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Subject: Council conclusions on security and defence in the context of the EU
Global Strategy

- Council conclusions (13 November 2017)

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 3574th meeting held on 13 November 2017.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON SECURITY AND DEFENCE**IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EU GLOBAL STRATEGY**

1. The Council highlights the significant progress made in strengthening security and defence, in the follow-up to the EU Global Strategy, following the regular guidance by the European Council and recalling its conclusions on these matters. It remains committed to implementing the EU Level of Ambition in responding to external conflicts and crises, building partners' capacities and protecting the EU and its citizens. To this end, the Council calls for further work with a view to building a more effective, capable and joined-up Union in security and defence and strengthening its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

In the present unstable and uncertain security environment, the European Union and its Member States will continue to do more, including by committing sufficient additional resources, in order to contribute decisively to collective efforts and take greater responsibility for their security while taking into account national circumstances and legal commitments. By addressing further Europe's current and future security and defence needs, this will enhance the EU's capacity to act as a security provider and its strategic autonomy, and strengthen its ability to cooperate with partners. In this regard, this will also enhance the European contribution to a rules-based global order with the United Nations at its core. It will also 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, as well as strengthen the transatlantic relationship.

Permanent Structured Cooperation

2. The Council welcomes today's common notification by Member States on their intention to participate in the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), which includes the list of more binding commitments they undertake in accordance with the Treaty provisions, in the areas of defence investment, capability development and operational contribution, as well as proposals for the governance. This represents a historic step forward in the interest of European security and defence. The common notification remains open for other Member States who still wish to subscribe to it.

In view of establishing PESCO by the end of the year, as envisaged by the European Council, the Council:

- Looks forward to adopt a Council Decision in accordance with Article 46(2) TEU before the end of the year.
- Welcomes the intention of those Member States which decide to participate in PESCO to submit, by the time of the adoption of this Council Decision, respective National Implementation Plans outlining their ability to implement the commitments they have undertaken, which will also be the basis for an annual assessment.
- Underlines the importance that those Member States who intend to participate in PESCO identify first collaborative PESCO projects to be agreed upon when PESCO is formally established, both in the area of capability development as well as on the operational dimension, aiming to optimize the available resources and improve their overall effectiveness, in support of the EU's Level of Ambition and its three strategic priorities. The proposals made so far should be prioritised with a view to a focused list of PESCO projects. The Council welcomes in this context the support provided by the EDA and EEAS (including the EU Military Staff) in developing a coherent approach and assessment methodology in view of the future project selection mechanism.

- In line with the common notification notes that third states may exceptionally be invited by project participants, in accordance with general arrangements to be decided in due time by the Council in accordance with Article 46 (6) TEU. They would need to provide substantial added value to the PESCO project, contribute to strengthening PESCO and the CSDP and meet more demanding commitments. This will not grant decision powers to such third states in the governance of PESCO. Moreover, the Council in PESCO format will decide if the conditions set out in the general arrangements are met by each third state invited by the respective project participants.
- Looks forward to an effective and well-coordinated implementation of PESCO, making the most of all existing structures.

European Defence Fund

3. The Council welcomes the progress on the implementation of the European Defence Fund, in particular the launching of the Preparatory Action on Defence Research and the swift examination of the Commission's proposal for a Regulation on a European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP). Taking into account all relevant elements mentioned in the European Council Conclusions of October 2017, the Council looks forward to reaching agreement on a general approach before the end of 2017. This would pave the way for an agreement with the European Parliament as early as possible in 2018 and to swiftly define a work programme in order to be able to support the first projects by 2019. The Council calls for making full use of EDA's potential in providing possible support to Member States in regard to the European Defence Fund. The Council invites Member States and the Commission to initiate discussions on the financial toolbox of the European Defence Fund and is looking forward to receiving proposals for dedicated programmes post-2020 in the research and capability windows of the European Defence Fund by summer 2018.

Coordinated Annual Review on Defence

4. Recalling notably its Conclusions of 18 May 2017, the Council welcomes the launch of the trial run of the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) and encourages all Member States to participate in it to the maximum extent possible. It highlights that CARD will help operationalise the Capability Development Plan and identify new areas for launching cooperative projects, which could be considered in the PESCO and/or European Defence Fund frameworks. For those Member States participating in PESCO, the annual assessment of progress towards attainment of PESCO commitments should draw to the maximum extent possible on information provided under the CARD exercise. The Council looks forward to the report of the CARD trial run, paving the way for further political guidance on the coherence of the European capability landscape ahead of the first full CARD implementation to be launched in 2019. It reiterates the need to ensure coherence between CARD, as well as the Capability Development Plan, and respective NATO processes, such as the NATO Defence Planning Process, where requirements overlap while recognising the different nature of the two organisations and their respective responsibilities.

