

Basic information	
2019/2135(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Implementation of the common security and defence policy - annual report 2018	
Subject 6.10 Common foreign and security policy (CFSP)	

Key players				
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs		DANJEAN Arnaud (EPP)	15/07/2019
			Shadow rapporteur	
			ARA-KOVÁCS Attila (S&D)	
			PAET Urmas (Renew)	
			NEUMANN Hannah (Greens /EFA)	
			VAN ORDEN Geoffrey (ECR)	
			RIVIÈRE Jérôme (ID)	
			WALLACE Mick (GUE/NGL)	
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFCO Constitutional Affairs		GONZÁLEZ PONS Esteban (EPP)	12/11/2019
European Commission	Commission DG		Commissioner	
	Budget		OETTINGER Günther	

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
24/10/2019	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
04/12/2019	Vote in committee		
11/12/2019	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0052/2019	Summary

14/01/2020	Debate in Parliament		
15/01/2020	Decision by Parliament	T9-0009/2020	Summary
15/01/2020	Results of vote in Parliament		
15/01/2020	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2019/2135(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Annual report
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/9/01458

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE641.445	21/10/2019	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE643.150	11/11/2019	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE643.151	11/11/2019	
Committee opinion	<div>AFCO</div>	PE643.103	27/11/2019	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0052/2019	11/12/2019	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0009/2020	15/01/2020	Summary

Implementation of the common security and defence policy - annual report 2018

2019/2135(INI) - 11/12/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Arnaud DANJEAN (EPP, FR) on the implementation of the common security and defence policy - annual report.

In a persistently uncertain and unpredictable security context, Members reaffirmed that European strategic autonomy is a legitimate and necessary ambition and must remain a priority objective of the CFSP and European defence policy.

Need to develop and strengthen European strategic autonomy

The report stressed that European strategic autonomy is based on the EU's ability to enhance its freedom to assess its autonomous operational capacity, including credible military forces, its industrial capacity to produce the equipment needed by its forces and its political capacity to take decisions where circumstances so require. Such autonomy reflects the objective of assuming greater responsibility for European security, in order to defend its common interests and values, with its partners as far as possible, and alone when necessary. It presupposes the EU's capacity to assess a crisis situation and take a decision autonomously, which necessarily implies an independent and effective decision-making process, means of evaluation and freedom of analysis and action.

Members are of the opinion that the affirmation of European strategic autonomy depends on the establishment of a comprehensive CFSP supported by European defence cooperation in the technological, capability, industrial and operational fields. Only concrete and flexible cooperation based on pragmatic initiatives will make it possible to gradually overcome difficulties, forge a genuine common strategic culture and shape common responses tailored to the main security and defence challenges facing the Union.

In order to increase the EU's strategic autonomy, Member States should increase defence spending and aim for a target of 2% of GDP, invest more urgently in security and defence, and ensure that solidarity and cooperation on defence becomes the norm.

Members considered it appropriate to pursue a restrictive arms export policy for all types of weapons, including for dual-use goods. They urged the Member States to comply with the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports.

CSDP missions and operations

Members considered that the Union must become a more robust player in crisis management, conflict resolution and peacekeeping, if possible together with other regional and international organisations, such as the United Nations and the African Union, in line with its commitment to multilateralism, but also alone when the situation requires it. They encourage the European External Action Service (EEAS) and Member States to introduce a more forward-looking approach to planning and capability development and to anticipate future needs so that the Union can provide a strong response to crises and conflicts.

Member States and European bodies are encouraged to maintain a high level of commitment in Africa. The report highlighted the Union's overall commitment to the Sahel and the Horn of Africa through six civilian and military missions and welcomed the effort made to regionalise the operation of civilian missions in the Sahel in the face of security challenges which go beyond the framework of the States where European missions are deployed. It reaffirmed the strategic importance of Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans for the security and stability of the Union and stressed the need to focus and strengthen the Union's political commitment to this region.

Noting, however, that the effectiveness of CSDP missions and operations in general is hampered by persistent structural weaknesses and the growing reluctance of Member States and European institutions to make them more robust, Members called for a common European solution to remedy this. They stressed the need to regularly evaluate missions and operations in order to improve their effectiveness and the importance of joint training and exercises between European armed forces as well as parallel and coordinated exercises between the EU and NATO. They stressed the importance of reviewing the Athena mechanism with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the funding mechanism for CSDP military operations and missions.

Capability and industry

The report stressed that achieving European strategic autonomy will necessarily be based on increasing the Member States' capabilities and defence budgets, and on strengthening the European defence technological and industrial base.

Members welcomed the Commission's proposal of June 2017 to create a European Defence Fund (EDF) that would coordinate, complement and amplify national defence investment, encourage cooperation between Member States in the development of ultra-modern and interoperable defence technologies and equipment, and support an innovative and competitive defence industry throughout the Union, including cross-border SMEs. They also welcomed the Commission's proposal to allocate EUR 6.5 billion to military mobility projects in the next MFF.

Members supported the effective implementation of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) as an essential step towards closer security and defence cooperation between Member States. They also stressed the strategic dimension of the space sector for Europe, highlighting the need to make progress in developing technologies with both civilian and military uses which are capable of ensuring European strategic autonomy.

Defence cooperation and CSDP partnerships

The EU and the United Kingdom will still share the same strategic environment and the same threats to their peace and security after Brexit. Members consider it essential to maintain strong, close and special defence and security cooperation between the Union and the United Kingdom after Brexit.

Furthermore, recalling NATO's fundamental role in collective defence, Members are convinced that the EU-NATO strategic partnership is essential for addressing the security challenges facing Europe and its neighbourhood. EU-NATO cooperation should take full account of each of the two institutions' specific features and roles and continue with full respect for the principles of inclusiveness and reciprocity and the decision-making autonomy of both organisations.

