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NOTE

From: High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy,
Vice-President of the European Commission, and Head of the European
Defence Agency

On: 14 November 2016

To: Council

Subject: Implementation Plan on Security and Defence

Delegations will find attached the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence as a proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice President of the European Commission, and Head of the European Defence Agency.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ON SECURITY AND DEFENCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Implementation Plan sets out proposals to implement the EU Global Strategy (EUGS) in the area of security and defence. It is presented by the HRVP / Head of the Agency for consideration and decision at the FAC in November and the European Council in December 2016.

It forms part of a wider package including the Commission's European Defence Action Plan and the follow-up of the Joint Declaration signed in Warsaw by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO. It is also closely connected to other work strands to implement the EUGS, in line with the FAC Conclusions of 17 October 2016.

A New Level of Ambition

The proposed new Level of Ambition, for consideration and decision by the Council, aims to develop a stronger Union in security and defence, which is able to tackle today's threats and challenges more effectively, with the right capabilities, tools and structures to deliver more security for its citizens.

As set out in the EUGS, the EU must contribute to: (a) responding to external conflicts and crises, (b) building the capacities of partners, and (c) protecting the Union and its citizens. The proposed Level of Ambition outlines the goals that the EU and its Member States set out to achieve, including through CSDP and using the full potential of the EU Treaty, in order to contribute to these strategic priorities from a security and defence perspective. While respecting the autonomy of the EU's decision-making processes, the EU will continue to work closely with its partners, particularly with the United Nations and NATO.

- *Responding to external conflicts and crises* covers the full range of CSDP tasks in civilian and military crisis management. The aim is to enhance CSDP’s awareness and responsiveness in all phases of the conflict cycle, including conflict prevention, in order to promote peace and security within a rules-based global order. Evolutions in the security and defence environment, however, require us to reassess the goals of possible CSDP military operations and civilian missions with executive mandates in full respect of international law, and as part of an EU integrated approach to conflicts and crises.

- *Capacity building of partners* is the objective of CSDP missions/operations with tasks in training, advice and/or mentoring within the security sector. The aim is to strengthen CSDP’s ability to contribute more systematically to the resilience and stabilisation of partner countries recovering from or threatened by conflict or instability, in synergy with other EU instruments and actors, notably along the nexus of security and development. CSDP can also be used to provide expertise and assistance to strengthen partners’ resilience and counter hybrid threats.

- *Protecting the Union and its citizens* covers the contribution that EU and its Member States can make from a security and defence perspective, notably through CSDP in line with the Treaty, to tackle challenges and threats that have an impact on the security of the Union and its citizens, along the nexus of internal and external security. This priority will be pursued in cooperation with Freedom, Security and Justice (FSJ) actors. While CSDP missions and operations are deployed outside the Union, the EU can contribute from a security and defence perspective to strengthening the protection and resilience of its networks and critical infrastructure; the security of its external borders as well as building partners’ capacities to manage their borders; civil protection and disaster response; ensuring stable access to and use of the global commons, including the high seas and space; countering hybrid threats; cyber security; preventing and countering terrorism and radicalisation; combatting people smuggling and trafficking; building capacities to manage irregular migration flows; promoting compliance with non-proliferation regimes and countering arms trafficking and organised crime. Existing EU policies in these areas should be taken forward in a comprehensive manner.

The importance of Mutual Assistance and/or Solidarity in line with Article 42.7 TEU and Article 222 TFEU respectively is highlighted in this context as well. NATO remains the foundation for the collective defence for those States which are members of it. The specific character of the security and defence policy of all EU Member States will be fully respected.

These three priorities are mutually reinforcing. A single CSDP mission or operation in fact can potentially contribute to all three priorities: they constitute a coherent whole.

In carrying forward its actions, the EU will work with partners and actively enhance its partnerships, while strengthening its own ability to take responsibility and share the burden with our partners in security and defence. Europe's strategic autonomy entails the ability to act and cooperate with international and regional partners wherever possible, while being able to operate autonomously when and where necessary. This adds to the EU's credibility vis-à-vis partners. There is no contradiction between the two. Member States have a 'single set of forces' which they can use nationally or in multilateral frameworks. The development of Member States' capabilities through CSDP and using EU instruments will thus also help to strengthen capabilities potentially available to the United Nations and NATO.

Implementing the Level of Ambition

Concrete actions are necessary to implement the Level of Ambition together with the Member States in a credible way. Proposals are notably made on:

- identifying the related capability development priorities:
1. EEAS to make proposals for Member States' consideration on revisiting the Feira priority areas for civilian missions in light of the profoundly changed security environment.
 2. EEAS to make proposals on enhancing the responsiveness of civilian crisis management, building on ongoing work in this area including on the list of generic civilian CSDP tasks and identifying requirements needed.

3. Member States to agree to take forward work in the European Defence Agency (EDA) to specify and complement capability priorities based on the Level of Ambition and the EUGS, as part of the revision process of the Capability Development Plan (CDP).
4. Member States to agree to review the military requirements stemming from the EUGS and the Level of Ambition, in line with agreed procedures under the control of the Political and Security Committee as well as the EU Military Committee, as a contribution to the CDP.
 - *deepening defence cooperation and delivering the required capabilities together:*
5. Member States to invite the HRVP / Head of the Agency to present proposals on detailed scope, modalities and content to Ministers in spring 2017 with a view of setting up the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence in concrete terms.
6. EDA with its participating Member States to develop further proposals concerning output-oriented capability development, Key Strategic Activities, R&T, more structured cooperation, critical enablers, and Security of Supply, and prepare for their implementation.
 - *adjusting the EU's structures for situational awareness, planning and conduct, as well as the rapid response toolbox:*
7. Member States to agree to review the structures and capabilities available for the planning and conduct of CSDP missions and operations, in view of enhancing civ/mil synergies, ensuring more seamless planning and conduct, and improving on current shortcomings. As a short term objective, address the gap at the strategic-level for the conduct of non-executive military CSDP missions from within EEAS structures.
8. EEAS to take stock of capabilities at hand in INTCEN and EUMS INT and develop short-, mid- and long-term proposals for Member States' consideration for upgrading such capabilities in line with the level of ambition. Reinforce links between INTCEN/EUMS INT with other EU and Member States' entities providing situational awareness in order to further support the development of a European hub for strategic information, early warning and comprehensive analysis.

