



## Glimmer of hope for the Common Security and Defence Policy

*Olaf Wientzek*

### Key Points

- In comparison to previous attempts, the conditions for closer cooperation in the area of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) are relatively favourable.
- The process initiated in Bratislava in September 2016 to further strengthen the CSDP primarily includes pragmatic measures to improve its functioning and contains only few new proposals. However, this improves the prospects for actual implementation.
- The proposals do not entail competition between the CSDP and NATO; all the parties instead aspire to closer cooperation between the EU and NATO.
- In view of the security policy challenges the EU is facing, the proposals only represent a small step in the long run.
- Further steps in both institutional and operational terms are required to turn the CSDP into an effective instrument and to improve the EU's capacity to act in response to security threats.

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Current threats  
demonstrate the  
importance of a  
more effective  
security policy.

## Introduction:

### Favourable conditions for deepening defence cooperation

One of the core messages that emerged from the informal European Council meeting in Bratislava on 14 and 15 September 2016 was a commitment to enhanced cooperation in the area of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).<sup>1</sup> There is nothing fundamentally new about such a declaration. If anything, the commitment to reinforce the CSDP has for many years been part of the standard repertoire of EU summits: During the French (2008) and Polish (2011) Council Presidencies, far-reaching plans were presented – and yet, many of the announcements came to nothing. Although the list of measures to enhance the CSDP adopted by the Heads of State or Government at the December summit in 2013 was welcomed by experts, implementation has nonetheless lagged behind expectations. Notwithstanding some small steps forward, central projects of the CSDP have regularly foundered on the rocks of the different strategic priorities of the Member States and ‘difficulties on the ground’ – whether these lie in the area of procurement or in fundamentally divergent positions relating, for instance, to the financing of CSDP missions.

Consequently, the announcement by the Heads of State or Government at the Bratislava Summit that cooperation on security issues was to be stepped up was largely met with scepticism on the part of numerous observers. However, changes in the framework conditions are fundamentally transforming the dynamic:

- **The Brexit vote:** The United Kingdom has always been sceptical, in particular of any institutional intensification of the CSDP; one example of this is the country’s resistance to the creation of a permanent European headquarters for CSDP missions as desired by many EU Member States<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, the departure of the United Kingdom will significantly weaken the CSDP in terms of personnel and will therefore increase the pressure on the remaining Member States to work together to mitigate this loss.
- **A new security strategy:** With the adoption of the ‘EU Global Strategy’ (EUGS) in June 2016<sup>3</sup> – the successor document to the European Security Strategy of 2003 – new political momentum has been generated for the renewal of the CSDP. The strategy features an aspiration to create a credible, swift and effective CSDP.
- **The migration crisis:** this has illustrated the inability of the EU in places such as Syria and Libya to bring stability to its own neighbourhood by civil or, where necessary, military means – with tangible consequences for every EU Member State. A sense of urgency regarding closer cooperation is currently being more keenly felt in the Member States than has been the case for many years.
- **A new geopolitical situation:** Current threats – not least those posed by Russian aggression in the immediate vicinity of the EU – demonstrate the importance of a more effective security policy. Last but not least, the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States and the uncertainties that this will entail for the time being have further increased the sense of urgency.
- **Important accompanying processes:** The NATO-EU agreement signed at the NATO Summit of 8-9 July in Warsaw had lent a new impetus to the cooperation between the two organisations. At the same time, the European Commission worked on a defence action plan. The calls of other institutions, including the European Parliament, for closer cooperation, with the ultimate aim of creating a defence union, had also become stronger in the preceding months and

years. Hence deliberations on strengthening the CSDP found their context in an already ongoing dynamic.

Just two weeks after the European Council summit, on 27 September, the EU defence ministers met in Bratislava to work out concrete steps for improving defence cooperation. It was noteworthy that a whole array of papers were published in parallel by various Member States with proposals to revitalise the CSDP.

