



**European
Movement
International**

Policy Position Security

The **strategic environment of the European Union has changed fundamentally** over recent years. Among the complex issues the EU is confronted with are the ongoing conflict in Ukraine as well as conflicts in Syria, Libya, Iraq and Yemen, a major refugee crisis and the need for a concerted humanitarian response, as well as radicalisation and terrorist attacks on European soil. Climate change, the unsustainable use of resources and energy dependence are a major factor in many of these challenges and a pressing problem in itself. At the same time, the EU is dealing with the challenge of disinformation, uncertainty in its relationship with the US and hostility in its relationship with Russia.

The European Movement International is convinced that in order to protect Europe's interests the EU offers the best forum for security and defence cooperation. However, the current crises have revealed the EU's limited capacity in crisis management, and urgently oblige it to formulate a better response. Strained national budgets and expected efficiency gains from European cooperation further underline the need for concerted European action on security and defence.

New and complex threats to Europe's security have spurred initiatives for more European security and defence cooperation, including several proposals by smaller coalitions of Member States. Whereas such proposals usually meet a lack of political will among Member States, **the upswing in the debate has**

led to a series of concrete proposals, most notably the *European Union Global Strategy and Implementation Plan*

which set out a new *Level of Ambition*, the *European Commission Defence Action Plan*, and the *EU-NATO Joint Declaration and Common set of proposals*. The Foreign Affairs Council and European Council have expressed their support for these documents and suggested concrete measures for increased cooperation.

Building blocks for closer security and defence cooperation

The European Movement welcomes

and supports these proposals towards closer security and defence cooperation. With the **objective of impactful joint action in defence and security** in mind, there are several essential building blocks.

Political will

The initiatives for further cooperation in security and defence will not ensure effective and common action unless Member States show the political will to cooperate and to implement the proposals. Furthermore, an effective response also requires rapid action of the EU institutions in the areas where they have competence.

A White Book

A White Book on Security and Defence to concretise the EU's priorities in terms of capabilities and for a more effective CSDP, which should build on the Global Strategy and Implementation Plan.

The Lisbon Treaty

Use of provisions foreseen in the Lisbon Treaty, such as Articles 20 TEU on enhanced cooperation, 44 TEU on the flexibility provision and 46 TEU on Permanent Structured Cooperation. The actual deployment of EU Battle-groups would also be a step in the right direction.

The single market

The completion of the single market for defence is an important element



for an integrated and more competitive defence industry, as well as for civilian and military synergies in research and technology. It will ensure a more efficient use of resources while increasing Europe's capability to face security challenges.

Institutional embedding

A better institutional embedding of security and defence policies, which can include a stronger European Defence Agency, a permanent civil and military headquarters building on the new military planning and conduct capability, the proposed Coordinated Annual Review on Defence as a 'European Defence Semester', a Council format of Defence Ministers, a standing Commission working group on defence, and elevating the European Parliament subcommittee on Security and Defence to full-fledged Committee status.

Funds for security and defence

Availability of funds for increased security and defence cooperation can be ensured via broadening the scope of the Athena mechanism for the financing of common costs relating to EU military operations; the Commission-proposed European Defence

Fund for joint research and development; and exploring the use of own resources for EU military spending.

Partner cooperation

Cooperation with partners is as important as internal cooperation. With EU-NATO cooperation guided by the Joint Declaration, the EU can simultaneously develop its defence capabilities to act where EU action is more appropriate. When devising its security and defence policies, the EU should



keep its partners involved, in particular those on the European continent that are not members of the EU, and establish an active dialogue with prospective EU members as they also belong to the European security community.

Further integration

Following these steps, the concept of a European army in the form of pooled capabilities, harmonisation and standardisation among EU armed forces should be pursued, paying special attention to the human rights and fundamental freedoms of civilian

and military personnel. Further integration of defence resources will also bring efficiency gains.

With these building blocks, the EU can develop the impactful and joint action that is needed to respond to security challenges. **An immediate response is key**, and in this light, short-term practical measures using existing policies, tools and treaty provisions should be prioritised. However, **only deeper integration** in the field of defence and security policy will allow the European Union to be a stronger and more independent global actor, and permanently ensure its security.