9. Member States to consider relevant multinational structures or initiatives in the area of security and defence in view of reinforcing cooperation with the EU or deepening existing frameworks of cooperation. In particular, to consider developing a concept to make better use of existing national or multinational deployable headquarters made available to the EU, on a rotational basis, with a focus on training, mentoring and advising.
10. EEAS to present proposals on strengthening the relevance, usability and deployability of the EU's Rapid Response toolbox, including the EU Battlegroups and their modularity, particularly to reinforce their modularity, preparation and effective financing.
 - *increasing financial solidarity and flexibility, as well as ensuing a more seamless range of funding options as part of an integrated approach:*
11. Member States to agree to consider financing in a comprehensive manner, reinforcing solidarity, effectiveness and flexibility to underpin the Level of Ambition and enhance CSDP responsiveness; to explore all funding options as well as to provide political guidance in view of an ambitious review of the Athena mechanism in 2017.
 - *making full use of the Treaty potential: Permanent Structured Cooperation:*
12. Member States to agree to explore the potential of a single and inclusive PESCO based on the willingness of Member States to strengthen CSDP by undertaking concrete commitments. If so requested, the HRVP can provide elements and options for reflection.
 - *actively taking forward CSDP partnerships:*
13. Take forward CSDP partnerships and EEAS to present options for a more strategic approach to CSDP partnership cooperation with partner countries which share EU values and are willing and able contribute to CSDP missions and operations, including considering possibilities to strengthen their resilience.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Global Strategy on EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS) provides a shared vision on the EU's role in the world and puts forward common actions. Based on the EUGS' definition of EU interests, principles and priorities, this Implementation Plan on Security and Defence responds to the call for the EU to become increasingly credible in security and defence, especially through the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).
2. This Implementation Plan is presented by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice President of the European Commission and Head of the European Defence Agency. It is based on Member States' inputs and contributions, fully acknowledging Member States' competences in security and defence. In line with the Council Conclusions on the EUGS follow-up of 17 October, it has been prepared for consideration and decision at the Foreign Affairs Council (including in its Defence composition) in November 2016 and the European Council in December 2016.
3. This Implementation Plan is part of wider package which includes:
 - The Commission's forthcoming European Defence Action Plan, which will seek to support Europe's defence industry and capability development, also as a follow-up to the EUGS. As stated by the Council, it should propose instruments in support of priorities to be agreed. This should contribute to ensuring that the European defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB) can fully meet Europe's current and future security needs and, in that respect, enhance its strategic autonomy and strengthen its ability to act with partners. The Council has recalled that these efforts should be inclusive with equal opportunities for defence industry in the EU, balanced and in full compliance with EU law.

- The work taken forward in parallel on the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed in Warsaw in July 2016 by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO, in view of presenting concrete options for implementation to the respective Councils in December 2016, in full respect of the decision-making autonomy of both organisations, based on the principle of inclusiveness and without prejudice to the specific character of the security and defence policy of all EU Member States.¹

4. This Implementation Plan is also closely connected to other ongoing work strands to implement the EUGS, in line with the Council Conclusions of 17 October, such as (1) building resilience and developing an integrated approach to conflicts and crises; (2) better coordination along the internal-external nexus in areas such as migration, as well as hybrid threats, counterterrorism and countering violent extremism (CT/CVE); (3) the review of existing sectoral strategies; and (4) stepping up public diplomacy efforts.

¹ In all areas identified in the Joint Declaration: 1) countering hybrid threats, 2) operational cooperation including at sea and on migration, 3) cyber security and defence, 4) defence capabilities, 5) defence industry and research, 6) exercises, 7) supporting Eastern and Southern partners' capacity building efforts.

LEVEL OF AMBITION

5. The EU's Level of Ambition should outline the goals that the EU and its Member States set out to achieve, including through CSDP and using the full potential of the EU Treaty, in order to implement the EUGS in the area of security and defence. This is for the Council to decide upon. As set out in the EUGS, the EU must contribute to: (a) responding to external conflicts and crises, (b) building the capacities of partners, and (c) protecting the Union and its citizens. In fulfilling these three mutually reinforcing tasks, we should continue to work closely with our partners, particularly with the United Nations and NATO, while respecting the autonomy of the EU's decision-making processes.
- a) Responding to external conflicts and crises covers the full range of CSDP tasks in civilian and military crisis management. The aim is to enhance CSDP's responsiveness in all phases of the conflict cycle, including conflict prevention, in order to promote peace and security within a rules-based global order underpinned by the United Nations. The EU's ambition remains to be able to respond with rapid and decisive action through the whole spectrum of crisis management tasks covered by Article 43 of the TEU.
 - b) The capacity building of partners is the objective of CSDP missions/operations with tasks in training, advice and/or mentoring within the security sector. The aim is to strengthen CSDP's ability to contribute more systematically to the resilience of partner countries recovering from or threatened by conflict or instability, in synergy with other EU instruments and actors, notably along the nexus of security and development. CSDP can also be used to provide expertise and assistance to strengthen partners' resilience and counter hybrid threats. This could include the areas of strategic communication, cyber security and border security. Promoting respect for international law, in particular international humanitarian and human rights law, as well as gender sensitivity, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions, protection of civilians, and principles of democracy and good governance is integral to these efforts.