### Initiatives of Germany and France, Italy and Finland

Particularly central to the discussions of the next few months was the joint Franco-German initiative of the Ministers of Defence Ursula von der Leyen and Jean-Yves Le Drian: at the heart of the paper entitled **“Erneuerung der GSVP – hin zu einer umfassenden, realistischen und glaubwürdigen Verteidigung in der EU” (“Renewal of the CSDP – Towards a comprehensive, realistic and credible defence policy in the EU”)**<sup>4</sup> was the actual implementation and better use of instruments which had been adopted but which at that point still existed only on paper. These include the greater use of Permanent Structured Cooperation to enable closer cooperation in the security field among an avant-garde group of Member States. In addition, Germany and France are calling for more regular meetings of the Heads of State or Government on defence issues, the creation of a permanent military planning capability (a kind of ‘military headquarters’) and the expansion of the joint financing of CSDP missions<sup>5</sup>. On the operational level, one idea is for the Eurocorps to undergo a renaissance, for instance in support for education and training measures. Other measures include a European medical command, the reinforcement of transport capacities and the creation of a European logistics hub; partnership with African countries in security and defence; and the reinforcement of the EU Battlegroups through the enhancement of their ability to carry out entry operations. Both countries called for joint capacity building, to be followed by a CSDP-related research programme in the next Multiannual Financial Framework. Other forms of investment incentives are also to be considered (including through the European Investment Bank). Defence budgets and capability development are to be more closely coordinated on a voluntary basis (by means, for example, of a European defence semester). 20% of defence spending is to be reserved for investment.

Germany and France:  
improved implemen-  
tation of existing  
instruments

The Italian paper **“For a stronger European defence: The Italian vision”**<sup>6</sup> goes even further, proposing that a pioneering group of Member States should lay the foundations for a European Defence Union. At the same time, Rome is calling for a veritable strategy of European defence to include the definition of its objectives and the short- and long-term instruments of the CSDP. In addition to a reform of the Battlegroup concept and the creation of a joint military training system, Italy is proposing a specialisation of certain countries. Moreover, Italy is committed to the creation of a permanent headquarters for military CSDP missions under the control of the Member States, as well as subordinate HQs. Member States willing to share military forces or capabilities are to be able to form a permanent multinational European force. This could be the nucleus for integrated armed forces in the future, which could also be deployed in either a NATO or UN context. Furthermore, Italy is proposing fiscal and financial incentives for the development of joint capabilities (EIB funding, VAT exemption).

Italy: Member states  
should be able to form  
a permanent multina-  
tional European force.

**Finland** also set out its ideas in an informal paper in the run-up to the discussions.<sup>7</sup> The demands include a reform of the Capability Development Plan to cover new

### Finland: Enhancing the security of supply

threat scenarios (hybrid warfare, maritime security, solidarity clause). Finland is also calling for the closer coordination of national defence plans, the creation of a European defence research programme and a European semester in defence policy. Further ideas: Improvements in the security of supply (including facilitation of transfer and agreement on fixed procedures in times of crisis) and questions relating to the use of armed forces on a domestic level. In addition, the paper calls for close cooperation with the United Kingdom even after its departure from the EU. The paper from the EU headquarters is more restrained: as a first step, the joint planning cell for military CSDP missions is to be responsible only for non-executive military missions (e.g. training missions).

In a joint letter dated 12 October, the defence ministers of Germany, France, Italy and Spain largely reaffirmed the guidelines contained in the Franco-German proposal.

## Measures to Strengthen Defence Cooperation

### Discussions along the guidelines of the Franco-German paper

Between September and December, a raft of measures was prepared by various political actors: The discussions, in particular those held by the defence ministers in September, ran largely along the same lines as the demands of the Franco-German paper. And yet, these appeared only in watered-down form in the conclusions<sup>8</sup> adopted on 14 November by the EU foreign ministers, which were discussed and largely adopted at the Summit of European Heads of State or Government on 15 and 16 December. At the same time, on 15 November, the High Representative of the EU for Foreign and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, presented a plan for the implementation of the defence policy elements of the EUGS. On 30 November, the European Commission presented its Defence Action Plan to strengthen research, industry and capability development. On 6 December, NATO and the EU in turn adopted a package of measures to implement the agreement on improved cooperation between the two organisations signed at the NATO summit in Warsaw in July.