Coherence among the EU defence initiatives

5. The Council underlines that PESCO, CARD and the European Defence Fund together will help bring about a step-change in defence cooperation between Member States, and will deepen European defence cooperation in line with the Council conclusions of November 2016. These three separate but mutually reinforcing initiatives will contribute to enhance the efficiency and output in the area of European security and defence by bringing Member States' armed forces closer together and strengthening the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB), through enhanced collaboration and coordination. The Council further recognises the importance of security of supply based on Member States' political commitments. The Council invites the High Representative/Vice-President/Head of the European Defence Agency to promote where appropriate further synergies and coordination among the respective processes, in close consultation with Member States.

Requirements Catalogue 2017

6. Today, the Council also approves the Requirements Catalogue 2017 (RC17) which identifies the military capability requirements for CSDP stemming from the EU Level of Ambition as agreed by the Council in November 2016, taking into account the three strategic priorities deriving from the EU Global Strategy. Based on the RC17, which is now broader and also takes into account new threats, work will continue in implementing its recommendations to identify and prioritise the EU military capability shortfalls contributing to the Capability Development Plan in view of identifying priorities for EU capability development.

EU Battlegroups

7. The Council reiterates the continuous need to reinforce the preparation of the EU Battlegroups, their modularity and their effective financing, also in order to facilitate political decision-making on deployment, in line with its Conclusions of 18 May 2017.

Single set of forces

8. 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.

Improving Military Mobility

9. In the current security environment, the need to facilitate and expedite military mobility for effective, timely and safe movement of military forces and assets across Europe and beyond has significantly increased. In that respect, the Council welcomes the timely presentation of the Joint Communication of the High Representative and the Commission which indicates possible lines of action the EU could take to facilitate and expedite military mobility across its territory including by maximising civilian/military synergies between EU instruments. In this context, it welcomes the work taken forward in the framework of the EDA, including the ad-hoc working group, working closely with the EEAS and Commission services, with a view to presenting a detailed roadmap with recommended tasks and responsibilities, including ambitious timelines also for the benefit of CSDP. The Council welcomes the intention of the High Representative and the Commission to present an Action Plan on Military Mobility which builds upon these results by March 2018. The Action Plan should consider comprehensively the infrastructural, procedural and regulatory issues in light of the military requirements defined by Member States to facilitate mobility of personnel and assets across the EU. In this light, the Council also recognises the PESCO participating Member States' commitment to simplifying and standardising cross-border military transport. These efforts should involve Member States' competent authorities in consultation with other pertinent stakeholders and should be coherent with the respective NATO initiatives in this area. The Council recognises the responsibility of the Member States as regards sovereign national decisions on military movements and will revert to the issue on a regular basis.

Strengthening Civilian CSDP

Priorities for civilian crisis management

10. The Council highlights the essential contribution of civilian CSDP to the three strategic priorities deriving from the EU Global Strategy, namely to respond to external conflicts and crises, to build the capacities of partners and to protect the EU and its citizens. The Council reiterates that strengthening the police, rule of law and civil administration remains the core function of civilian CSDP, and also underlines the importance of SSR and monitoring tasks and the possibility of deploying missions with executive mandates. Civilian CSDP is an important tool of the EU's external wider response also to tackle security challenges, including those linked to irregular migration, hybrid threats, cyber security, terrorism and radicalisation, organised crime, border management and maritime security. Further to its conclusions of November 2016 and March and May 2017, the Council expresses its resolve to further develop and strengthen the important role civilian CSDP can play alongside other EU instruments in addressing both the new and longstanding security challenges.
11. The Council furthermore stresses the importance of the EU Integrated Approach to Conflicts and Crises and close cooperation between CSDP and FSJ actors in order to strengthen the nexus between internal and external security as well as civilian-military synergies, including cooperation in the field and building capacities of partners. Regarding the cooperation between CSDP and the FSJ agencies, the Council underlines the need to swiftly move forward on the exchanges of relevant information and also to enhance cooperation at strategic and operational level.