c) Protecting the Union and its citizens covers the contribution that the EU and its Member States can make from a security and defence perspective, notably through CSDP in line with the Treaty, to tackle challenges and threats that have an impact on the security of the Union and its citizens, along the nexus of internal and external security. This priority will be pursued in cooperation with Freedom, Security and Justice (FSJ) actors. While CSDP missions and operations are deployed outside the Union, the EU can contribute from a security and defence perspective to strengthening the protection and resilience of its networks and critical infrastructure; the security of its external borders as well as building partners' capacities to manage their borders; civil protection and disaster response; ensuring stable access to and use of the global commons, including the high seas and space; countering hybrid threats; cyber security; preventing and countering terrorism and radicalisation; combatting people smuggling and trafficking; building capacities to manage irregular migration flows; promoting compliance with non-proliferation regimes and countering arms trafficking and organised crime. Existing EU policies in these areas should be taken forward in a comprehensive manner. The importance of Mutual Assistance and/or Solidarity in line with Article 42.7 TEU and Article 222 TFEU respectively is highlighted in this context as well. NATO remains the foundation for the collective defence for those States which are members of it. The specific character of the security and defence policy of all EU Member States will be fully respected.

6. These priorities are mutually reinforcing. CSDP missions or operations outside the EU's borders can, directly or indirectly, support Europe's own security needs by fostering human security, tackling root causes of conflict and thus resolving crises and their spill-over effects into the Union. Capacity building can contribute to the transition strategy of executive operations aimed at crisis response. A single CSDP mission or operation in fact can potentially contribute to all three priorities: they constitute a coherent whole.

7. The EU has a unique range of tools and instruments which can contribute to the three strategic priorities. A more joined-up approach is the overall objective of the wider EUGS follow-up. This Level of Ambition focuses on the security and defence dimensions of such follow-up, and as such impacts on (1) the effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP, (2) capability development and European defence cooperation, (3) a stronger and more competitive EDTIB, which also contributes to strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy.

Responding to external conflicts and crises

8. Enhancing EU's responsiveness in all phases of the conflict cycle is a strategic priority. As a security provider, the EU must have a wide reach, while focusing on addressing conflicts, crises and instability in its surrounding regions through preventive action, mediation, crisis response, stabilisation operations and peacebuilding. The EU's ambition remains to be able to respond with rapid and decisive action through the whole spectrum of crisis management tasks covered by Article 43 the TEU.
9. Preventing conflicts from erupting or escalating remains of paramount importance. We need to improve our ability to respond early and effectively to conflicts and crises. To support anticipation and situational awareness, enhanced civil/military intelligence and strategic foresight is required. As it has done in the past, EU can contribute to conflict prevention by using a CSDP civilian mission or military operation to assist on Security Sector Reform (SSR) and/or providing security and preventing atrocity crimes in fragile settings such as in the context of elections, de-escalation and mediation efforts. Moreover, civilian or military experts can reinforce the EU Delegation's capacity of analysis and interaction in a state where there are risks of violence, instability or hybrid threats.

10. Evolutions in the security and defence environment require us to reassess the goals of possible CSDP military operations and civilian missions with executive mandates in full respect of international law, and as part of an EU integrated approach to conflicts and crises. These may include:
- supporting conditions for achieving and implementing peace agreements and ceasefire arrangements, and/or rapidly providing EU bridging operations for the deployment of wider UN peacekeeping missions, including in non-permissive environments;
 - temporarily substituting or reinforcing domestic civilian security, law enforcement or rule of law, in case of breakdown of normal state functions;
 - projecting stability in order to re-establish security in a degrading humanitarian situation, by protecting civilians, denying a terrorist organisation or armed group a foothold in a fragile country, or creating a safe environment in which a country can recover from war and destabilisation;
 - contributing to maritime security/surveillance worldwide but most immediately in areas relevant to Europe in the context of specific security needs, including with aerial and space capabilities;
 - providing rapid support to national or UN actors involved in addressing massive health pandemics or the fall-out of national disasters, including situations of public disorder;
 - supporting the evacuation of European citizens if required with military means.

Building capacities of partners

11. Another strategic priority is to enhance the resilience of partner countries by contributing to capacity building and reform of their security and defence sectors. Building on experience to date, CSDP should be prepared to contribute more systematically to such tasks, as part of wider EU country and regional strategies and along the nexus between security and development. In light of the changing security environment, CSDP can also be used to provide expertise and assistance to strengthen partners' resilience and counter hybrid threats, including in the areas of strategic communication, cyber security and border security.

Promoting respect for international law, in particular humanitarian and human rights law, gender perspectives, UNSCR 1325, and principles of democracy and good governance is integral to these efforts. In order to fulfil this priority, the EU may deploy non-executive CSDP civilian and military missions, upon invitation of the host country, to provide strategic advice, training, mentoring and monitoring. These missions may require robust force protection depending on the security situation on the ground. It could also take the form of security cooperation with relevant third state partners.