The most important proposals and decisions:

- 1. Creation of a permanent operational planning and conduct capability.**  
 The cell is to be initially responsible only for non-executive military missions (e.g. training missions) – while avoiding any duplication of NATO structures. As before, the United Kingdom in particular remains sceptical about the idea of a fully fledged joint headquarters, but some other Member States have also expressed reservations concerning such a step. The formulation of the final wording has been deliberately kept open to allow the possibility of a real EU headquarters in the future on the basis of the planning cell (possibly after the UK's departure). The High Representative is expected put forward concrete proposals for the design of the planning cell in the first half of 2017.
- 2. Coordination of national capability development:** Taking into account the prerogatives of the Member States, a higher level of synchronisation of national defence planning (for the development and acquisition of capabilities) is sought in the form of a 'Co-ordinated Annual Review on Defence'. Even if the term is not explicitly used, this is the equivalent of the so-called 'European defence semester'. Participation in such a coordination mechanism would however be on a voluntary basis. The High Representative, Federica Mogherini, is expected to submit detailed proposals in the spring of 2017.

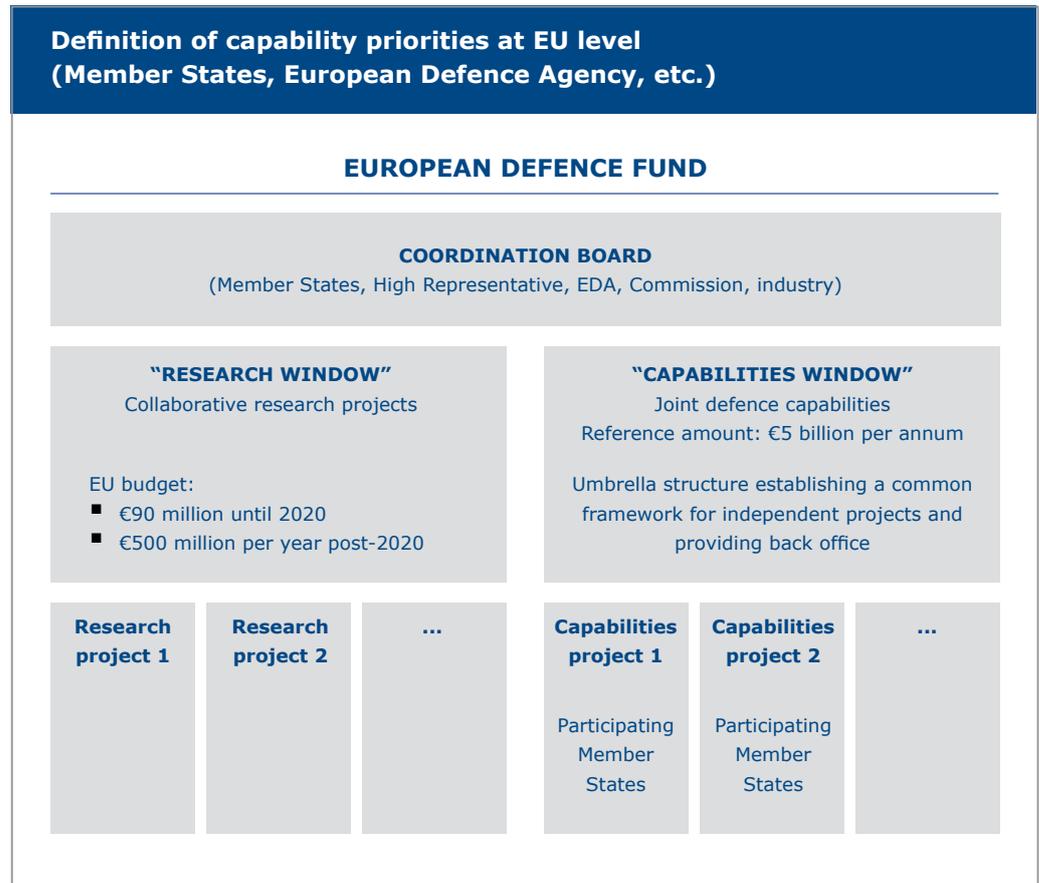
### Objective: stronger synchronisation of national defence planning

The European Commission proposes the creation of a European Defence Fund.