Institutional framework

Members welcomed the announcement of the creation of a Directorate-General for the Defence and Space Industries within the European Commission, under the responsibility of the Internal Market Commissioner. They also undertook to ensure close parliamentary monitoring and scrutiny of European defence missions, instruments and initiatives.

They called for progressive steps towards a common defence policy and, ultimately, the establishment of a common defence. They called for the drafting of a European Defence Strategy and for the elaboration of a European Union White Paper on Security and Defence as an essential strategic tool to reinforce the governance of the Union's defence policy.

Implementation of the common security and defence policy - annual report 2018

The European Parliament adopted by 496 votes to 113 with 103 abstentions a resolution on the implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy - annual report.

Deterioration in the EU's security situation

Parliament took note of the continuing deterioration of the security situation in the European Union, which faces a multitude of challenges affecting the security of its Member States and citizens.

Members stressed the EU's interest in being actively engaged in its neighbourhood, considering that instability at the Union's borders and in its immediate neighbourhood (North Africa, Middle East, Caucasus, Balkans, Eastern Mediterranean, Russian aggression against Ukraine and Georgia, etc.) as well as in its more distant neighbourhood (Sahel, Horn of Africa, etc.) represented a direct and indirect threat to the security of the continent.

Moreover, some global players (United States, China, Russia) but also a growing number of regional players (Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, etc.) are seeking to assert power through a combination of unilateral diplomatic posturing, shifts in alliances, destabilising activities of a primarily hybrid nature and increasing military build-ups. Members deplored the fact that some of these actors deliberately circumvent, or even attempt to destroy, multilateral mechanisms, the principles of the UN Charter and the relevant provisions of international law, which are essential for peacekeeping.

Parliament took the view that the EU has been slow to react, politically, diplomatically and militarily, to new crises and to this new international situation. In the specific area of defence, insufficient investment, lack of capabilities and interoperability, as well as political reluctance to implement the provisions laid down in the European Treaties, have prevented the EU from playing a decisive role in external crises and from making full use of its potential.

Stressing that no country is in a position to face the security challenges facing the European continent and its immediate environment alone, Parliament called on the European Council to make the use of qualified majority voting in the Council in the field of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) a political priority, where the Treaty on European Union (EU Treaty) so permits.

Need to develop and strengthen European strategic autonomy

Members reaffirmed that European strategic autonomy is a legitimate and necessary ambition and that it must remain a priority objective of the CFSP and European defence policy. The affirmation of European strategic autonomy depends on the establishment of a comprehensive CFSP supported by European defence cooperation in the technological, capability, industrial and operational fields.

According to Members, European strategic autonomy:

- is based first and foremost on the EU's ability to assess a crisis situation and take a decision autonomously, which necessarily implies an independent and effective decision-making process, means of assessment and freedom of analysis and action;
- is based on the Europe's capacity to act alone when its interests are at stake (theatres of operations regarded as priorities by the Member States of the Union) or within the framework of existing cooperation arrangements;
- forms part of a multilateral framework which respects commitments within the United Nations and complements and strengthens the alliances and partnerships to which most Member States have subscribed;
- does not mean that the Union will systematically act alone, everywhere and always.

In order to increase the EU's strategic autonomy, Member States should increase defence spending and aim for a target of 2% of GDP, invest more urgently in security and defence, and ensure that solidarity and cooperation in defence matters become the norm.

CSDP missions and operations

Members believe that the EU must become a more robust player in crisis management, conflict resolution and peacekeeping, if possible together with other regional and international organisations, such as the United Nations and the African Union, but also alone where necessary.

The EU is currently present on three continents, with 16 civilian and military missions deployed. While recognising the contribution of these missions to international peace, security and stability, Parliament wished to promote the objective of achieving a higher level of effectiveness of CSDP missions and called on the Member States to increase their contributions. It encouraged the European External Action Service (EEAS) to introduce a more forward-looking approach to capability planning and development and to anticipate future needs so that the Union can provide a strong response to crises and conflicts.

Member States and European bodies have been encouraged to maintain a high priority and commitment in Africa, in particular in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa through the commitment of six civilian and military missions. The strategic importance of Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans for the security and stability of the Union was reaffirmed.

Capability and industrial field

The resolution stressed that the realisation of European strategic autonomy was based on increasing Member States' capabilities and their defence budgets and on strengthening a European defence technological and industrial base.

Members welcomed the Commission's June 2017 proposal to create a European Defence Fund (EDF). They supported the effective implementation of permanent structured cooperation (PSC) as an essential step towards enhanced security and defence cooperation between Member States. They also underlined the strategic dimension of the space sector for Europe.

Defence cooperation and CSDP partnerships

Members considered that the EU and the United Kingdom will still share the same strategic environment and the same threats to their peace and security after Brexit.

Furthermore, recalling NATO's fundamental role in collective defence, Members are convinced that the EU-NATO strategic partnership is essential for addressing the security challenges facing Europe and its neighbourhood. EU-NATO cooperation should take full account of each of the two institutions' specific features and roles and continue with full respect for the principles of inclusiveness and reciprocity and the decision-making autonomy of both organisations.

Institutional framework

Parliament called for progressive steps towards a common defence policy and, ultimately, the establishment of a common defence. It also undertook to ensure close parliamentary scrutiny and control of European defence missions, instruments and initiatives. It called for the drafting of a European Defence Strategy and for the elaboration of a European Union White Paper on Security and Defence as an essential strategic tool to reinforce the governance of the Union's defence policy.