12. The EU must be able to deploy quality civilian crisis management capabilities rapidly, with the necessary support functions and equipment. Better coordination must be ensured between civilian and military capacity building efforts. In the same vein, synergies between CSDP and EU-funded programmes in related sectors should be promoted.
13. Civilian and military capacity building will be strengthened, based on an integrated and more flexible EU approach, in line with the EU-wide SSR framework and the Capacity Building for Security and Development (CBSD) concept with its flexible geographical scope, based on local ownership and buy-in. This would include:
 - enhancing flexibility and adaptability e.g. through the rapid deployment of assessment teams as temporary support to EU Delegations;
 - further developing regional approaches and civ/mil synergies;
 - promoting access to suitable funding options and enhancing the effectiveness of the project cells of CSDP missions;
 - developing security cooperation with key partners in surrounding regions, including in the framework of the reviewed European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

The provision of equipment and infrastructure is an indispensable part of training and capacity building activities. It is crucial to allow the EU to provide this assistance in an effective, responsible and seamless way. In this context, the decision to take forward the initiative on CBSD as proposed in July 2016 should be supported by sustainable, long-term arrangements in order to further support partner countries to prevent and manage crises on their own.

Protecting the Union and its citizens

14. Protecting the Union and its citizens is an increasingly pressing strategic priority. The security of Member States is deeply interconnected. Any threat to one Member State is a threat to all others and to all EU citizens and no Member State can meet today's threats and challenges alone. We should commit to a vision of Member States working together to enhance their political solidarity and mutual assistance, based on a shared strategic interest in providing security for EU citizens while contributing to peace beyond our borders.

15. This strategic priority focuses on the continuum between internal and external security – as evidenced by the violent acts of terrorism, cyber and hybrid threats by state and non-state actors, as well as illicit trafficking and smuggling. Furthermore, our security and prosperity increasingly rely on the protection of networks, critical infrastructure and energy security, on preventing and addressing proliferation crises, as well as on secure access to the global commons (cyber, airspace, maritime, space) on which our modern societies depend in order to thrive. Countering disinformation and effectively communicating our actions internally and externally is crucial. In all these areas, the EU will intensify the coordination between its internal and external instruments, tools and policies. For the EU as a whole this priority is not new, but from an EU security and defence perspective it is a consequence of the deteriorated and more unpredictable security environment and builds on relevant CSDP developments in recent years. CSDP indeed is an integral part of the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and an essential part of the EU's external action more broadly. This work will also be pursued in cooperation with NATO, which remains the foundation for the collective defence for those States which are members of it. The specific character of the security and defence policy of all EU Member States will be fully respected. Duplications will be avoided in view of Member States' single set of forces.

16. On the basis of all these parameters, the EU and its Member States can contribute to the protection of the Union and its citizens from a security and defence perspective, including through CSDP whose missions are deployed outside EU borders, by:
- supporting partner countries in the fight against terrorism, organised crime (e.g. smuggling / trafficking of humans, arms, drugs, etc.) and hybrid threats, including through building capacities and enhancing maritime or cyber security, while further considering how to better link CSDP with EU migration policies (building on the cases of Niger and Mali);
 - further developing CSDP’s links to the implementation of the Internal Security Strategy, respecting the roles of the different instruments and under the joint lead of the Political and Security Committee and the *Committee* on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI) in shaping the way ahead, and with participation of the EEAS and Commission services.
 - reinforcing CSDP’s ties with Freedom/Security/Justice (FSJ) actors, notably the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and Europol, at the strategic level and in the field, to support the monitoring and security of land, sea and air borders in light of security needs;
 - building Europe’s strength and resilience, including by enhancing civilian and military capabilities, ensuring security of supply, protecting networks and infrastructure, and promoting technological innovation and defence investment;
 - taking forward the cross-cutting strategies in the domain of cyber security (including the Cyber Defence Policy Framework), maritime security and space (including in relation to the Copernicus and Galileo programmes) and their links to CSDP;
 - ensuring the follow-up to the Joint Communication on countering hybrid threats to the EU, its Member States and partners from state and non-state actors within and beyond our borders, including through CSDP;
 - prioritising strategic foresight, anticipation and situational awareness, e.g. through the Hybrid Fusion Cell and CT analytical capacity in the INTCEN, and by making full use of the EU Satellite Centre;

- underlining the relevance of the Mutual Assistance Clause of the Treaty (Article 42.7 TEU) as well as the Solidarity Clause (Article 222 TFEU) and explore the possibilities, if so requested, for the EU to contribute including through CSDP options.

Types of possible CSDP civilian missions and military operations derived from the Level of Ambition

1. To be able to undertake rapid and decisive action in support of the Level of Ambition and its three strategic priorities, across the whole spectrum of crisis management tasks covered by Article 43 of the TEU, CSDP needs to be backed up by credible, deployable, interoperable, sustainable and multifunctional civilian and military capabilities. As a security provider, the EU should have a wide reach, while focusing on its surrounding regions. It will act with partners wherever possible, and always in compliance with international law. Based on previously agreed goals and commitments², the EU should thus be capable to undertake the following types of CSDP civilian missions and military operations outside the Union, a number of which may be executed concurrently, in different scenarios³, including in situations of higher security risk and underdeveloped local infrastructure:
 - Joint crisis management operations in situations of high security risk in the regions surrounding the EU;
 - Joint stabilisation operations, including air and special operations;
 - Civilian and military rapid response, including military rapid response operations inter alia using the EU Battlegroups as a whole or within a mission-tailored Force package;
 - Substitution/executive civilian missions;
 - Air security operations including close air support and air surveillance;
 - Maritime security or surveillance operations, including longer term in the vicinity of Europe;
 - Civilian capacity building and security sector reform missions (monitoring, mentoring and advising, training) inter alia on police, rule of law, border management, counter-terrorism, resilience, response to hybrid threats, and civil administration as well as civilian monitoring missions;

² Including the Headline Goal 2010, the Civilian Headline Goal 2010 as well as the ambition agreed by the European Council in December 2008.