A defence research programme with an annual budget of up to €500 million

- 3. Reinforcing security in African countries:** One of the priorities is the improvement of synergies between civilian and military elements of the CSDP missions on the African continent and support for reforms in the field of security and defence – a core concern for France in particular.
- 4. Capability development:** the European Council pushed for a speedy implementation (in the first six months of 2017) of the Capacity Building in support of Security and Development (CBSD) initiative. The European Defence Agency (EDA) is moreover to develop various measures to intensify the coordination of capability development and the capability development plan envisaged for 2018 (including harmonisation of standardisation and the certification of defence-related products, alongside improvements in research cooperation).
- 5. More funding for joint defence research and capability development.** The defence action plan of the European Commission proposes the creation of a **European Defence Fund**. This would consist of two pillars: a so-called 'research window' and a 'capability window'. The idea behind the first of these would be to promote research into defence equipment and technology. The background to this proposal is the drastic reduction in spending on research and technology in the Member States over the last decade.<sup>9</sup> €90 million are already to be provided in the current financial framework (by 2020) in the context of a 'preparatory action' for defence research. Subject to approval by the Member States, the next multi-year financial framework (i.e. as of 2021) is to feature an independent defence research programme with an annual budget of up to €500 million. The programme would focus on a limited number of major research projects and be aimed at 'critical areas of defence' and innovation-driven technologies. The 'capability window' would serve the purpose of financing the joint development of defence capabilities. The plan is to mobilise national funds in the order of around €5 billion per year. The capability window could consist of two levels: an 'umbrella structure' would be open to all Member States. A second level would consist of concrete projects for the development of common capabilities on the basis of the voluntary participation of a group of Member States. Responsibility for financial and operational decisions would rest as before with the member states participating in the project. The funds would always be earmarked for specific projects. Details of the proposal will be presented by the Commission in the first half of 2017.

**Figure: The European Defence Fund:**



Source: European Commission<sup>10</sup>

6. **Strengthening the defence industry:** The Defence Action Plan envisages a series of measures to strengthen the defence industry and create a real internal market for defence: The facilitation of market access across borders, joint procurement, better access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises and the expansion of the internal market for defence equipment, including the implementation of existing guidelines that have thus far been ignored by the Member States. Also under consideration is the provision of financial support for the defence industry by the EIB or the EFSI – especially when it comes to goods that serve both civilian and military purposes<sup>11</sup>.
7. **Reform of the EU Battlegroups:** The aim in the first instance is to improve the operational capability of the Battlegroups – which have existed since 2007 but have so far never been deployed – potentially through modularisation and, in consequence, more flexible deployment. In this regard, the High Representative intends to submit a joint proposal with the Member States by mid-2017.
8. **Extending the joint financing of CSDP missions:** To date, only a small part of the cost (approximately 10%) has been jointly financed by the Member States via the “Athena” mechanism. This has curbed the enthusiasm of the Member States for participation in such missions. Joint funding is now to be significantly expanded, thereby increasing the incentives for participation in CSDP missions. A reform of the mechanism is planned by the end of 2017; before that date, a Franco-German paper will present its own proposals.
9. **Use of the “Permanent Structured Cooperation”<sup>12</sup> (PESCO) instrument:** More intensive cooperation in the field of defence policy between a group of Member States is planned within the framework of the “Permanent Structured

Extending the joint financing of CSDP missions

Cooperation". This should not however have the effect of decoupling such an avant-garde group from the remaining Member States. Instead, this instrument is to be available to all interested Member States. In this case, too, the High Representative is to quickly submit specific suggestions for possible projects.

