

Declaration on strengthening the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy

Security concerns both in our neighborhood and at home have grown significantly. The Union is facing growing instability in our Eastern and Southern neighborhood, terrorism and migration pressures. Efforts to **strengthen defence co-operation within the European Union** must be stepped up. This calls for a common political will of the EU member states.

Finland and France have demonstrated commitment to **EU crisis management** and encourage more solidarity and burden-sharing, through considering broader use of common funding and capabilities for operations.

The EU's Common Security and Defence Policy should also contribute to protecting Europe and Europeans. Defence, together with other aspects of security, in particular internal ones, have the potential to become **drivers of European integration**. Defence cooperation is in the interest of EU citizens, nurtures a culture of trust and makes financial sense. It is also an important way to build the capabilities the EU needs as a credible external actor. Following the terrorist attacks in Paris, the EU was decisive with firm response and solidarity against aggression after the activation of the mutual assistance clause of the Treaty of Lisbon by France.

EU has constantly underlined that security is a precondition for development in partner countries. The Commission and the External Action Service should rapidly deliver on **capacity-building in support of security and development (CBSD)**, including through more flexible interpretation of the Treaties and setting up a dedicated financing instrument in the next multi-annual financial framework. This would be an important step towards maximizing the effectiveness of the EU's external action.

EU should strive to maintain a strong, competitive and innovative European defence technological and industrial base. Prime contractors and SMEs will both benefit from integrated supply chains and improved cross-border market access. In this respect European Commission, through its Defence Action Plan to be published by the end of 2016, should improve coherence of defence cooperation. Defence should be **better connected to other EU policies** such as internal market, industry or space.

EU can bring added value in defence research. Appropriate funding should be devoted to **the Preparatory Action on CSDP-related research**.

A comprehensive **EU-wide security of supply regime** is needed to support the resilience of the Member States, ensure competitiveness of the defence industry and facilitate the creation of internal market for defence and develop European strategic autonomy.

While NATO remains the cornerstone of collective defence, the EU's role as a security and defence provider both within Europe and abroad needs to be reinforced, including through a more strategic approach to its **relations with NATO**. The European Council and the Warsaw Summit should create political momentum to move forward with a joint declaration. Cooperation should be developed in the areas of maritime security, supporting partners in training and capacity building, exercises and hybrid threats.

Hybrid threats have become permanent and troubling. More must be done to build resilience in our societies. While the Member States are the first responders, the EU has a robust toolbox in support of improving awareness, building resilience as well as preventing and responding to crisis. EU should strengthen its **efforts to counter hybrid threats**. The establishment of a Centre of Excellence for countering hybrid threats could support both EU and its member states, and enhance EU-NATO cooperation as called for in the Council Conclusions of 18 April 2016.

Achieving the abovementioned goals will require both sufficient investment in defence by the Member States and **more systematic defence cooperation** within the EU. The Member States, who own the military capabilities, should strive to better coordinate their defence plans and budgets, starting from national defence white papers. In this context, creation of “a European Semester for Defence” could be considered. The Union should explore further measures to incentivize defence cooperation.

Following the finalization of the EU global strategy and with a view to its full operationalization, the European Council should provide guidance for a more effective and capable military dimension of the European Union.