Implementation of the common security and defence policy - annual report 2022

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The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Tom VANDENKENDELAERE (EPP, BE) on the implementation of the common security and defence policy – annual report 2022.

Context

Europe is facing the most complex combination of both military and non-military threats since the end of the Cold War, accentuated by Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. In response to these threats, the EU urgently needs to enhance the effectiveness of its foreign, security and defence policy to defend its interests, values and citizens, both within and outside its borders, to deliver peace, human security, sustainable development and democracy and to support its partners.

The Strategic Compass aims to equip the EU with the necessary strategic guidance, realistic and operational tools to move towards a coherent and credible defence policy, and to make it an effective and capable security provider and an assertive global actor. There is a new urgency to boosting EU security and defence capabilities, including building on the unprecedented support for Ukraine, most notably through the European Peace Facility (EPF), and ensuring complementarity with NATO.

Russia's hybrid aggression makes it necessary to design the defence of a free Europe in a comprehensive and multifaceted manner incorporating all critical areas, from the improvement of traditional military capacities, to the protection of critical civilian infrastructure, supply chains and energy facilities, as well as the active fight against disinformation and cybersecurity threats.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has also underlined the lack of investment in security and defence in numerous EU and NATO Member States.

The report also added that China has increased its defence spending over the last decade by about 600 % and is making use of its military power to intimidate and threaten its neighbours, most notably Taiwan.

Using momentum to enhance the CSDP

Members stress that the dramatic deterioration in European security calls for the EU to step up its **strategic autonomy** and joint efforts to achieve the necessary defence capacities and show greater willingness to continue to act in a united way in order to deliver the security expected by EU citizens. Member States are called on to accelerate their military assistance to Ukraine, in particular the provision of weapons in response to clearly identified needs.

Strengthening capabilities by increased, joint and smarter spending

The report welcomes the EU's ambition to strengthen its military and civilian capabilities and it stresses the need to make full and better use of EU initiatives and budgets in order to close critical capability gaps and ensure swift deployability of armed forces, replenish depleted stocks and reduce fragmentation in the defence-procurement sector.

Member States are urged to commit to a significant increase in funding for the envisaged joint EU procurement mechanisms, such as the European defence industry reinforcement through common

procurement act and the a European Defence Investment Programme, by providing adequate funding and to take swift and thorough action in this crucial field while ensuring interoperability with NATO.

The report also underlines the urgent need to establish a truly European defence equipment market.

Reinforcing CSDP missions and operations

Members support the review and reinforcement of all civilian CSDP missions and military operations to align them more closely with the real needs of the countries concerned. They call for the adoption of a new Civilian CSDP Compact by mid-2023 that will provide objectives on the type, number and size of civilian missions and calls for a civilian capability development process to be set up by 2024.

Systematisation of security and defence partnerships

The report calls for the strengthening, when strategically relevant, of security and defence partnerships with like-minded partners worldwide to meet the EU's level of ambition as a security provider. Members welcome the EU-US security and defence dialogue as an important milestone in closer transatlantic cooperation. In addition, Members reiterate their call for institutionalised security and defence cooperation with the United Kingdom.

Enhancing Parliament's scrutiny of the CSDP

The need to involve Parliament more actively in CSDP and defence industrial policy decision-making has been stressed. Members encourage proposals for further action by Parliament, and in particular its Subcommittee on Security and Defence, to improve its impact on the CSDP, and to ensure the effectiveness, consistency, democratic accountability and adequate parliamentary scrutiny of EU security and defence policy and initiatives by inter alia:

- including the Subcommittee on Security and Defence as co-deciding committee in accordance with rule 58 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament in all legislative files with substantial and relevant implications for security and defence;

- creating a fully-fledged Defence Council;

- setting up a full Committee on Security and Defence;

- reinforcing inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation with national parliaments on European security and defence to reinforce accountability and scrutiny of security and defence policy.