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Background Paper: Session IV

Quo Vadis EU defence: A Force for Peace or a Military Power?

The EU's policies within the broad field of security and defence have been affected by novel political developments. These are partly external to the EU and linked to the deterioration of the Unions' security environment. But internal developments such as tightening defence budgets and the willingness to consolidate the defence industrial base in Europe (EDTIB) have also provided security and defence cooperation with a new dynamism.

There are at least three main dimensions in the on-going deepening security and defence policies. The first is the broadened foci of security and defence, which in the form of CSDP used to be mainly linked to external crisis management. During the past few years the Union's needs have been defined in a broader manner, which was reflected in the EU's Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS), endorsed in June 2016. The EUGS defined *the protection of Europe* as one of the key goals of the EU's security and defence policy. This strategic shift from a global responsibility and need to prevent and manage crises external to Europe has affected the Union's various policies in the field by putting the Union's territory, borders and citizenry at the centre of its security policy. This trend is reflected in the strengthened political emphasis on TEU art 42.7. , the mutual defence clause, in political debates. Moreover, discussions revolving around the EU's strategic autonomy or even about a common European army, are further examples of a broadened focus of security and defence.

The second new dimension deals with procurement issues and common capabilities taking a key position on the defence agenda. This implies an effort to use existing EU competences and mechanisms to strengthen the defence industrial base by supporting procurement cooperation and common projects and hence, decrease duplication and overlap in the planning and production of defence equipment. A European defence fund has been established to finance common research and development projects with a sum of 525 million euros during 2019-20. Later on the fund is supposed to reach a 13 billion euros in the Union's multiannual financial framework of 2021-27.

It is in this framework the Member States have also decided to coordinate their capability needs better, and to reach this goal the EUGS called for the *gradual synchronisation and mutual adaptation of national defence planning cycles and capability development practices*. This led in May 2017 to the establishment of a Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD). A trial run of the CARD 'Review' started in the autumn of 2017, leading to a first CARD report in November 2018. A first full CARD-cycle will run in 2019-2020. The EDA-run CARD exercise is basically

a gap analysis of the Member States' current capabilities, procurement plans and the priorities identified in the Capability Development Plan (CDP).

The launching of PESCO, Permanent Structural Cooperation, forms another important effort to enhance capability cooperation. This permanent framework for defence cooperation allows willing and able member states to jointly develop defence capabilities, invest in shared projects, and enhance the operational readiness and contribution of their armed forces. Thus far 34 PESCO projects have been established with varying participation among the 25 Member States taking part in PESCO. In May the Council made its first annual review of whether the participating Member States meet the more binding commitments included in PESCO.

Finally, the broadened security and defence cooperation agenda has also affected the institutional set-up and involved the Commission as a key actor due to its mandate in general economic and industrial policies. This has contributed to security and defence policy developing towards a normalised field of EU policies interlinked with adjacent areas of external and internal policies. The following questions, however, need to be addressed in order to assess the future direction of security and defence cooperation:

Points of discussion:

- What are the main current dividing lines among Member States on security and defence cooperation and how can they be overcome?
- How can the negative consequences of Brexit for security and defence cooperation be minimized?
- How could the EU further enhance the implementation of the treaty-based possibilities in security and defence cooperation?