- 10. Reinforcement of EU-NATO cooperation:** On 6 December, NATO and the EU reached initial agreement on 42 measures (the list can be amended each year) to improve cooperation. At the top on the list – under the pressure of the Russia-Ukraine crisis and Daesh – is the fight against hybrid threats (envisaged here, for instance, is the joint analysis in mid-2017 of disinformation strategies aimed at NATO and the EU). A further example is the improvement of operational cooperation in marine operations, as was implemented back in February in the Aegean Sea and could in the future also be carried out in to the Mediterranean or the Indian Ocean. Further measures: Cyber-defence, improved coordination in capability development and armaments research, joint exercises<sup>13</sup>. These are first and foremost practical measures – also in recognition of the considerable scepticism of some countries vis-à-vis further cooperation plans<sup>14</sup>. The European Council summit also underlined the importance of close cooperation between the two organisations – this is being urged in particular by the Visegrad countries, but was also of crucial importance for Germany and other EU Member States.

42 concrete measures to improve cooperation.

In June 2017, the High Representative is to submit a first progress report on the implementation. The Heads of State or Government will then address the issue in the framework of the European Council in order to maintain the political momentum. Prior to that date, the Member States will also give more detail on their positions with regard to the action plan of the Commission. These measures can be summarised under the following guiding principles: Reinforcement of the EU's crisis response capacity, more efficient use of existing resources, reinforcement of the industrial and technological basis of defence, better coordination with key partners. Other noticeable features are these:

- **Member States to remain key players:** The proposals do not envisage any transfer of sovereignty to Brussels and do not cast any doubt on the central role of Member States. Even given the various forms of closer cooperation, decisions will continue to be made by unanimous consent.
- **No competition with NATO:** Gone are the days in which the CSDP was portrayed as a competitor project to NATO. The above-mentioned initiatives of the Member States, the defence and foreign ministers and the Heads of State or Government all repeatedly emphasise their close ties to the transatlantic alliance<sup>15</sup>. No NATO structures are to be duplicated, even in the establishment of the aforementioned planning cell. Even advocates of closer cooperation within the context of the CSDP are quite clear that collective defence remains the preserve of NATO. It is noteworthy that NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg – also in comparison to his predecessor – is an enthusiastic proponent of closer cooperation (and a strong CSDP) and is also seeking closer dialogue with the European Commission.
- **Inclusivity:** Even though Permanent Structured Cooperation is to be strengthened, there is still a clear preference for a joint approach by the 27. Smaller countries in particular fear the emergence of a two-speed defence policy in Europe.
- **Constructive attitude towards the United Kingdom:** Notwithstanding its anticipated withdrawal from the EU, there is still a broad consensus that the UK should remain an important partner to the EU. It is also conceivable that the UK could be a partner within the framework of the Permanent Structured Cooperation. This clearly seems to be a matter of common interest: In contrast to his occasionally pugnacious appearances before the press after the

No transfer of sovereignty to Brussels

Broad consensus to keep the United Kingdom close

### The European Army is not on the agenda

meeting of defence ministers, the British Secretary of State for Defence has been relatively constructive during the discussions.

- **A pragmatic approach:** The resolutions of the ministers and the proposal of the Commission remain within the boundaries of the Lisbon Treaty, as do the papers of the Member States. The pragmatic approach can be also discerned from the fact that, notwithstanding a commitment to a security and defence union, the European Army project is not on the table for the time being, not even in the discussions of the defence ministers. This was also underscored by the joint letter issued by Germany, France, Italy and Spain in the run-up to the discussions. In many countries, including those which are generally positive towards the CSDP, such as Sweden, the project of a "European Army" is still viewed with deep scepticism. There is a general consensus that it would be inadvisable to pursue the issue too aggressively – not least due to the risk of generating inflated expectations which would be disappointed at the end of the day.
- **Wariness of further-reaching steps:** At the discussions between the Member States – and even at the European Council Summit – it became apparent that there are huge disparities in enthusiasm for any intensification of the CSDP: France, Italy and Germany are among the strongest proponents, whereas the current Polish Government has hinted at reservations in relation to some ideas, in particular regarding the action plan proposed by the European Commission. Further-reaching new ideas, such as the creation of a European medical command and a 'logistics hub' for the EU, as supported by Germany, are not reflected in the conclusions of the foreign ministers (though the latter is mentioned in the implementation plan of the High Representative). The same applies to the field of EU-NATO cooperation in the sharing of highly sensitive intelligence information.
- Despite intense debate, however, the Member States did ultimately decide against including a clear reference to the 2% target. Instead, they agreed only on a toned-down formulation with a non-binding commitment to increase defence spending – in the context, however, of national circumstances and legal commitments.