Focus areas in security and defence cooperation

The different proposals for more intense European cooperation push the debate forward, but there is a risk that the focus will get lost in the myriad of initiatives. The EU should keep a clear focus in its security and defence policy, and ensure the interlinkage between its various policies:

Peace

The EU should employ its security and defence policies to ensure peace on the European continent and in its neighbourhood, and to contribute to peace efforts worldwide whilst de-

fending human rights and promoting European values.

Enlargement

As one of the most successful external EU policies, enlargement directly impacts peace and security on the European continent and should be an integral element of all strategic documents and policies, fostering economic and democratic resilience in the Western Balkans. Similarly, structuring relations with Europe's different neighbours and partners should be a key part of the EU's external policies, and the European Neighbourhood Policy should be closely integrated in the overall strategies for EU security and foreign policy.

Migration

There is a clear security dimension in addressing the conflicts that result in the displacement of people, such as the war in Syria. The implementation of the EU Agenda on Migration should be fully coherent with the overall direction of the EU's foreign and security policy, as well as actions to address the 'root causes' of mass population displacement and conflicts, including the EU's development policy.

Energy and climate change

The EU's energy and climate policies on the one hand and security and

“The EU should employ its security and defence policies to ensure peace in Europe and its neighbourhood”

defence policies on the other hand should be fully consistent, as climate change and energy dependence are closely interwoven with Europe's security. Not only does global warming pose a direct threat to Europe – for example in rising sea levels – but the impact of global warming often aggravates tensions elsewhere. Furthermore, energy has a strong geopolitical aspect, especially in Europe's neighbourhood. Europe's energy dependency makes it vulnerable, and the diversification and integration of European energy markets is therefore important.

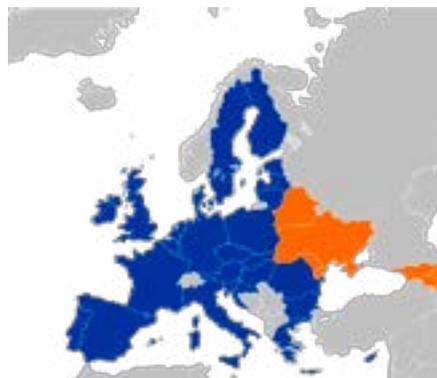
The digital realm

The digital realm is of increasing importance with regard to security. Countering (online) propaganda, cyberwarfare from state actors and non-state actors such as terrorist groups, extremist groups or hacktivists should be addressed in all secu-

rity and defence strategies, for example by setting up an EU Cyber Command.

Intelligence sharing

Increased and more structured intelligence sharing between Member States and EU agencies will help to develop mutual understanding of common security threats both in the digital realm and with regard to counter-terrorism. A permanent structure



Eastern Partnership countries

for intelligence cooperation, involving all stakeholders, will build the trust needed between governments and civil society to deliver a transparent, robust and proportional intelligence network at the EU level.

The EU should not lose its focus in the debate on increasing its security and defence cooperation. With different proposals on the table, the EU should keep its eye on the goal: impactful joint action in defence and security to make Europe more secure. Including the above building blocks in the next concrete steps will bring the EU closer to this goal. **The European Movement International is convinced that in the current strategic environment, the European Union is the best forum for cooperation in defence and security, but that the EU can only succeed if all Member States and EU institutions throw their weight behind the same goal.**

The European Movement

seeks to provide a platform to encourage and facilitate the active participation of citizens and stakeholders in the development of European solutions to our common challenges. We offer thought leadership on the issues that affect Europe and we give the opportunity to representatives from European associations, political parties, enterprises, trade unions, NGOs and other stakeholders, through our 39 National Councils and 34 International Associations, to work together, towards improving the way that Europe works.

European Movement International

www.europeanmovement.eu

Rue Marie-Thérèse 21

B-1000 Brussels

T +32 (0)2 508 30-88

secretariat@europeanmovement.eu

[@EMInternational](https://twitter.com/EMInternational)



Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union