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Subject: Council Conclusions on Security and Defence in the context of the EU
Global Strategy
- Council Conclusions (25 June 2018)

Delegations will find in the Annex the Council Conclusions on Security and Defence in the context of the EU Global Strategy, adopted by the Council at its 3628th meeting held on 25 June 2018.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON SECURITY AND DEFENCE

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EU GLOBAL STRATEGY

In the framework of the implementation of the EU Global Strategy in the area of security and defence, following the regular guidance by the European Council and recalling its conclusions and other guidance on these matters, the Council recalls its firm commitment to implement the EU Level of Ambition in responding to external conflicts and crises, building partners' capacities and protecting the EU and its citizens. By continuously addressing Europe's current and future security and defence needs, the EU will enhance its capacity to act as a security provider and its strategic autonomy, and strengthen its ability to cooperate with partners. In this regard, the Council welcomes the presentation of ambitious proposals on security and defence of the Commission in the framework of the next Multiannual Financial Framework, notably the creation of a dedicated budgetary heading on security and defence.

Today, the Council:

Permanent Structured Cooperation

1. Has adopted in the context of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) a Council Decision establishing the common set of governance rules for the projects undertaken in that framework.
2. Looks forward to the adoption of a Council Recommendation, in principle in July 2018, on the sequencing of the fulfilment of the more binding commitments undertaken by the Member States participating in PESCO as well as specifying more precise objectives.

3. Commends the ongoing work by the participating Member States to implement the seventeen PESCO collaborative projects and in the context of the call for a second wave of PESCO projects encourages them to make further ambitious proposals to address the EU's operational needs and agreed capability development priorities, and thus contribute to fulfilling the more binding commitments and achieving the EU Level of Ambition, with a view to updating the list of PESCO projects and their participants by November 2018.
4. Looks forward to the adoption of a Council Decision, in principle in November, on the general conditions for the exceptional third state participation in PESCO projects, and calls for the work to this end to start without delay.

Capability Development Plan (CDP) and Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)

5. Approves the Progress Catalogue 2018 (PC18), which provides the military assessment of the prioritized capability shortfalls and high impact capability goals to be achieved in a phased approach, as an outcome of the Headline Goal process launched in November 2016 following the agreement on the EU Level of Ambition.
6. Looks forward to the imminent approval of the EU Capability Development Priorities derived from the CDP review, taking also into account the prioritised capability shortfalls and high impact capability goals. The Council agrees that these priorities, as a key reference for Member States' and EU's capability development, will inform CARD, PESCO and the European Defence Fund, which bring a step-change in defence cooperation, thus contributing to coherence among these three distinct but mutually reinforcing initiatives, in accordance with the Council conclusions of November 2017. The Council further encourages the Member States to implement such priorities also taking into account the findings of the CARD trial run and future CARD cycles.

Single set of forces

7. The Council recalls that, as Member States have a 'single set of forces' which they can use in different 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.

European Defence Fund

8. Welcomes the political agreement on the regulation on establishing the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) aimed at fostering the competitiveness, efficiency and innovation capacity of the defence industry throughout the Union, which contributes to the Union's strategic autonomy. The EDIDP should aim at incentivising collaborative development programmes in line with defence capability priorities commonly agreed by the Member States at EU level within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy particularly in the context of the Capability Development Plan.
9. Takes note of the Commission's proposal of 13 June 2018 for a Regulation establishing the European Defence Fund for the period 2021-2027. It calls for such Regulation to take into account initial lessons learned of the EDIDP and the Preparatory Action on defence research as appropriate. The Council highlights the need for the implementation of the proposed European Defence Fund to strongly involve the Member States, make full use of the views and expertise of the European Defence Agency and associate the European External Action Service. Furthermore, the Council considers that financial instruments could be an appropriate tool for use in the European Defence Fund after 2020 and calls for further work on this matter.

European Peace Facility

10. Takes note of the proposal of the High Representative, with the Commission's support, for a European Peace Facility (EPF) and shares the aim of enhancing the Union's ability to preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security, by improving the financing of actions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) relating to military or defence matters and by enhancing the Union's capacity to flexibly adapt to evolving needs and priorities. It invites the relevant Council preparatory bodies to take work forward and present concrete recommendations on the proposed Facility, including by adapting the proposal if necessary, paying particular attention to assessed needs including financial, while respecting the role of Member States in the governance of the proposed Facility and the competence of the Council regarding CFSP.

Furthermore, the Council recalls, in line with its Conclusions of 13 November 2017, that the comprehensive revision of the Athena mechanism must be finalised.

Military Mobility

11. Stresses that improving the mobility of military personnel, materiel and equipment for routine activities and during crisis and conflict, within and beyond the EU, by all transport modes (surface, air and sea) and in all strategic directions, is necessary to enable Member States to address enduring and rising threats, thereby contributing to the security of all. This will allow Member States to act faster and more effectively in the context of the Common Security and Defence Policy as well as national and multinational activities.
12. Emphasises that this improvement of military mobility can only be achieved with the full involvement and commitment of all Member States, in coherence with relevant initiatives at the EU level including in the context of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). At the national level, this requires a whole-of-government approach and the involvement of the competent national authorities beyond the Ministries of Defence.