Some of the proposals have been received with suspicion, if for very different reasons; not the least of these is the defence fund proposed by the European Commission.

### Evaluation

The accusation levelled at the EU by some security and defence experts that, with the CSDP, the organisation is clearly making piecemeal efforts rather than taking a giant leap forward is not without justification. What is striking is that the conclusions have become progressively more restrained from one round of negotiations to the next – and this in spite of Donald Trump's election as US President in the meantime.

### Small steps rather than a giant leap

At the same time, given the history of broken promises, it seems to be a more promising approach to channel efforts into making existing instruments fit for use. If this actually happens, then the Bratislava process can indeed be successful. This presupposes, however, that this process will have been just the beginning of a comprehensive reinforcement of the CSDP. The policy, now adopted, that was set out by the foreign ministers is in the German interest but does not go as far as the Franco-German paper – there is still plenty of room here for more concrete measures without any need for transfer of sovereignty to Brussels. The EU remains a long way away from the "strategic autonomy" postulated in the EUGS. The measures

adopted do however represent a glimmer of hope, provided that they are a starting point for further development.

The open wording does indeed suggest that the idea is to leave the door open to a future intensification of cooperation, in particular after the withdrawal of the UK from the EU. The very tight deadlines for the individual measures should be viewed positively. These should in principle make it possible to maintain the pressure and avoid the disappointment of past initiatives. The desire to take the CSDP forward on the basis of unanimity for now and not to view the PESCO as an instrument of differentiated integration seems equally understandable. This needs to be understood particularly in the context of the self-imposed reflection process of the Heads of State or Government, the aim of which is not only to achieve 'concrete results', but, after the Brexit vote, also to stem centrifugal forces within the Union and to send a signal of unity.

Positive: closely-set  
deadlines

That the Member States should remain the key players in all decision-making is both logical and conducive to the reinforcement of individual responsibility. In the light of the above, the close involvement of the Member States in the preparation of the EUGS implementation strategy is to be welcomed. In the long term, however, the question remains open as to whether a European Defence Union will be sustainable without a partial transfer of sovereignty in some areas – under the control of the European Parliament. It remains to be seen how productive the annual review of national defence plans will be if the process is to be managed solely by the Member States.

The process does however show that, despite the appeals of the Heads of State or Government in Bratislava and at the European Council summit in December, the CSDP remains a difficult area. This will remain so even after the UK leaves the EU. The forces of inertia at the national level are significant. The process of drawing up the conclusions also made it clear that some foreign ministers are not fully behind the more ambitious proposals of their defence colleagues. Exactly how difficult it is to make progress is also illustrated by the example of the tough negotiations on a higher budget for the European Defence Agency. Instead of the increase of 6.5% called for by Mogherini, an increase of only 1.67% was agreed upon (in absolute terms this amounts to only €500,000)<sup>16</sup> – this step was nevertheless deemed a success.

The CSDP remains a  
difficult topic

Much will depend on what the proposals to be submitted by High Representative Mogherini will ultimately look like in detail, and whether these will also then receive the necessary backing from the Member States – the same applies to the European Commission's action plan.

It is yet too early to say whether the first steps of the Trump administration will – beyond the measures already agreed upon – further boost the EU's commitment towards stronger defence cooperation – even though some of the more recent declarations by high EU or member state representatives have implied such a development.

