



Union of European Federalists
Union Europäischer Föderalisten
Union des Fédéralistes Européens

RESOLUTION OF THE UEF FEDERAL COMMITTEE “TOWARDS A EUROPEAN ARMY”

Adopted by UEF Federal Committee, Brussels on 18 April 2015.

The Federal Committee of the Union of European Federalists,

in reference:

- to the contributions of the UEF Working Group on CSDP;
- to the resolution on defence adopted at its meeting in Brussels in April 2013,
- to the resolution on foreign and defence policy adopted in Brussels in June 2014;
- the Memorandum of Altiero Spinelli to Alcide De Gasperi on the European Defence Community of 1951;

having regard to:

- the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
- the European Council conclusions of 18 December 2013;
- the Council conclusions on the Common Security and Defence Policy of 25 November 2013 and 18 November 2014;
- the European Parliament Draft Report on the implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy;

whereas

- European security is at risk due to the increasingly unstable environment surrounding the European Union (EU), in particular the war in Ukraine, the conflict in Syria and Iraq, the crisis in Libya, and terrorist threats,
- At present, the EU is not able to guarantee the security of its citizens and counter the threats to the Union's security,
- Such a guarantee cannot rely mainly on military assets, but has to be based on the comprehensive use of the civilian, developmental, diplomatic, economic and military instruments available to the Union,
- European security is still relying on the United States presence in Europe, while the shifts in US strategic interests away from Europe increasingly force the EU to take more responsibility for defence and security,
- Lack of mutual trust and solidarity persists among member states, together with differences in threat perceptions and strategic cultures,
- The major innovations introduced by the Lisbon Treaty in regard to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) are still far from being fully exploited,

G. CSDP can only make limited progress as long as it exclusively focuses on international crisis management, remains essentially intergovernmental and dependent on the political will, personnel and funds put at its disposal by the EU member states;

H. The fragmentation of defence spending combined with the decline in national defence budgets mainly, but not only due to austerity policy has worsened the poor status and the inefficiencies of defence in Europe,

I. The European Parliamentary Research Service has calculated the cost of non-Europe in defence to be at least €26 billion per year;

J. European countries could save up to €13 billion per year if they worked more closely together in weapons procurement, as highlighted by a study conducted by McKinsey for the Munich Security Conference,

K. Over 70% of the European public would be in favour of a broad European project in the area of defence (Eurobarometer 82/2014),

L. Not all EU member states and candidates are or want to become members of NATO, while NATO continues to be an important pillar of security for most EU member states,

M. There are expectations on the European Union, which deserved the Nobel Peace Prize for its past but struggles to merit it in the present and for the future,

1. Stresses that this is the right time to take concrete steps toward more integration in European defence, as an important instrument of European foreign policy;

2. Considers that a unified and robust European foreign policy, including defence, is needed to guarantee peace and security and to enable the EU to play a global role;

3. Recalls that the EU is called upon in the Treaty (art. 42) to work on the progressive framing of a common Union defence policy, which could lead to a common defence;

4. Notes that the pooling of military capabilities at the EU level would allow to both increase the efficiency of European defence and bring about savings to the national budgets by exploiting the effects of economies of scale;

5. Considers irresponsible the current fragmentation of defence in Europe which makes European governments' defence expensive, ineffective and therefore irrelevant to respond to international crisis;

6. Emphasizes that any further development in European defence policy needs to be underpinned in the framework of a new European security strategy;

7. Considers that the political stimulus given by the European Council of December 2013 was insufficient and calls for the European Council of June 2015 to take the adequate steps to relaunch European defence as a priority for the Union;

Steps for a more integrated defence cooperation within existing treaties

8. Invites able and willing EU member states to establish a Permanent Structured Cooperation (Art. 42.6, 46 TEU and Protocol 10) as the first nucleus of a European Defence Union, which will remain open to any other member state that wishes to join at a later stage;

9. Calls on the High Representative/Vice President to explore the potential of the Lisbon Treaty, especially Art. 44 TEU, and put forward recommendations at the European Council in June 2015;

10. Calls also on the European Parliament to present bold proposal to build on the momentum and move forward with EU integration in defence;
11. Recommends the establishment of permanent EU military headquarters in Brussels, that would enable the EU to respond to crisis without having to rely on assets structures provided by NATO or EU member states;
12. Recommends the operationalisation of the EU battlegroups, becoming a European rapid reaction force within the CSDP, necessary to intervene for defusing escalating crisis;
13. Suggests the creation of a European security investment fund, by pooling resources of the national defence budgets, and the revision of financing mechanisms for EU operations, including the creation of a common funding of rapid reaction operations using EU battlegroups;
14. Recommends further strengthening of the training dimension in military CSDP with the goal of common training standards for all military personnel in the Union based on work done in the framework of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), which includes projects such as the European initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus to complement similar efforts in the field of civilian crisis management and conflict prevention, which are more advanced.
15. Recommends the enhancement of the role of the European Parliament by upgrading the subcommittee for Security and Defence to a fully-fledged Committee and by strengthening the consultation procedures with the national parliaments, and the creation of a Council of Defence Ministers, on the model of the Eurogroup;
16. Encourages the further development of shared threat assessment at the EU level, which can provide input to the analysis conducted at the national level;
17. Welcomes positively the development of EU research programmes in the military field and of regional key-capabilities development plans by the European Defence Agency and encourages further integration and cooperation efforts;
18. Believes that national protectionism of the defence and security industry is incompatible with both the economic and the political union. The EU internal market rules should apply to military procurement, in order to create a competitive, strong and efficient European defence industrial and technological base;
19. Calls for the concrete implementation and streamlining of pooling and sharing at European level under the supervision of the European Defence Agency and encourages the European Commission and the European Defence Agency to foster a European defence industry;
20. Believes it is crucial to clarify the EU's relation with NATO and reinforce the EU's role as the European pillar of NATO, based on an equal partnership, with a renewal of the commitments made under the Berlin Plus agreement, and the launch of a strategic debate on burden sharing and identification of common threats to redefine their approach, especially in the light of the multiple crisis in Europe's neighbourhood;
21. Calls on the leaders of both the EU and NATO to firmly work to overcome the impasse created by the Cypriot and Turkish government, in order to restore a full political consultations between the two organisations;
22. Calls EU member states to coordinate inside NATO.

Towards a European army

23. Considers nevertheless the Permanent Structured Cooperation only a temporary solution and therefore urges the Heads of State and Governments at the European Council of June 2015 to launch a roadmap towards a European Defence Union as a new field of EU integration, on the model of the European and Monetary Union, sixty-five years after the Pleven Plan for a European Defence Community;

24. Welcomes the support by President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, German Minister of Defence, Ursula Von der Leyen, and other European politicians for the idea of a common European army as an ultimate goal of European integration, but warns against shifting the attention from necessary concrete measures in the near future;

25. However, reminds that in order not to disregard the course of the European integration process and to set at defiance the accumulated experience – and failures – of our history, federalists must underline that to establish an effective European army, means at least:

- to transfer the national defence sovereignty, that is to say to create a federal union – decentralised certainly and with national competences in the defence field, being federal, but within which the capacity to make decisions is not divorced from the power to implement them;
- to establish a command of a European General Staff, answerable to a European authority subject to parliamentary control;
- to pool in a common European/ad hoc budget the national defence budgets

26. Reaffirms the European federalists commitment in promoting initiatives to mobilize the public opinion and make pressure on the political classes and leaders to establish a European defence which be credible, supranational, and able to contribute to build a more peaceful and just world.