

Program

European Office Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

The Strategic Compass – A true milestone in European Defence and Security Policy?

"The *Strategic Compass* provides answers for the EU to become a provider of security for its citizens, act faster and more decisively to protect our values and interests and contribute to international peace and security."

– European External Action Service (EEAS)

26. April 2022

10:00 – 11:00

Online Event

"Europe is in danger" expressed the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy a few weeks ago. The infamous statement of Josep Borrell may have sounded exaggerated to some ears but against the backdrop of a war at the gates of the European Union and the uncertain geopolitical future – also with a view to China and the global balance of power – the statement seems now more accurate than ever. There is an urgency to recognise threats more quickly and to be able to react to them. The European Union should become an independent guarantor of security for its citizens. Not only the war in Ukraine but also the hasty withdrawal of Western troops from Afghanistan in August last year highlighted the importance of greater European autonomy and of the expansion of the common Security and Defence Policy. The EU has always not only been in the shadow but also in the dependence of NATO and thus of the USA and its military strength. It is time for the EU to consolidate its international standing by becoming a stronger player in the global order amidst authoritarian powers.

The so-called Strategic Compass, which had already been drafted long before Putin's war of aggression was adopted by the heads of state and government at the Council summit on 24/25 March, expresses the imperative to act sovereignly in four core concerns: strengthening security and defence measures in the areas of crisis management, resilience, as well as the development and expansion of capabilities and partnerships. Perils must be recognised more quickly throughout the EU and Security Policy responses are to be found jointly. What stands behind the four main actions? What progress can the use of the Strategic Compass generate and when could the first successes in terms of a stronger global position of the EU become visible and what about the complementarity of security policy between the EU and NATO? The Strategic Compass, a true milestone in European Defence and Security Policy?

We would like to explore these and other questions in our online event. We want to give an outlook on the positive effects and at the same time the challenges that a strengthened European strategic action would bring. We are pleased to welcome our guests **Michael Gahler**, Member of the European Parliament, **Gesine Weber**, Program Coordinator for security and defence programming at the Paris Office of the German Marshall Fund (GMF), and **Jean-Pierre van Aubel**, Expert on Defence Policy and Strategy, Security and Defence Policy Division, European External Action Service (EEAS). The panel discussion will be moderated by **Niklas Nováky**, Senior Research Officer at the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies. The online event will take place on **26. April from 10:00 – 11:00 (CET)**. We look forward to your participation, your questions, and a lively and exciting discussion!

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10:00 – 10:05

Welcoming remarks

Dr Hardy Ostry

Head of the European Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

10:05 – 10:15

Statement

Jean-Pierre van Aubel

Expert on Defence Policy and Strategy, Security and Defence Policy Division, European External Action Service

10:15 – 10:50

Panel discussion

Michael Gahler

Member of the European Parliament, member of the AFET Committee

Gesine Weber

program coordinator for security and defence programming at the Paris Office of the German Marshall Fund (GMF)

Jean-Pierre van Aubel

Expert on Defence Policy and Strategy, Security and Defence Policy Division, European External Action Service

Moderated by

Niklas Nováky

Senior Research Officer at the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

10:50 – 11:00

Questions from the audience

11:00

Acknowledgement and end of the event