³ As appropriate, some of these missions and operations may also be deployed to provide assistance in the context of a global response to natural disasters and pandemics outside the EU, in particular when such situations can lead to large scale destabilisation.

- Military capacity building through advisory, training, and mentoring missions, including robust force protection if necessary, as well as military monitoring/observation missions.

This non-exhaustive list provides input for the follow-on work to derive requirements based on a review of the Illustrative Scenarios, in line with agreed procedures under the Capability Development Mechanism, under the control of the Political and Security Committee (see Action 4 below).

18. In carrying forward its actions, the EU will work with partners and actively enhance its partnerships, while strengthening its own ability to take responsibility and share the burden with our partners in security and defence. Europe's strategic autonomy entails the ability to act and cooperate with international and regional partners wherever possible, while being able to operate autonomously when and where necessary. This adds to the EU's credibility vis-à-vis partners. There is no contradiction between the two. Member States have a 'single set of forces' which they can use nationally or in multilateral frameworks such as the United Nations, NATO, EU or ad hoc coalitions as well in support of regional organisations such as the OSCE. The development of Member States' capabilities through CSDP and using EU instruments will thus also help to strengthen capabilities potentially available to the United Nations and NATO. Mutual reinforcement, complementarity and coherence will be ensured, including through the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed by the leaders of the Institutions of EU and NATO in Warsaw on 8 July 2016 as well as through the framework of the EU-UN cooperation on crisis management.

Implementing the Level of Ambition

19. Concrete actions are necessary to implement the Level of Ambition in a credible way, notably by: (1) identifying the related capability development priorities; (2) deepening defence cooperation and delivering the required capabilities together; (3) adjusting the EU's structures for situational awareness, planning and conduct, as well as the rapid response toolbox; (4) increasing financial solidarity and flexibility, as well as ensuing a more seamless range of funding options as part of an integrated approach; and (5) actively taking forward CSDP partnerships.

20. The Conclusions from the European Council in December 2013 and June 2015, as well as the CSDP Council Conclusions adopted in November 2013, November 2014 and May 2015 provide the political framework for the work ahead and should be fully implemented.
21. CSDP missions and operations should continue to form part of an integrated EU approach, which will be further developed as a separate work strand. Throughout, it is critical to integrate full respect for international law, in particular obligations under relevant human rights and humanitarian law, mainstream gender perspectives and expertise, adhere to the highest standards of conduct, discipline and accountability, as well as promote the respect for international law among the EU's international partners when carrying out CSDP mandates.
22. The Level of Ambition needs to be underpinned by the necessary financial coverage, in particular considering the deteriorating security environment. A stronger Union in security and defence requires each Member State to do its fair share and invest more in sustainable security for future European generations. Member States are called upon to allocate a sufficient level of expenditure for defence and make the most effective use of resources, as recalled by the European Council in June 2015, and thus aim to meet the voluntary and collective benchmarks agreed in the European Defence Agency, which are qualitative and cooperation driven.⁴ They should also consider reinforcing financial solidarity and burden sharing. Finally, availability, flexibility and eligibility of EU financial instruments to support security and defence should be enhanced.
23. We should continue to analyse jointly the threats, risks and challenges faced by the EU, and regularly review our priority actions. This could lead to regular high-level meetings (European Council or Foreign Affairs Council, including in Defence format or jointly with other relevant Council formations) to address internal and external security and defence issues facing the Union.

⁴ Notably spending 20% of the defence budget spending on procurement of equipment and Research & Technology, and 35% of total equipment expenditure through European collaboration, as recalled in the Council conclusions on CSDP of May 2015.

ACTIONABLE PROPOSALS

Setting Capability Development Priorities

24. In light of more than a decade of experience and the changed security environment, the Feira priority areas of civilian CSDP missions should be revisited to identify how civilian CSDP could better respond to current challenges related to migration, hybrid threats, cyber, terrorism, organised crime and border management. Doing so will also contribute to the EU's internal security and protection.

➤ Action 1: EEAS to make proposals for Member States' consideration on revisiting the Feira priority areas in light of the profoundly changed security environment.

25. The Civilian Capability Development process should be reinvigorated to better reflect current needs and lessons learned, but also to take on board the new Level of Ambition. Civilian capabilities should be considerably enhanced including by:

- building on the work of establishing a List of Generic civilian CSDP tasks common to all missions, the required capabilities should be identified;
- ensure more effective and rapid force generation, including by deploying specialised teams of experts: the possibility to use teams is linked both to the phase of the mission (for instance in start-up mode) and to the mandate (e.g. the need for formed police units or monitoring teams);
- strengthen capacities available for the generic functions common to all missions, such as in the area of command and control, information/strategic communication, mission support, including logistics (e.g. Mission Support Platform, a more ambitious warehouse concept) and duty of care;
- improve the training of mission staff including through the forthcoming new CSDP Training Policy.

➤ Action 2: EEAS to make proposals on enhancing the responsiveness of civilian crisis management, building on ongoing work in this area, including on the list of generic civilian CSDP tasks and identifying requirements needed.

26. The EUGS sets out the need for Member States to collectively retain and further develop full-spectrum military land, air, space and maritime capabilities. Echoing relevant capability priorities out of the Capability Development Plan (CDP) 2014, it highlights a number of defence capability priority areas in which Europe needs to invest and develop collaborative approaches:

- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems, satellite communications, and autonomous access to space and permanent earth observation;
- high-end military capabilities, including strategic enablers;
- cyber and maritime security.

These initial priority areas include the four flagship capability projects supported by the European Council in 2013, namely regarding Air-to-Air Refuelling (AAR), Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), Cyber, and Satellite Communication (GovSatCom). Additional and complementary capability requirements and priorities based on the EUGS and the new Level of Ambition will be identified within the revision process of the CDP. Capability priorities identified by Member States will provide guidance to the European Defence Action Plan.

