



FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL (Defence)

6 March 2018

The Foreign Affairs Council (Defence), chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, will start at 9.00 with an exchange of views on **security and defence**. Defence ministers are expected to have a broad debate covering the many aspects of current and future EU cooperation in this field. Ministers could in particular touch upon the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the European Defence Fund, CSDP partnerships and ongoing work on military mobility.

Defence ministers will then discuss **cooperation with NATO** together with the NATO Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller.

The Council will have a discussion on **permanent structured cooperation** (PESCO).

Over lunch, EU defence ministers will review the **EU CSDP missions and operations, in particular the military training missions** deployed in the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia. It will be an opportunity to discuss the functioning of the **Military Planning and Conduct Capability** (MPCC), which has responsibility for the EU military training missions since its creation one year ago.

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Press opportunities:

+/- 8.40 (tbc) Doorstep by High Representative F. Mogherini

+/- 15.00 Press conference following the Foreign Affairs Council

[Press conferences and public events via video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

Security and defence

Defence ministers will exchange views on the implementation of the EU Global Strategy in the field of security and defence. Amongst other things, they will focus on the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the European Defence Fund, CSDP partnerships and the ongoing work on military mobility.

In November 2016, the Council agreed a new level of ambition and welcomed the implementation plan on security and defence. Based on the EU Global Strategy, the implementation focuses on three strategic priorities: responding to external conflicts and crises, building the capacities of partners and protecting the EU and its citizens.

Ministers may touch upon specific actions undertaken to achieve these goals:

- the **Coordinated Annual Review on Defence** (CARD), for which the European Defence Agency is conducting a trial run

The CARD promotes enhanced defence cooperation among member states through greater transparency on defence plans. It will help member states to deliver on key military capabilities and benefit from economies of scale.

- the **European Defence Fund**, which was proposed by the European Commission in June 2017

The European Defence Fund aims to foster innovation and allow economies of scale in defence research and in the industrial development phase by supporting collaborative projects, thus reinforcing the competitiveness of the Union's defence industry. A preparatory action on defence research is already ongoing, and the co-legislators will currently negotiate a Commission proposal for the establishment of a European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP). The Council adopted its negotiating position (general approach) on 12 December 2017. Negotiations with the European Parliament are expected to start before the end of March.

- **CSDP partnerships**, including third states' participation in EU CSDP missions or operations

As part of the implementation of the EU Global Strategy in the field of security and defence, the Council has indicated its intention to take a more strategic approach to CSDP partnerships with a view to enhancing cooperation, with a focus on partner countries that share EU values, including respect for international law, and are able and willing to contribute to CSDP missions and operations.

- **improving military mobility**, with the aim of addressing the obstacles which are hampering the movement of military equipment and personnel across the EU

The High Representative and the Commission presented a joint communication on improving military mobility in the EU on 10 November 2017 which foresees an action plan to be presented later in March. This is also an area identified for stronger cooperation between the EU and NATO.

[EU cooperation on security and defence \(background information\)](#)

[Coordinated Annual Review on Defence \(CARD\), EDA factsheet](#)

[European Defence Industrial Development Programme \(EDIDP\), 12 December 2017](#)

[Joint communication on improving military mobility in the EU, 10 November 2017](#)

EU-NATO cooperation

Defence ministers will discuss EU-NATO cooperation together with the Deputy Secretary General of NATO, Rose Gottemoeller.

Last December, the Council adopted conclusions on EU-NATO cooperation, endorsing new proposals for concrete actions in areas such as counter-terrorism, women, peace and security, and military mobility. These new proposals come in addition to the original set of proposals for 42 actions endorsed by the Council in December 2016, bringing the total to 74. The proposals are for concrete actions undertaken by the EU and NATO to implement the July 2016 joint declaration between the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of NATO.

[Factsheet on EU-NATO cooperation \(EEAS\)](#)

[EU defence cooperation: Council adopts conclusions on EU-NATO cooperation, endorsing common set of new proposals for further joint work \(press release, 05/12/2017\)](#)

Permanent structured cooperation (PESCO)

Defence ministers will start with a discussion on permanent structured cooperation (PESCO). Ministers are expected to adopt a decision formally establishing the list of projects to be developed under PESCO. The initial list of 17 collaborative projects was already agreed politically in December 2017. The projects cover areas such as training, capability development and operational readiness in the field of defence.

The Council is also expected to adopt a recommendation on an implementation roadmap for PESCO. This recommendation is set to provide strategic direction in order to structure the necessary further work on processes and governance, including on projects.

On 11 December 2017, the Council adopted a decision establishing PESCO, following the notification by member states of their intention to participate in this cooperation. The 25 member states participating in PESCO are: Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

On 14 December, the European Council welcomed the establishment of an ambitious and inclusive PESCO and stressed the importance of quickly implementing the first batch of projects. It called on participating member states to deliver on their national implementation plans.

[Defence cooperation: Council establishes Permanent Structured Cooperation \(PESCO\), with 25 member states participating \(press release, 11/12/2017\)](#)

[Overview of first collaborative PESCO projects](#)

[Q&A on permanent structured cooperation](#)

[Factsheet on permanent structured cooperation \(EEAS\)](#)

EU CSDP missions and operations, in particular training missions

Over lunch, defence ministers will review the EU CSDP missions and operations. There are currently 16 missions and operations, both military (6) and civilian (10). Defence ministers are expected to focus on the three non-executive military training missions in the **Central African Republic**, **Mali** and **Somalia**.

It will be an opportunity to review the functioning of the **Military Planning and Conduct Capability** (MPCC), which has responsibility for operational planning and conduct of the three missions since its establishment in June 2017 within the EU Military Staff of the EEAS.

EUTM **Somalia** was launched in 2010. It contributes to the strengthening of the Federal Government and its federal member states, and in particular the defence institutions of Somalia. It also contributes to the capacity building of the Somali National Army.

EUTM **Mali** was launched in 2013 to support the rebuilding of the Malian armed forces and to meet their operational needs.

EUTM RCA (**Central African Republic**) was launched in 2016 and supports the government of the Central African Republic in the implementation of security sector reform in the country.

[EU defence cooperation: Council establishes a Military Planning and Conduct Capability \(MPCC\) \(press release, 08/06/2017\)](#)

[EUTM Somalia \(website\)](#)

[EUTM Mali \(website\)](#)

[EUTM RCA \(website\)](#)