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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Enhanced EU Security Cooperation in and with Asia - Council conclusions (28 May 2018)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on the Enhanced EU Security Cooperation in and with Asia, as adopted by the Council at its 3621st meeting held on 28 May 2018.

ENHANCED EU SECURITY COOPERATION IN AND WITH ASIA

Council conclusions

1. The Council emphasises the role of the EU as a global security partner, in line with the priorities identified in the Global Strategy on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy, on-going work to strengthen the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and relevant Council Conclusions, notably those adopted by the Council on 6 March 2017 and 13 November 2017.
2. The Council reaffirms that the EU has a fundamental interest in co-operating with partners worldwide, including in Asia, to safeguard its citizens, defend the fundamental values upon which the Union is founded, including the protection of human rights, uphold the international rules based system, promote multilateralism, contribute to regional stability, prevent violent conflicts and secure the Union's economic interests.
3. The Council recognises the increasing importance of Asian security for European interests and emphasises that Asian countries, regional organisations and platforms, such as the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM), are crucial to help secure a more stable and peaceful world. The Council stresses that efforts to enhance EU-Asian security cooperation and Euro-Asia connectivity should be mutually reinforcing.
4. The Council notes there have already been positive security-related outcomes of existing cooperation. It welcomes the concrete contributions of Asian naval forces to help deter, prevent and counter acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. The Council also welcomes the EU co-chairmanship of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Intersessional Meeting on Maritime Security (2018-2020) and the holding of several editions of the EU-ASEAN High-Level Dialogue on Maritime Security.

5. The Council notes there are important possibilities to deepen EU security cooperation with its Asian Strategic Partners: China, India, Japan and the Republic of Korea. It also underlines the importance of deepening co-operation with other partners, along with ASEAN and its member states. In each case, the emphasis should be on achieving tangible results in addressing shared security challenges, both in Asia and elsewhere (notably Africa and the Middle East), including on the full implementation of UN Security Council resolutions, making cooperation a two-way street.
6. The Council considers that the key areas for deeper security engagement are: maritime security, cyber security, counter terrorism, hybrid threats, conflict prevention, the proliferation of Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) weapons and the development of regional cooperative orders. The Council underlines the need for EU security and defence cooperation in and with Asia to become more operational. The Council notes that closer coordination of all security-related activities by the EU and Member States would enhance visibility and collective impact.
7. The Council agrees that the immediate priorities regarding the EU's security engagement in and with Asia should be to:
 - a) Support regional peace and stability in Asia, complementing existing or future dialogues with capacity building where appropriate, training programmes and joint exercises;
 - b) Bring increased visibility and impact to the EU's security engagement with priority Asian partners by developing a tailor-made cooperation approach, grouping together EU security-related efforts with the country concerned;
 - c) Increase co-ordination, complementarities and synergies with EU Member States' bilateral initiatives across Asia;

- d) Further operationalise the EU's involvement with the ASEAN-led regional security architecture and other forms of multilateral security cooperation in Asia, including the ASEAN Defence Minister Plus process and the East Asia Summit;
- e) Help strengthen the ability of ASEAN and its member states to better address traditional and non-traditional maritime security issues such as upholding freedom of navigation, fight against piracy, organised crime, Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, illegal trafficking and maritime pollution;
- f) Enhance cooperation on maritime security with other Asian partners, including the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA);
- g) Deepen cooperation in the field of conflict prevention and fighting impunity by working jointly to address root causes, making full use of the potential of preventive diplomacy and promoting security sector reform;
- h) Enhance cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism by addressing e.g. the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, radicalisation including in prisons and the online threat in all its aspects;
- i) Deepen existing cooperation on upholding key international normative frameworks, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the UN Outer Space Treaty and implementing confidence building measures on that basis;
- j) Enhance cooperation in the field of cyber security in favour of a global, open, free, stable and secure cyberspace. Deepen cooperation to investigate and prosecute cybercrime in line with the Budapest Convention and work with Asian partners on the application of international law in cyberspace and the implementation of norms of responsible state behaviour and on cyber capacity building;
- k) Based on the EU's integrated approach, gradually expand mil-to-mil and staff-to-staff contacts with priority Asian security cooperation partners;

- l) Encourage more Asian participation in EU CSDP missions and operations and offer European Security and Defence College (ESDC) training to countries with possible interest in contributing to EU operations;
 - m) Explore opportunities for the EU and its Member States, working within existing resources, to observe or participate in Asian partner-led exercises and to advance cooperation on UN peacekeeping training;
 - n) Develop targeted capacity building, training and joint exercises in the field of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation, including through the EU-led regional Centres of Excellence;
 - o) Enhance cooperation with Asian partners on global challenges with a relevant security angle, such as climate change, environmental security, biodiversity degradation, irregular migration and humanitarian and disaster relief.
8. The Council invites the High Representative/Vice-President and the Commission to update on the implementation of these priorities.
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