The future EU Defence Research Programme should finance research projects from priority areas to be agreed by Member States. Moreover, a European Defence Fund could support the financing of capabilities commonly agreed by Member States and with recognised EU added value.

➤ Action 3: Member States to agree to take forward work in EDA to specify and complement capability priorities based on the Level of Ambition and the EUGS, as part of the revision process of the CDP.

27. Military capability requirements need to be derived from the EUGS and the Level of Ambition, based on a review of the Illustrative Scenarios and Strategic Planning Assumptions, leading to the identification of prioritised shortfalls as input for the CDP. We should build on previously agreed political ambitions and goals, including those agreed by the European Council in December 2008, as a baseline for this work and take into account the persisting shortfalls. The three strategic priorities as developed above must be taken into account. Coherence with NATO's Defence Planning Process (in its timelines and outcomes), where requirements overlap, will continue to be ensured throughout this process.

➤ Action 4: Member States to agree to review the military requirements stemming from the EUGS and the Level of Ambition, in line with agreed procedures under the control of the Political and Security Committee as well as the EU Military Committee, as a contribution to the CDP.

Deepening defence cooperation

28. Deepening defence cooperation is increasingly important for Member States to develop economies of scale and use resources more efficiently. This is in view of the rising cost of advanced defence technology and the need to retain full spectrum armed forces. There are many positive examples of Member States pursuing closer defence cooperation – even integration – including through bilateral or regional clusters. Yet, 80% of defence investment in Europe is still spent nationally and our collective output needs to be increased substantially. For both strategic and economic reasons, we need to reverse the long-standing fragmentation of Europe's defence sector to enhance our collective output and performance.
29. Achieving the objectives set out in the EUGS and the new Level of Ambition will require developing a coherent set of capabilities based on an end-to-end cooperative approach. More needs to be done to make cooperation the norm. Increasing incentives, transparency, convergence, and top-down political commitment remain essential. The EDA has a key role to play by assisting Member States to develop the required capabilities, strengthening the CDP and acting as an interface between Member States and the Commission without being a substitute for national positions being conveyed to the Commission through other channels.

30. To deliver together the required capabilities for the Level of Ambition and foster strategic coherence, an intergovernmental “Coordinated Annual Review on Defence” could be set up. The aim would be to develop on a voluntary basis a more structured way of developing the required capabilities, based on greater transparency and commitments from the Member States, for example by:

- taking stock of the implementation of CDP priorities;
- sharing national plans and intentions and how they link to the common effort, based on existing reporting;
- identifying possible gaps in the tackling of capability shortfalls and considering lead nations for taking the work forward;
- ensuring predictable budget planning related to collaborative projects and seizing opportunities for cooperation.

Such transparency and visible commitment would increase output, collaboration and mutual accountability, while ensuring coherent output with NATO processes. It would also foster a gradual synchronisation and mutual adaptation of national defence planning cycles and capability development practices, which should also enable more systematic cooperation. As part of this, the voluntary provisions of the Policy Framework for Systematic and Long-term Cooperation could be rendered more structured, more specific, and based on a higher level of commitment.

➤ Action 5: Member States to invite the HRVP / Head of the Agency to present proposals on detailed scope, modalities and content to Ministers in spring 2017 with a view of setting up the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence in concrete terms.

31. Moreover, the following proposals should be further developed to support Member States to deliver more cooperation and output:

- a) Output-oriented Capability Development:
 - Develop the CDP as the central tool within the EU to translate the identified defence capability priorities into concrete European collaborative capability development or procurement programmes, involving interested Member States and making use of relevant EU funding instruments in support of required industrial and technological efforts.

- Better connect the collectively identified capability priorities to Member States' national defence planning to promote coherence and convergence.
- b) Key Strategic Activities:
- Identify the Key Strategic Activities (KSA) – i.e. technologies, skills, industrial manufacturing capacities – based on the revised capability priorities in order to promote and guide investment drawing on relevant EU funding instruments, starting with a suitable pilot case. Identifying and promoting KSA, including in a structured dialogue between Member States and Industry, is crucial to ensure an appropriate level of European strategic autonomy.
- c) Better alignment of defence R&T efforts:
- Ensure coherence and complementarity of Research & Technology undertaken in different fora (national, EDA ad hoc research, the Preparatory Action and the potential future European Defence Research Programme) including by coordinated prioritisation, guided by Member States.
 - The results of R&T conducted at European level should be systematically taken up by collaborative capability programmes in support of CDP priorities. This should be complemented by a wider Innovation Initiative on managing potentially disruptive technologies, directed towards the EDTIB.
- d) Concrete models of European cooperation:
- Investigate replicating the successful model of the multinational European Air Transport Command in Eindhoven in other areas in order to ensure increased efficiency and effectiveness of related capabilities (e.g. Surface Movement of Military Assets, Logistics at Sea and on Land).
 - Explore the creation of a European Medical Command with a view to enhance synergies and interoperability of the different services; work on a European logistic hub.
 - Develop proposals on a European barter mechanism (e.g. exchange of services) designed to optimise the use of existing capabilities

- e) Critical enablers for cooperation: standardisation, certification, test & evaluation, training
- Derive standardisation needs and opportunities from the CDP, the Collaborative Database and other projects (such as in R&T), and mainstream the use of the European Defence Standards Reference System (EDSTAR) and civilian / military standards in view of enhancing interoperability and efficiency and deepening defence cooperation, in coherence with NATO.
 - Develop harmonised certification requirements and coordinated approaches towards their implementation in the land, air and sea domains, with an initial focus on ammunition and (military) airworthiness.
 - Develop full spectrum test & evaluation capabilities in Europe based on a fully coordinated network of national centres. This entails fostering collaborative activities among Test Centres, creating networks of excellence and systematically relating them to EDA projects.
 - *Support the development of a European training framework among Member States, focusing on high-end capabilities based on training curricula and making best use of national training centres.*
- f) Improved Security of Supply
- Move towards enhanced security of supply at European level based on Member States' political commitment and existing sector- or system/programme-specific Security of Supply mechanisms.