12. Against this background, the Council invites the HR to submit a forward looking concept paper by early 2018. It should assess, how civilian CSDP should further contribute concretely to addressing the new and longstanding security challenges and where it has added value within the EU Integrated Approach to Conflicts and Crises and throughout the entire conflict cycle, including prevention, early warning, crisis management, stabilisation and peacebuilding, inter alia by building resilience, capacity building and support for security and stability. This work should take place in close consultation with Member States, Commission services, civilian CSDP Missions, FSJ actors and other relevant stakeholders.
13. The Council invites the HR to present on this basis by spring 2018, in close consultation with and taking into account relevant information from Member States, Commission services and FSJ actors (including agencies) a Civilian Capability Development Plan. This will lay out the next steps in the development of civilian capabilities.
14. Building on this work and further guidance received from Member States, a Civilian CSDP Compact, including political commitment to the process, should be agreed in 2018, in order to live up to the Level of Ambition derived from the EU Global Strategy. High level discussions could support this process, when appropriate. The Council invites the HR to report on the progress made in the framework of her reporting on the implementation plan on the EU Global Strategy.

Responsiveness of civilian missions

15. The Council reiterates the importance of the Union becoming more responsive, flexible and rapid in reaction. In this regard, the Council welcomes the concrete proposals to implement a multi-layered approach to civilian CSDP, building on existing structures. In particular, the Council approves the creation of the core responsiveness capacity, consisting of a reinforced Mission Support Platform as well as resources placed in existing Missions. This core responsiveness capacity can be complemented through rapidly deployable assets and planning elements from Member States, as well as, where agreed, specialised teams and multinational formations such as the European Gendarmerie Force. The layers can be activated simultaneously and deployed as required and appropriate. The multi-layered approach will be implemented in an inclusive manner. Further guidance with regard to the implementation, with the aim of achieving an ambitious responsiveness capacity, will need to be provided by Member States, in close consultation with the EEAS and the Commission. The Council invites the HR to establish the core responsiveness capacity, in close coordination with the Commission, to be fully operational by May 2018. The multi-layered approach should be reviewed by spring 2019.

Situational awareness

16. Further to its conclusions of November 2016 and May 2017, the Council welcomes the continued progress made in promoting EU civil-military intelligence-based situational awareness, notably through the progressive alignment of the various EEAS-structures and existing procedures and the structured cooperation with the EU Satellite Centre (SATCEN). It calls on enhanced Member State buy-in facilitating further intelligence support to the EU as well Member States providing experts and support including for the Hybrid Fusion Cell. It will revert to the issue again in view of further progress achieved.

Financing military CSDP missions and operations

17. The Council encourages the improvement of the financing provisions and arrangements of the common costs of EU military missions and operations. In that regard, it looks forward to an agreement by the end of 2017 on the comprehensive revision of the Athena mechanism to administer the financing of the common costs of EU operations having military or defence implications.

Cyber defence

18. The Council recognises that synergies between cyber defence and cyber security should be maximised, including in response to cyber incidents, based on the implementation and update of the 2014 EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework, and taking advantage of the implementation of the European Defence Action Plan and the Cybersecurity Package presented in September 2017. It particularly welcomes the EU CYBRID 2017 and EU PACE 2017 exercises, and encourages to build on the lessons learned. The Council encourages Member States to emphasise research and development of cyber technologies, cyber resilience and skills gaps, also to better protect EU CSDP missions and operations. The Council stresses in particular the need to swiftly establish a cyber training and education platform. The Council furthermore stresses the possibility to take full advantage of the proposed defence initiatives to accelerate the development of adequate cyber capabilities in Europe and recognises the opportunities in possibly developing cyber defence projects through PESCO, if deemed necessary by PESCO participating Member States.

Capacity Building in support of Security and Development

19. The Council welcomes the positive steps taken towards an amended Regulation of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), paving the way for capacity building in support of security and development in partner countries and it looks forward to the implementation. It recalls its previous Conclusions of 18 May and 6 March 2017, and 14 November 2016 about the need to fully cover all requirements to further support partner countries in preventing and managing crises on their own, including in the context of CSDP missions. It reiterates the flexible geographical scope of CBSD and calls on the Commission and the EEAS to swiftly identify and develop new projects. The Council further recalls its proposal to work on a dedicated instrument for providing capacity building taking into account the necessary preparatory work.
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