EU strategic defence and security partnerships

2025/2119(INI) - 11/02/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 440 votes to 119, with 85 abstentions, a resolution on EU strategic defence and security partnerships.

European safety environment

Parliament stressed that **security and defence partnerships are essential** for Europe to respond effectively to emerging threats and to support the Union's ambition to play a stronger role as a global strategic actor. These partnerships are not an option but a necessity for Europe to become more sovereign and assume greater responsibility for its own defence.

Members believe that **Russia** 's neo-imperial aspirations and revisionist stance constitute **the most significant threat** to European security and that it is urgent to strengthen the EU's defensive and deterrent capabilities. Russia continues its aggression on the European continent, notably with the support of its allies such as the Iranian, North Korean, and Belarusian regimes, while economic cooperation between the Union and China must be reassessed in light of Chinese support for Russia's war economy.

Parliament stressed the importance of industrial cooperation, innovation, interoperability, and joint training, as well as the EU's commitment to **the rules-based international order**, human rights, and multilateralism. It called for regular updates to the **Strategic Compass** and for strengthening resilience, particularly in the areas of critical infrastructure, supply chains, and energy independence.

Criticality of the EU-NATO strategic partnership

Parliament emphasised the strengthened strategic partnership with NATO, particularly in areas such as military mobility, maritime security, the defence industry, and capability development, notably through joint exercises that reinforce NATO's European pillar. This cooperation must remain mutually reinforcing and be based on trust, transparency and respect for the decision-making autonomy of both organisations.

Members considered NATO to be the most successful military and political alliance in modern history, having ensured collective defence, stability, and security of its members for over seven decades. **The EU's relationship with NATO is a priority** and must continue to develop. Recalling that NATO remains the essential alliance for collective transatlantic defence, the resolution stressed the need for a **strong EU defence pillar within NATO**, capable of acting autonomously while complementing NATO, thereby strengthening the transatlantic partnership and providing the necessary security guarantees for the EU and its Member States.

The Commission and Member States are invited to **simplify and harmonise the rules** on the production, certification, transfer, military mobility and maintenance of defence equipment and systems, in order to build a competitive and integrated European industrial supply chain, capable of ensuring greater operational preparedness and full and effective **interoperability** between the EU and NATO.

The need for EU partnerships in security and defence

Parliament emphasised the strategic importance and priority of the security and defence partnerships signed with **Norway, the United Kingdom, and Canada**, which are NATO allies and crucial EU defence

partners. Stressing that relations between the EU and the **United States** remain a cornerstone of European security and defence, it stressed the importance of exploring the establishment of a formal security and defence partnership with the United States.

Members stressed the importance of exploring the establishment of a formal security and defence partnership with **Ukraine**. They also highlighted the strategic importance of the EU's partnerships with countries in the **Indo-Pacific region** (Japan, South Korea, and India). Lastly, they emphasised the importance of establishing partnerships with **Western Balkan** countries to improve regional stability, counter hybrid threats, and strengthen the European security architecture in the EU's immediate neighbourhood.

Partnership with the United Nations, various modes of cooperation

The resolution underscored the importance of the EU-UN strategic partnership on peace operations and crisis management (2025-2028), stressing the coherence, joint planning, and integration of the **Women, Peace and Security** agenda. It underlined the strategic role of the **European Peace Facility** (EPF) while deploring the Hungarian Government’s ongoing obstruction of the use of this instrument to assist Ukraine. Members regretted that the agreement with the UK has not yet been finalised.

Parliament insisted that the EU’s defence readiness 2030 requires partnerships and EU involvement with **like-minded partners**. Achieving the EU’s proclaimed goals requires securing supply chains, including of raw materials and critical components, reinforcing and strengthening the European defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB) and reducing the EU’s strategic dependencies.

Strengthening key areas of collaboration

Parliament highlighted the role of security and defence partnerships in **integrated border management** with a number of partners, calling for increased EU financial and operational support for the border management capabilities of frontline states. It called for more joint **maritime security** exercises to promote operational readiness on waterways and at strategically important border crossings worldwide, particularly in areas where vital EU interests are threatened.

Faced with cyberattacks and **information manipulation** and foreign interference activities, Members called for the EU to strengthen cooperation with its partners to strengthen its resilience and protect its critical infrastructure.

They stressed that extensive intergovernmental cooperation and information sharing, both within the EU and with third countries, are needed to effectively combat and **prevent terrorism and violent extremism**. Furthermore, partnerships are essential to promote peaceful and responsible behaviours in **outer space**.

Lastly, Members called for strengthening the **role of Parliament** in fostering defence cooperation.