➤ Action 6: EDA with its participating Member States to develop further proposals concerning output-oriented capability development, Key Strategic Activities, R&T, more structured cooperation, critical enablers, and Security of Supply, and prepare for their implementation.

Adjusting structures, tools, and (financial) instruments

32. *There is scope to improve the EU's capacity to plan and conduct civilian and military missions and operations with the overall objective to provide a faster, more effective and more seamless response, in full respect of the role of the PSC under Article 38 TEU and of the military and civilian chains of command and without duplication of NATO structures.*⁵

Stronger links and support from structures in Brussels to both military missions and operations is essential in order to overcome shortcomings in the provision of political and technical advice, provide continuity, facilitate relations with third States and international organisations, as well as with Member States, and handling better administrative and financial procedures. This would also contribute to ensure that corporate experience and knowledge is consolidated and that support is available in times of surge or crisis. Whereas all this is crucial in the conduct phase, improving the existing integrated civilian-military strategic planning structure would also enhance the EU's ability to plan and decide more swiftly and comprehensively on CSDP missions and operations, while facilitating a seamless transition from planning to the conduct of civilian or military missions and operations.

Building on existing structures, the objective is therefore to incrementally strengthen our ability to plan and conduct such missions and operations, thus providing a faster and more effective response and a more integrated approach to civilian and military deployments.

⁵ Civilian CSDP missions are operationally planned and run by the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) in the EEAS. For military executive operations, the EU relies fundamentally on ad hoc activated military OHQs, in particular those provided by Member States (DE, FR, IT, EL, UK), by NATO through Berlin + arrangements and the EU Operations Centre (in line with its 2004 ToRs). Current CSDP military non-executive missions (such as training missions in CAR, Mali and Somalia) only have Mission Headquarters in the field.

Action 7: Member States to agree to review the structures and capabilities available for the planning and conduct of CSDP missions and operations, in view of enhancing civ/mil synergies, ensuring more seamless planning and conduct, and improving on current shortcomings. As a short term objective, address the gap at the strategic-level for the conduct of non-executive military CSDP missions (EUTM type) from within EEAS structures.

33. Improving CSDP responsiveness requires enhanced civil/military intelligence to support anticipation and situational awareness, through the Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity (SIAC) as the main European hub for strategic information, early warning and comprehensive analysis. This includes horizon scanning, updated situational assessment in support of political/strategic decision-making, and granular civil/military 24/7 situational awareness for the planning and conduct of missions/operations. There is scope to better link the EU's Early Warning System and joint conflict analysis tools to support CSDP horizon scanning, decision-making, conflict-sensitive planning and implementation. The EU Intelligence Assessment and Situation Centre (EU INTCEN) and the Intelligence Directorate of the European Military Staff (EUMS INT) need to be adapted accordingly in scope, functionality and technical assets. Furthermore, interaction with other EU bodies must be enhanced in order to facilitate the implementation of an integrated approach to conflicts and crises. Interaction with NATO bodies should be improved as well.

- Action 8: EEAS to take stock of capabilities at hand in INTCEN and EUMS INT and develop short-, mid- and long-term proposals for Member States consideration for upgrading such capabilities in line with the level of ambition. Reinforce links between INTCEN/EUMS INT with other EU and Member States' entities providing situational awareness in order to further support the development of a European hub for strategic information, early warning and comprehensive analysis.

34. To enhance responsiveness and reinforce defence cooperation in Europe, dialogue and cooperation between the EU and relevant multinational structures and initiatives could be further developed. This could build on existing models of cooperation such as with Eurocorps, the European Gendarmerie Force, and the European Air Transport Command. In the same vein, the dialogue with regional ‘clusters’ of (defence) cooperation among EU Member States could be fostered.

➤ Action 9: Member States to consider relevant multinational structures or initiatives in the area of security and defence in view of reinforcing cooperation with the EU or deepening existing frameworks of cooperation. In particular, to consider developing a concept to make better use of existing national or multinational deployable headquarters made available to the EU, on a rotational basis, with a focus on training, mentoring and advising.

Rapid Response

35. Rapid response underpins the EU’s responsiveness. The EU must be able to rapidly assess crises, swiftly plan and decide upon its response, and speedily deploy its missions and operations in general, and rapid response operations in particular. To this end, the EU should improve the usability and deployability of the EU’s rapid response toolbox, including the EU Battlegroups by considering for example:

- evaluating the EU rapid response toolbox in light of the evolving security threats and challenges;
- in order to enhance usability in a broader range of scenarios, with a focus on the initial phase of EU operations including bridging to wider UN peacekeeping missions: explore ways to make the EU Rapid Response database more usable and responsive, especially with regards to maritime and air rapid response assets, and reinforce the modular approach to the EU Battlegroups; a modular use of EUBG should be based on a national decision of the Member States providing the BG on stand-by and should not implicate a constraint for following EUBG;

- carry out large-scale and regular ‘live’ (civ/mil) exercises;
- seeking synergy with other high readiness initiatives, notably within NATO;
- developing a rapidly available common pool of strategic lift assets for the deployment of EU Battlegroups (instead of leaving this to each BG Framework Nation);
- enlarging the scope for common funding through Athena for the use of EU Battlegroups, as they are provided by a small group of Member States but deployed on behalf of the Union, building on the Declaration for the deployment cost of Battlegroups (which expires in December 2016) and bringing it permanently into the Athena mechanism;
- exploring the link to the possible use of Article 44 TEU, in line with the modalities and recommendations agreed by PSC in 2015, to speed up planning, decision-making and force generation.

