The EEAS’s Climate Change and Defence Roadmap

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The European Parliament adopted by 356 votes to 159, with 114 abstentions, a resolution on the EEAS’s Climate Change and Defence Roadmap.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine poses an unprecedented threat to the European security order and puts pressure on all sectors of the Union and its Member States. Climate change remains at the heart of the peace and security agenda, as it is seen as the **'threat multiplier'**, responsible for increasing social, economic and environmental risks that can fuel unrest as well as lead to violent conflict.

Strategy and concept

Parliament stressed the need to learn lessons from the changed security situation in Europe resulting from the **Russian war of aggression against Ukraine** and to speed up military capability development processes, as well as projects to make military technology more independent from fossil fuels, while at the same time increasing mission effectiveness and fighting strength.

Members are convinced that military activities and technology have to contribute to the Union’s carbon neutrality targets in order to contribute to the fight against climate change without compromising mission security and without undermining the operational capabilities of the armed force.

Parliament urged the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to ensure that environmental protection and the fight against climate change and its effects are **integrated into the Union's external action**. It called for the development of climate-specific strategies, policies, procedures, measures and capabilities and to ensure that the development of an EU climate security and defence policy includes the implementation of a human security approach.

Climate change and defence roadmap

Parliament called on the VP/HR to propose to Member States an **immediate action programme** including priority measures presented in the Climate Change and Defence Roadmap that can be implemented in the short term. It called for a review of the overall objectives before 2030. It invited Member States to establish national structures to support the objectives and called on all actors to consider this process as a priority and to develop and implement initiatives in line with the integrated approach.

Members called on the VP/HR to **present, by mid-2023, an assessment of the carbon footprint and environmental impact** of the Union's external action and stressed the need to develop by 2023 an effective method for quantifying greenhouse gas emissions from all EU security and defence activities. They called for voluntary targets to reduce the greenhouse gas emission intensity of military missions and operations, as well as a commitment to climate neutrality by 2050.

According to Members, the characteristics of clean hydrogen would make it one of the solutions for replacing fossil fuels and reducing the armed forces' greenhouse gas emissions.

A comprehensive and consistent approach

Parliament called for **coordinated action** to rapidly limit both the scale and scope of climate change by substantially reducing emissions. All elements of security, including infrastructure, institutions and policies, should be climate-proofed. Members strongly welcomed the fact that the Union's new Global Europe instrument (NDICI) reflects well the urgency and importance of swift, strong and extensive external climate action and will make sure that 30 % of its seven-year budget of EUR 80 billion supports climate actions. It called on the Commission to fully respect these targets and to include in its calculations only those measures that have a clear climate dimension.

The resolution stressed the need to boost the Union's **strategic foresight, early-warning, situational awareness and conflict-analysis capacities** using qualitative and quantitative data and innovative methods from various sources. It welcomed the key role played by European space programmes in this context. The principle of data-driven policy and programmes must be central to climate security programmes.

Members also stressed that **environment-related peacebuilding** should be reinforced, as it is one of the overall sustainable and fair solutions addressing the effects of climate change and can also present opportunities to build peace, while fostering dialogue and cooperation at the local, national and international level (e.g. on natural resource management, access to land and water, environmental protection, disaster risk reduction, welcoming climate refugees, etc.).

Addressing the operational dimension

Members are convinced that Member States should urgently mandate all missions and operations and all European Peace Facility (EPF) actions to contribute more to the integrated approach for addressing climate security challenges, in particular in the Sahel and Horn of Africa regions. This would reduce the costs of operations, while improving the missions' operational effectiveness.

The resolution stressed the need to integrate climate security and environment-related peacebuilding into the updated EU concepts on Security Sector Reform and Disarmament. Civilian missions and military operations take climate change into account from the outset. Members also stressed the imperative need to ensure that EU activities in fragile third countries do not contribute to resource scarcity, rising prices for vital resources or environmental degradation and pollution

Integrating climate change into military capability development

Parliament called for an assessment of the effects of climate change-induced changes in weather patterns and the increased frequency of extreme weather events on the operational effectiveness of armed forces. It stressed that increased defence spending should not lead to increased emissions.

The resolution stressed the need to increase **investment in 'green' defence**, including by devoting a greater share of military R&D and dual-use technological innovations (materials, energy, etc.) funded by the EU budget to carbon-neutral fuels and propulsion systems for aircraft, ships and other military vehicles.

Increasing international cooperation and multilateralism

Members called for the climate-security nexus to be included as a new priority area for the UN-EU Strategic Partnership on Peace Operations and Crisis Management. They stressed that the lack of climate finance is a major barrier to meaningfully addressing climate change and building climate security.