13. Stresses that in this common effort, the sovereignty, national decision-making and constitutional requirements of individual Member States including regarding their national territory and military movements and transportation; the specific character of their security and defence policies; as well as other considerations, including environmental rules and principles, remain fundamental and will be fully respected.
14. Welcomes the Action Plan on Military Mobility, adopted by the High Representative and the Commission on 28 March 2018, and calls for its swift implementation in close coordination between all relevant stakeholders. It takes note of the proposals by the Commission for military mobility in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework.
15. As a first step in the implementation of the Action Plan, the Council approves the overarching high-level part of the Military Requirements for Military Mobility within and beyond the EU, and calls for the swift completion of the technical specifications on transport infrastructure, vehicles and loads by early July 2018, and for the geographical identification of the needed infrastructure and other annexes deemed ready to be validated no later than the third quarter of 2018, and emphasises the engagement of Member States in these efforts.
16. Welcomes the ongoing work in the framework of the European Defence Agency in the implementation of the Action Plan, with two new projects on Cross Border Movement Permission and on Harmonising the Military Requirements related to Customs.
17. Reiterates that cooperation and coordination with NATO on military mobility should be further pursued in the framework of the common set of proposals for 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 the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, in order to ensure a coherent approach and synergies between the respective EU and NATO initiatives.

18. Calls on Member States to take action nationally to improve the efficiency of military mobility, and to simplify and standardise relevant rules and procedures in coherence with the Action Plan and the Military Requirements for Military Mobility within and beyond the EU, in accordance with national legislation of the Member States, as soon as possible but no later than 2024, and aim at the following first steps to be achieved by the end of 2019:
- a) develop national plans for military mobility and give their implementation high priority;
 - b) in accordance with relevant standardised procedures and subject to national decision making and criteria, accelerate border crossing procedures, and to that end work with competent national authorities towards granting cross border movement permissions, including requests for entry and movement permission for all modes (surface, air and sea) and aspects of military movement and transportation, for routine activities within 5 working days; and consider to bring this period further down for rapid reaction units;
 - c) facilitate and speed up communication and procedures, and to that end create a strong interconnected network of National Points of Contact for all aspects relating to military mobility to, amongst others, be able to quickly handle requests for cross-border movements;
 - d) use suitable existing national and multinational exercises to practice more regularly military mobility, including during live exercises, and short notice movements.

The Council will review progress on a yearly basis and will revert to the issue by summer 2019 including by defining, if possible, more ambitious time-bound objectives.

Strengthening civilian CSDP

19. Welcomes the ongoing work and recalls its conclusions of 28 May 2018 on strengthening civilian CSDP and reiterates the way forward as regards the presentation, by summer 2018, of a Civilian Capability Development Plan and the Civilian CSDP Compact by November 2018 and its invitation to the High Representative to report on the implementation of a strengthened civilian CSDP, as part of the yearly report on the implementation of the Global Strategy.

Partnerships in security and defence

20. Recalls its conclusions of 18 May 2017 and stresses the importance of enhancing cooperation with partners, both with third countries and other international organisations. In this context, the Council invites the relevant preparatory bodies to take work forward and to present concrete recommendations in due time on the basis of the recent proposals made by the High Representative to develop a more strategic approach for EU Partnerships on security and defence with third countries. The Council underlines that partnerships between the EU and third countries should be of mutual benefit and should contribute to strengthen the EU's security and defence efforts, while fully respecting the EU's institutional framework and its decision-making autonomy.
21. Notes with appreciation the ongoing work to reinforce the joint priorities for the EU-UN strategic partnership on peacekeeping and crisis management for the period 2019-2021, based on the important progress made so far, and taking into account ongoing UN peace and security reforms and EU security and defence developments, with particular focus on enhancing cooperation and impact on the ground.
22. Recalls its conclusions on EU-NATO cooperation of 8 June 2018 and welcomes further progress made in the implementation of the EU-NATO common set of proposals covering a total of 74 actions in all areas set out in 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 the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In this regard, the Council looks forward to the upcoming new Joint Declaration on EU-NATO cooperation in July 2018. The Council reiterates that it will ensure good coordination and mutual reinforcement between the EU and NATO, in full respect of the principles of inclusiveness, reciprocity and decision-making autonomy of the EU.

Increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to counter hybrid threats

23. Welcomes the Joint Communication of the High Representative and the Commission and accompanying reports adopted on 13 June 2018 and takes note of the proposals to strengthen resilience and to take work forward in response to the March 2018 European Council tasking on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear related risks, and help the EU and its Member States to bolster their capabilities to address hybrid threats, including in the areas of cyber, strategic communication and counter-intelligence. In this regard the Council stresses the need to further develop the EU's strategic communication strategy together with Member States. Furthermore, the Council stresses that comprehensive and long-term work, including on resources, to counter hybrid threats and to foster the resilience of the EU and its Member States is needed. While taking into account the EU's own autonomous analysis capability, the Council also puts particular emphasis on the importance of working closely with other international organisations, including NATO. The Council urges that work is taken forward in due course and progress reviewed regularly.

Welcomes the initiative to hold a special session of the Conference of the States Parties of the OPCW on 26 June 2018 and emphasises the importance of a strong outcome to reinforce the international rules-based order. In this context, the EU and its Member States support the proposed draft decision put forward by over twenty countries and appeal to all States Parties to support and adopt this decision.