct its resources specifically to countries of increasing political or economic importance for Finland. The network of diplomatic missions abroad will remain important for Finland.