

Emergency Resolution adopted at the EPP Congress, St. Julian's (Malta), 29 - 30 March 2017

Security and Defence

In an ever-changing world, marked by emerging challenges and constantly transforming threats, security and defence continue to play an increasingly important role for the European Union. The purpose of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is to protect our citizens and their territory, to defend our interests as well as to promote our values and principles. It is time for the EU to fully deliver on these promises and progressively develop a common Union defence policy, which should lead to a future common defence. Therefore, the level of ambition must rise collectively in order to tackle current as well as future challenges.

The priority is to **protect our citizens** from instability and threats both within and outside the EU. Therefore:

- National defence spending must reflect **seriousness and commitment** to the tasks ahead. We welcome the commitment by NATO Member Countries to invest **2% of their national GDP** on security and defence, and we encourage EU Member States to increase their defence spending for our common security in the future.
- **National duplication** and **fragmentation** must be prevented through a system of **pooling and sharing** among MS in order to operate in the most effective and cost-efficient manner. Moreover, rapid **implementation** on a national level must be considered a **key element** of the overall commitment.
- Based on the planned Military Planning and Conduct Capability, an EU civilian and military headquarters as well as a fully-fledged **EU Operational HQ** shall be established to ensure quick and effective planning, **interoperability and** command and control. A **permanent forum** for decision-making shall be established, which will ultimately lead to a **Council of Defence** Ministers, in order to guarantee operationalisation of resources and effective cooperation and integration among MS.
- The EU should make use of the full range of legal instruments provided in the Treaty of Lisbon. Effective cooperation within **Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)** will allow MS, which are able and willing to engage and contribute within the European framework, to improve our common defence solidarity as stipulated in Art. 42. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.
- Member States shall cooperate, **share relevant information** and **ensure rapid responses** in order to build **resilience**, address present challenges, such as irregular migration, and effectively counter **hybrid threats**, such as **cyber security** and disinformation campaigns. Strategic Communications must be strengthened in order to make the EU's security and defence policy a success.

For the EU to become a **regional and global power**, it is crucial to ensure **stability and peace** along its **borders** and within the catchment area.

- The EU and NATO must continue to deepen their common efforts agreed upon in the **Warsaw Joint Declaration**. Their mutual commitment is crucial for the EU's future security efforts.
- **Strategic partnerships** must be built beyond borders, with countries as well as with organizations. To the east, Ukraine must remain a strong partner and be supported on its path towards stability and prosperity. We should not lose sight of the security challenges which other association countries, namely Georgia and Moldova, face. To the south, Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan are reliable partners. Moreover, cooperation with counterparts such as the OSCE and the African Union, as well as the UN, are crucial for **securing borders, regulating immigration and combating terrorism** at its roots.
- The EU must have rapid response forces in place to tackle quickly emerging challenges. **EU Battlegroups** remain a tool that must be developed and improved as the primary option of choice.

A strong, independent and well-funded defence market will be the backbone of an EU Security and Defence Union.

- The EPP welcomes the presentation of a much-anticipated **European Defence Action Plan**,
- The creation of a **European Defence Fund** with the allocated economic resources for joint defence research projects in order to support innovative **SMEs and industries** to develop capabilities together. We need to support joint acquisitions by Member States either through bilateral or multilateral agreements, supported by a future common **defence fund**. The European Investment Bank must be able also to finance defence projects therefore we have to scrap the restrictions of the EU member states.
- A more integrated, sustainable, innovative and competitive **European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB)** may lead to the integration of a common **defence market**. In its first steps, the EDTIB must aim at targets such as boosting the economy by integrating SMEs, creating jobs and establishing a functioning security-of-supply regime.
- We underline the importance of the Preparatory Action for CSDP-related research, which should receive adequate funding in the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). This should lead to the establishment of an EU Defence Research Programme under the next MFF (2021-2027).
- Therefore we need to strengthen the use of Europe-wide public procurement.

- The **European Defence Agency** shall be strengthened by enhanced national funding and by the execution of joint projects by MS.

For the past 25 years, the EPP has been a constant frontrunner on security and defence policy. It is our duty to remain in this position. We believe that by taking the necessary steps, we will be able to create a strong and collective CSDP.