## Recommended actions

- Without political pressure from the highest level (Heads of State or Government), the dynamic that has been set in train could quickly disappear. The Heads of State or Government should therefore turn their attention to the progress made in the CSDP on a yearly basis, (similarly as they do with their discussions on the annual growth report)
- At the same time, it would be worth considering upgrading the role of the defence ministers, for instance by establishing a permanent Council of Defence Ministers to be independent of the foreign ministers (although this should not exclude existing annual joint meetings). This would ensure that the national ministries would be able to keep adequate track of political recommendations.
- Across-the-board increase in national defence spending. Here, the 2% target should be explicitly reinstated as a benchmark.
- Implementation of further-reaching proposals in the Franco-German paper (esp. the medical command and the logistical hub), if necessary within the framework of the Permanent Structured Cooperation – with the ultimate goal of establishing a European Defence Union. The PESCO could also serve as a testing ground in multilateral formats for certain elements which do not yet have majority backing – such as the Italian proposal for a permanent multinational European force. Such a project however only makes sense if the member states have actually at least once demonstrated their political will to put the already existing EU battle groups into practice.
- One of the main obstacles to rendering the EU capable of effective action is a lack of confidence in the solidarity of the other EU Member States:
  - 1. It would be helpful to consider the operationalisation of the solidarity and mutual assistance clause under article 42 (7) TEU I
  - 2. A specific European regime to reinforce security of supply
- One important step in the medium term would be to draft a European white paper on defence.<sup>17</sup>

- 1] cf. *Der "Bratislava-Prozess" – Eine erste Weichenstellung für eine EU-27 – INFORMELLER EUROPÄISCHER RATSGIPFEL VOM 16. SEPTEMBER 2016, KAS-Länderbericht Europabüro Brüssel (The "Bratislava Process" – setting the agenda for an EU of 27 Member States post-Brexit - INFORMAL SUMMIT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2016, KAS country report from the European office in Brussels).*
- 2] *To date, CSDP missions have always had to rely on ad-hoc headquarters.*
- 3] cf. *"Shared vision, common action: a stronger Europe – a global strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy", European External Action Service, Juni 2016.*
- 4] *Franco-German paper "Erneuerung der GSVP – hin zu einer umfassenden, realistischen und glaubwürdigen Verteidigung in der EU" ("Renewal of the CSDP – Towards a comprehensive, realistic and credible defence policy in the EU"), 12 September 2016.*
- 5] *Key in this regard is the reform of the so-called Athena mechanism that regulates the joint financing of CSDP missions: According to this mechanism, only about 10% of the CSDP mission costs is shared; the bulk of the expenditure is distributed according to the principle that the "costs lie where they fall", which means that they are borne by the Member States involved in the CSDP mission.*
- 6] *„For a stronger European defence: The Italian vision“.*
- 7] cf. *Defence elements for the implementation for the EU Global Strategy – Food for thought paper by Finland, 20 September 2016.*
- 8] *Council conclusions on implementing the EU Global Strategy in the area of Security and Defence, 14 November 2016.*
- 9] cf. *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – EU Defence Action Plan COM (2016) final, 30/11/2016, Brussels: 7-8.*

- 10| *cf. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – EU Defence Action Plan COM (2016) final, 30/11/2016, Brussels: 7.*
- 11| *cf. the conclusions of the European Council, 15 December 2016.*
- 12| *Cf. Art 42 (6) TEU and Protocol no. 10 on permanent structured cooperation established by Article 42 of the Treaty on European Union.*
- 13| *cf. NATO Press Release, 6 December 2016: Statement on the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_138829.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_138829.htm).*
- 14| *This concerns in particular those countries which are members of only one of the two organisations. cf. European Diplomacy & Defence No. 944: NATO and EU adopt raft of measures to increase cooperation.*
- 15| *Cooperation with NATO is mentioned seven times in the 16 pages of conclusions adopted on 14 November.*
- 16| *cf. European Diplomacy and Defence no. 938, Slight increase in EDA budget.*
- 17| *Also, cf. the position paper of the EPP-ED Group on the creation of a European Defence Union; European Parliament: Toward a European Defence Union – a white paper as a first step, Brussels / Strasbourg, 2015.*

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