➤ Action 10: EEAS to present proposals on strengthening the relevance, usability and deployability of the EU’s Rapid Response toolbox, including the EU Battlegroups particularly to reinforce their modularity, their preparation and their effective financing.

Financing

36. Enhancing the responsiveness and effectiveness of CSDP missions and operations also hinges on increased financial incentives and solidarity, more flexibility as well as a more seamless range of funding options:
- a) The current arrangements provide insufficient incentives for Member States to engage: the common costs covered by the Athena mechanism amounted to a small fraction of the total costs of an operation (i.e. the adopted budget for 2016 was 64.9 million euros in payments in 2016 for all military missions, operations and exercises). There is scope to reinforce solidarity: especially when deploying EUFOR-type operations or using EU Battlegroups – which are provided by a small group of Member States but deployed for the Union as whole – more common costs must be shared, while bearing in mind as well the impact on national defence resources;

- b) Especially in the area of civilian and military capacity building for partner states or regional organisations a more seamless range of funding options needs to be available to support EU agreed objectives;
- c) Ensuring flexibility in mobilising the CFSP budget is necessary to support a more rapid deployment of civilian CSDP missions, building on the work that has been carried out to date (CSDP warehouse, new paradigm for the preparatory measures, more flexible procurement rules, etc.).

➤ Action 11: Member States to agree to consider financing in a comprehensive manner, reinforcing solidarity, effectiveness and flexibility to underpin the Level of Ambition and enhance CSDP responsiveness; to explore all funding options as well as to provide political guidance in view of a comprehensive review of the Athena mechanism in 2017.

Drawing on the full potential of the Treaty: PESCO

37. The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), as defined in Articles 42.6 and 46 of the TEU and Protocol 10, has the potential to generate a more binding commitment as regards capability development, improving output and strengthening CSDP. The process leading to a decision to establish PESCO, by Qualified Majority Voting, would be open to any Member State who would be willing to undertake higher commitments and concrete measures in line with the Protocol. The aim would be to gather as many Member States to join in stepping up their security and defence commitments as an inclusive effort to strengthen CSDP. Within this ‘single’ PESCO, there would be scope for both common elements to which all participating Member States would subscribe as well as a modular and differentiated approach as regards concrete projects and cooperative initiatives which smaller groups of Member States would be free to pursue unhindered by other PESCO members. PESCO could cover commitments on defence expenditures, capability development and operational engagement e.g. through multinational formations, thus opening the prospect of deeper cooperation in defence matters. It is underlined that this depends on what Member States would be willing to commit to.

- Action 12: Member States to agree to explore the potential of a single and inclusive PESCO based on the willingness of Member States to strengthen CSDP by undertaking concrete commitments. If so requested, the HRVP can provide elements and options for reflection.

Actively Taking Forward CSDP Partnerships

38. In light of the EUGS and evolving priorities, the CSDP Partnership policy needs to be further enhanced and adjusted both as regards cooperation with partner organisations and with partner countries, within the respective frameworks and respecting the principles of decision-making autonomy and inclusiveness:
- a) Strengthen the unique and long-standing cooperation with the United Nations by implementing the jointly agreed priority areas for strengthening the UN-EU Strategic Partnership on Peacekeeping and Crisis Management until 2018, in view of exploring possibilities for a next step to enhance this partnership.
 - b) Take forward cooperation with NATO, strategically in areas of mutual interest and operationally in areas where EU and NATO are both deployed, as well as on military capability development; develop concrete options for implementation to be presented to the respective Councils by December 2016 in follow-up to the Joint Declaration of 8 July in the seven identified areas of cooperation, in full respect to the principles of inclusiveness and decision-making autonomy of each organisation and without prejudice to the specific character of the security and defence policy of any of our members.
 - c) Further cooperation should be explored with other regional organisations in particular the OSCE and the African Union. The EU and the OSCE should enhance their common work on operational capabilities, promotion of stability, inviolability of borders, human rights and fundamental freedoms, rule of law, media freedom, and fair democratic elections. The next EU-Africa Summit offers a potential opportunity to reconsider the Peace and Security Partnership between the two sister organisations in light of the renewed approach to Capacity Building in the field of security.

- d) Contributions from partner countries to CSDP missions and operations reinforce legitimacy, open paths for further cooperation and enlarge the pool of available capabilities. The EU will continue developing these partnerships including through (Framework) Participation Agreements. The existing modalities for participation of invited countries will be fully applied, including as regards sharing information on the planning of our missions and operations, while respecting rules and procedures on the exchange of information and the autonomy of EU decision-making. Consideration should be given to use CSDP partnerships with partner countries that share EU values and are able and willing to contribute to CSDP missions and operations also to promote resilience in the EU's surrounding regions, taking into account the importance of security in the ENP review and the forthcoming initiative on resilience-building as part of the broader implementation of the EUGS.

➤ Action 13: Take forward CSDP partnerships and EEAS to present options for a more strategic approach to CSDP partnership cooperation with partner countries which share EU values and are willing and able to contribute to CSDP missions and operations, including considering possibilities to strengthen their resilience.

Next steps

39. Subject to the guidance by the Council in November, implementation should start without delay, working closely with Member States. A first report on progress should be submitted by June 2017, as part of the overall implementation process of the EUGS.