Maritime dimension of the common security and defence policy

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The European Parliament adopted by 436 votes to 163, with 33 abstentions, a resolution 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. It is for this reason that the Members strongly believe that the **EU has a vital interest in a secure, open and clean maritime environment**.

Towards a European Maritime Security Strategy: Parliament considers 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.

Parliament 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**. It takes the view that the EMSS's level of ambition, means and capabilities should be anchored in the ESS and the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP).

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 resolution 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. Parliament 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.

Existing tools and capability development: Parliament is convinced that the financial and economic crisis should be seen as an opportunity to implement the 'Pooling and Sharing' initiative in the field of maritime capability generation in a truly European manner. It encourages Member States to work with the European Defence Agency (EDA) to **identify capability needs, particularly civilian, military and dual-use capabilities in the maritime domain**. It recalls the need for the consolidation of an **EU-based and EU-funded technological base** in the field of defence, including naval construction and equipment production capabilities.

Members consider that **irregular migration** must not be regarded as a security threat, but rather as a human phenomenon that requires a robust management strategy. They draw attention to the fact that this effort requires the **development of maritime capabilities and coastguard activities** to patrol and rescue migrants travelling on board illegal vessels.

In conclusion, Parliament invites 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 resolution.