

10 point S&D Group position on EU Security and Defence

Over the last few years, the EU Security and Defence policy has become a major priority for EU citizens and politics. New types of challenges have emerged: proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts resulting in migratory flows, competition for natural resources, energy dependence, climate change, failed states, terrorism, cyber-attacks, erosion of regional and global arms control agreements, disinformation campaigns and cross border organized crime.

As Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament, we stand for:

1

The EU as a “soft power” in transformation

In an increasingly unstable multi-polar world, with nationalist, xenophobic and anti-democratic forces on the rise, it is crucial for the European Union to become an influential player on the world stage. We are proud of the EU’s leading role as a global “soft power”, investing in conflict prevention, crises management and mediation before military options are considered. However, we do acknowledge that “soft power” alone is no longer sufficient to provide the security of our citizens.

2

Promoting a global rule-based order

The European Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy must be firmly enshrined in the framework of the United Nations. As the UN Charter and the European Union Treaty stipulate, the EU military interventions in third countries should be backed by UN Security Council resolutions and/or have the approval of the country in question.

3

EU and NATO working hand in hand

Whilst some EU member states are not NATO members, the EU and NATO are natural partners. Enhancing their cooperation is vital as well as recognizing that territorial defence is both the task of NATO and EU Member States with NATO being the structure for collective defence. We also promote cooperation between NATO and non-NATO EU Member States. An increased EU role is needed, in capability planning as well as in joint military and civilian missions.

4

Fighting terrorism and respecting fundamental rights

Terrorism is a threat to our core European values and security. EU cooperation and intelligence sharing should be strengthened while promoting and protecting fundamental rights and freedom. We need enhanced cooperation involving border management, law-enforcement, judicial and intelligence authorities at national and European levels as well as with third countries. The EU needs to tackle the root causes of radicalisation to counter violent extremism and terrorism.

5

More efficiency in the defence industry

The defence industry in the EU Member States fails to coordinate and cooperate at the expense of taxpayers' money. We are keen to promote a more integrated internal market for defence goods and EU support for coordinated research and development. The interests of employees in the defence industry should be safeguarded particularly in a period of transition.

6

Banning nuclear weapons

We believe that a world without Weapons of Mass Destruction is a safer one for everybody. We want to expand the EU's role on global disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons ranging from small arms to nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles. In this context, we want to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

7

Controlling Arms exports

We insist that that Member States comply with the EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports. Regimes that routinely violate Human Rights should not be supplied with more tools to suppress dissent. We support measures against landmines, cluster munitions, depleted uranium ammunition and securing loose weapons in conflict zones.

8

Promoting security, stability & development in the European Union's neighbourhood countries and in Africa

Our partnership with Africa and our action in the EU's neighbourhood countries should be based on the notion that security and development go hand in hand. We are, however, of the opinion that security measures must be financed through additional means and not by funds allocated to aid and development.

9

Additional funding for new EU Security and Defence activities

We stress that additional tasks require equivalent additional financial means by EU Member States for the Union's budget, and should not be financed from budgetary allocations for the other policies. The Union's budget could cover the administrative and operational costs of PESCO and of the European Defence Action Plan as well as a bigger share of the costs of the European Defence Agency and EU missions and operations. Whilst some Member States are taking the lead in an ambitious Permanent European Structured Cooperation (PESCO), it is of vital importance that this cooperation remains open to the participation of other Member States based on the same initial criteria.

10

More parliamentary control

We demand that the European Parliament - alongside national parliaments - be in the position to guarantee the parliamentary oversight of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy and its budget. If, in future, the military missions would be decided upon by the EU and no longer by the Member States (intergovernmental), we demand the European Parliament to have the right to approve such missions or operations.