# Maritime dimension of the common security and defence policy

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Ana GOMES (S&D, PT) on the maritime dimension of the Common Security and Defence Policy.

EU Member States comprise a **coastline of over 90 000 kilometres in length** bordering two oceans and four seas, in addition to overseas territories and national security installations throughout other oceans. Members strongly believe that the **EU has a vital interest in a secure, open and clean maritime environment** that allows the free passage of commerce and people and the peaceful, legal, fair and sustainable use of the oceans' riches. The security of European citizens and the promotion of the principles of Article 21 TFEU are an EU and Member State responsibility. **The EU institutional framework, both civilian and military, should, therefore, be further developed** in order to provide for the objectives, means and capabilities necessary to meet that responsibility.

**Towards a European Maritime Security Strategy**: Members consider that a European Maritime Security Strategy is needed to ensure an **integrated and comprehensive approach**, focusing specifically on the threats, risks, challenges and opportunities present at sea. Such a strategy should:

- **develop synergies and joint responses** mobilising all relevant institutions and actors, both civilian and military;
- **identify all potential threats**, from conventional security threats to those posed by natural disasters and climate change, from threats affecting the protection of vital marine resources to the security of maritime infrastructure and trade flows;
- **identify the specific means and capabilities** needed to address all challenges, including intelligence, surveillance and patrolling, search and rescue, sealift, evacuation of EU and other nationals from crisis zones, enforcing embargoes, and assistance to any CSDP-led missions and operations.

The report invites the High Representative, the Commission and the Council to elaborate an **EMSS centred on articulation and coordination among all European actors and Member States relevant to maritime security**. Members take the view that the EMSS's level of ambition, means and capabilities should be anchored in the ESS and the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and should be framed by the need to act as a global security provider, thereby ensuring free maritime flows and access on the high seas worldwide.

They call on Member States to closely assist and actively engage with the EEAS and the Commission in elaborating the new EMSS, with the aim of making **efficient use of all their varied assets**, as well as bearing in mind the identification and creation of new capabilities through **pooling and sharing**.

**Potential risks**: legal and illegal activities at sea have been growing in number and complexity as a result of this multiplication of actors present at sea making it increasingly difficult to distinguish legal activities from illegal ones. The report notes that the **EU is facing conventional threats to its security**, in particular since the emergence of new maritime powers has rendered more likely potential interstate rivalries over the ownership of maritime areas. In addition, emerging countries have developed their maritime capabilities (navies, submarines) and, at the same time, tend to call international maritime law principles into question.

Members recall that several factors such as poverty, lack of development, low levels of state control and law enforcement and the vulnerability of routes facilitate the proliferation of different types of threats to maritime security.

Those threats can derive both from the **behaviours of states interested in disturbing international maritime flows and from the illegal activities of non-state actors**, such as transnational crime (e.g. arms or drugs trafficking), international terrorism or piracy, that exploit the weaknesses of a fragmented local, regional and global maritime governance system.

This puts pressure on the EU to invest in a **holistic approach** in order to address the complexity of transnational challenges, which no Member State can meet alone.

**Critical maritime zones**: as a global actor, the EU must consider security challenges and possible autonomous responses, especially with regard to the nearby Mediterranean Sea, the Horn of Africa and West Atlantic areas, but also the Pacific, via East and West, and from the Arctic to the Antarctic. The report makes a number of recommendations for each of these critical maritime zones.

The **EU's strategy for the Horn of Africa** (where three ongoing CSDP missions in the region (EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EU Training Mission in Somalia and EUCAP Nestor) should be used as a model for a comprehensive approach involving EU's political, diplomatic, social, and economic tools.

This comprehensive approach must be at the core of the EMSS and should involve coordination among different EU initiatives, agencies and instruments, with a view to addressing the root causes of instability and helping to solve conflict.

In conclusion, Members invite the **forthcoming Defence European Council in December 2013** to adopt an EU Maritime Security Strategy that includes the views of the European Parliament as expressed in this report.