Security research : the next steps

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report by Bogdan Adam **KLICH** (EPP-ED, PL). (Please see the document of 20/04/2005.) Parliament felt that an efficient security research programme should be based on a coordinated reference framework, involving relevant security research stakeholders and appropriate and rationalised funding, and should be built on existing Community experience in the management of joint research programmes.

The European Security Research Programme and its financing: Parliament underlined that the ESRP should respect the particular nature of security research, taking into account specific elements such as rules governing intellectual property rights, treatment of classified information, protection of secure information and technology transfer. The activities of the ESRP should be based on the codecision procedure. Parliament recommended that the future European security research programme should include among its priorities the fight against terrorism, territorial monitoring, civil defence, control of the Union's external frontiers, and other areas in which Community action can provide added value without entering into conflict with the competences of the Member States. It shared the view that the ESRP should focus concretely but not exclusively on research activities and technological areas with common added value so as to successfully mitigate new security challenges, such as those related to bio-terrorism, cyber-crime and any other form of modern organised crime.

Parliament recognised that additional funding will be needed for an effective security research programme. The funding level of EUR 1 000 million per year proposed by the Group of Personalities Report could be reached by making use of funding from the Framework Research Programme as well as from alternative sources.

Consultation and cooperation with stakeholders: Parliament welcomed the suggested setting up of the European Security Research Advisory Board (ESRAB). The European Parliament should be represented in the ESRAB by five members. It urged a balanced involvement of industrial representatives, research sponsors and public and private customers, scientific research bodies, public institutions and representatives of civil liberties organisations. Within the framework of transatlantic relations, European security research should entail the necessary efforts to avoid duplication and promote interoperability, while respecting the specificities of the Union research landscape in this field. Parliament emphasised nevertheless that the Union's security research budget should be used to develop EU corporate interests.

Institutional setting: Parliament insisted that it should be engaged in the development of European security research activities not only by being regularly informed of progress but above all by being consulted in advance on the implementation of the planned programme. It also insisted on the need for a more coherent political and institutional framework to promote cooperation and efficient coordination between the ESRP, the new European Defence Agency (EDA) and the Union's relevant policies relating to security and defence issues.

Management of the European Security Research Programme: the management of the ESRP should emphasise the added value of interoperability and connectivity so as to improve cross-border cooperation, avoid unnecessary duplication and improve the coherence of the Union's efforts. Parliament strongly advocated the development of strong common research and development infrastructures, the promotion of collaboration between laboratories on a Union-wide scale and the development of human resources in research and technology, making Europe a more attractive area for skilled researchers in this field. It stressed the benefits that a more competitive European security industry, based on the existing capacity of the defence industry and other specialised areas relating to new technology infrastructures, could provide

in strengthening the economic growth and overall competitiveness of the European economy. However, EU initiatives on security research must not result in a weakening of the Union's principles and values on human and democratic rights, political freedoms, civil liberties and ethics.