Constitutional, legal and institutional implications of a common security and defence policy: possibilities offered by the Lisbon Treaty

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The European Parliament adopted by 360 votes to 212, with 48 abstentions, a resolution on the constitutional, legal and institutional implications of a common security and defence policy: possibilities offered by the Lisbon Treaty.

Constitutional and legal framework: according to Parliament, the Lisbon Treaty brings to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) a **sufficient and coherent framework** that sets the path for a truly common policy, based on shared resources and capabilities as well as on coordinated planning at Union level.

Parliament called for:

- the **European Defence Agency (EDA) and permanent structured cooperation (PESCO)** to be treated as Union institutions *sui generis*, as is the case with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and for them to be **financed with a specific section in the Union budget;**
- a definition and the commitment to a common level of ambition within a reformed EDA: Members called for the reinforcement of the EDA's political backing, funding and resources, as well as of its coordination with the actions of the Commission, the Member States and other actors, especially in the areas of capability development, defence procurement, research and the promotion of interoperability among Member States' armed forces;
- the continued need for the establishment of a **Council format of Defence Ministers** under the presidency of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in order to coordinate the implementation of the CSDP and make it more efficient.

Parliament encouraged Member States to **join PESCO** within the Union framework as soon as possible and that a permanent "European Integrated Force" (EIF) should be set-up as a multinational force.

Moreover, the **EU Battlegroup system** should be brought under PESCO, alongside the creation of a permanent civilian and military headquarter. This would strengthen strategic and operational planning across the entire planning cycle, enhance civil-military cooperation and improve the EU's ability to react speedily to crises.

Members called for a closer relationship between the **CSDP and NATO**, which offers a political opportunity for collaboration and complementarity at every level.

The European added value of the CSDP: convinced that the security and defence threats faced by the EU, and directed at its citizens and territory, are common and cannot be addressed by a Member State alone, Parliament called on the EU to develop an effective system for European burden-sharing for its own security and defence.

Members considered it essential to **increase national defence expenditure to 2 % of EU GDP**, this would mean extra expenditure of nearly EUR 100 billion on defence by the end of the coming decade.

A substantial part of that expenditure should be channelled to research and development, as well as to strategic cooperative programmes, focusing on new dual-use and defence technologies.

Role of the Parliament: Parliament should, jointly with the Council, exercise legislative and budgetary functions, as well as functions of political control and consultation as laid down in the Treaties. The views of Parliament should be duly taken into consideration in the framework of the consultation of Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the CSDP as part of the CFSP. Parliament is urged to turn its Subcommittee on Security and Defence into a fully-fledged parliamentary committee.

Political recommendations: the resolution supported the proposal for a Coordinated Annual Review on Defence and called on the Council and the VP/HR to elaborate an **EU white book** on security and defence that includes an appropriate definition of the threats and dangers to European security faced by the EU.

Parliament called on the need to:

- clarify thoroughly the governance, financing and objectives of the possible **European Defence Fund**;
- immediately reform of the **Athena mechanism** in view of enlarging its potential for cost sharing and common funding, as well as of ensuring a fair sharing of operational costs, without being restricted by their financial capabilities;
- ensure that **European military training missions abroad** achieve their task of training local national military units capable of addressing conditions of war and security threats (rebellions and terrorism);
- reflect on the need for deeper discussions on the future relation between the **Union and the United Kingdom** in CSDP matters, and in particular in the field of military capabilities, should the UK decide to trigger Article 50 TEU;
- reform the **UN Security Council** must be reformed, especially as regards its composition and voting procedures, in order to boost its capacity to act decisively to address global security challenges.

The members of a future convention are called upon to establish a **standing "defence matters" working group** of members of the Commission, to be chaired by the VP/HR and in association with the Parliament.