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Implementation of the common security and defence policy – annual report 2023

European Parliament resolution of 28 February 2024 'Implementation of the common security and defence policy – annual report 2023' (2023/2119(INI))

(C/2024/6740)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),

— having regard to Title V of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), in particular Chapter Two, Section Two thereof on provisions on the common security and defence policy (CSDP),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/697 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing the European Defence Fund (EDF) and repealing Regulation (EU) 2018/1092 ([1]),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) 2019/452 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union ([2]),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) 2023/2418 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 on establishing an instrument for the reinforcement of the European defence industry through common procurement (EDIRPA) ([3]),

— having regard to Regulation (EU) 2023/1525 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 July 2023 on supporting ammunition production (ASAP) ([4]),

— having regard to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials and amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1724 and (EU) 2019/1020 (COM(2023)0160),

— having regard to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down measures to strengthen solidarity and capacities in the Union to detect, prepare for and respond to cybersecurity threats and incidents (COM(2023)0209),

— having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/2315 of 11 December 2017 establishing permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) and determining the list of participating Member States ([5]),

— having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 of 22 March 2021 establishing a European Peace Facility (EPF), and repealing Decision (CFSP) 2015/528 ([6]),

— having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/1970 of 17 October 2022 amending Decision 2010/452/CFSP on the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, EUMM Georgia ([7]),

— having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/1968 of 17 October 2022 on a European Union Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) ([8]),

— having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2507 of 19 December 2022 amending Decision 2010/452/CFSP on the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, EUMM Georgia ([9]),

([1]) OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 149.
([2]) OJ L 791, 21.3.2019, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L, 2023/2418, 26.10.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2418/oj.
([4]) OJ L 185, 24.7.2023, p. 7.
([5]) OJ L 331, 14.12.2017, p. 57.
([6]) OJ L 102, 24.3.2021, p. 14.
([7]) OJ L 270, 18.10.2022, p. 93.
([8]) OJ L 270, 18.10.2022, p. 85.
([9]) OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, p. 110.

— having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/162 of 23 January 2023 on a European Union mission in Armenia (EUMA) ([10]),

— having regard to the European Council conclusions of 14 and 15 December 2023, concerning the decision to open accession negotiations with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, to open accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina once the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria is achieved and to grant candidate status to Georgia on the understanding that the relevant steps set out in the Commission recommendation of 8 November 2023 are taken,

— having regard to the statement by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 16 February 2024 on a planned Israeli military operation in Rafah,

— having regard to the Council conclusions of 22 January 2018 on the integrated approach to external conflicts and crises and of 24 January 2022 on the European security situation,

— having regard to the Council conclusions of 21 February 2022 extending and enhancing the implementation of the Coordinated Maritime Presences Concept in the Gulf of Guinea,

— having regard to the Versailles Declaration adopted at the informal meeting of heads of state and government on 11 March 2022,

— having regard to the 'Strategic Compass for Security and Defence – For a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests and contributes to international peace and security', which was approved by the Council on 21 March 2022 and endorsed by the European Council on 25 March 2022, and to the Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, published in March 2023,

— having regard to the Civilian CSDP Compact – Towards more effective civilian missions, approved by the Council on 22 May 2023,

— having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security of 18 May 2022 entitled 'Defence Investment Gaps Analysis and Way Forward' (JOIN(2022)0024),

— having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security of 10 March 2023 on the update of the EU Maritime Security Strategy and its Action Plan 'An enhanced EU Maritime Security Strategy for evolving maritime threats' (JOIN(2023)0008),

— having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security of 10 March 2023 entitled 'European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence' (JOIN(2023) 0009),

— having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 10 November 2022 entitled 'Action plan on military mobility 2.0' (JOIN(2022)0048),

— having regard to the Commission communication of 27 September 2023 entitled 'Towards a more resilient, competitive and sustainable Europe' (COM(2023)0558),

— having regard to the 8th progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017, submitted jointly by the Vice-President of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs (VP/HR) and the NATO Secretary General to the EU and NATO Councils on 16 June 2023,

— having regard to the North Atlantic Treaty,

— having regard to the NATO 2022 Strategic Concept and the NATO 2023 Vilnius Summit Communiqué,

— having regard to the Madrid Summit Declaration adopted by the NATO Heads of State and Government participating in the North Atlantic Council meeting in Madrid on 29 June 2022,

([10]) OJ L 22, 24.1.2023, p. 29.

— having regard to the three Joint Declarations on EU-NATO cooperation signed on 8 July 2016, 10 July 2018 and 10 January 2023,

— having regard to the Charter of the United Nations, in particular Article 2.4 thereof prohibiting the use of force and Article 51 on the inherent right to individual and collective self-defence,

— having regard to UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1889 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015) and 2493 (2019) on Women, Peace and Security and Resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020) on Youth, Peace and Security,

— having regard to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS),

— having regard to the UN Security Council resolutions concerning Cyprus and the UN Security Council Press Statement on Cyprus of 21 August 2023,

— having regard to its resolution of 5 May 2022 on threats to stability, security and democracy in Western and Sahelian Africa ([11]),

— having regard to its resolution of 18 January 2023 on the implementation of the common security and defence policy – annual report 2022 ([12]),

— having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2023 on the humanitarian consequences of the blockade in Nagorno-Karabakh ([13]),

— having regard to its resolutions of 9 March 2022 ([14]) and of 1 June 2023 ([15]) on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation,

— having regard to its resolutions of 15 March 2023 on EU-Armenia relations ([16]) and on EU-Azerbaijan relations ([17]),

— having regard to its resolution of 18 April 2023 on the implementation of civilian CSDP and other EU civilian security assistance ([18]),

— having regard to its recommendation of 8 June 2022 to the Council and the VP/HR on the EU's Foreign, Security and Defence Policy after the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine ([19]),

— having regard to its recommendation of 5 October 2022 to the Council, the Commission and the VP/HR on the EU's strategic relationship and partnership with the Horn of Africa ([20]),

— having regard to its recommendation of 23 November 2022 to the Council, the Commission and the VP/HR concerning the new EU strategy for enlargement ([21]),

— having regard to its resolution of 19 April 2023 on the EU Rapid Deployment Capacity, EU Battlegroups and Article 44 TEU: the way forward ([22]),

— having regard to its recommendation of 10 February 1999 on the establishment of a European Civil Peace Corps ([23]),

— having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0403/2023),

([11]) OJ C 465, 6.12.2022, p. 137.
([12]) OJ C 214, 16.6.2023, p. 54.
([13]) OJ C 214, 16.6.2023, p. 104.
([14]) OJ C 347, 9.9.2022, p. 61.
([15]) Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0219.
([16]) OJ C, C/2023/404, 23.11.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/404/oj.
([17]) OJ C, C/2023/405, 23.11.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/405/oj.
([18]) OJ C, C/2023/445. 1.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/445/oj.
([19]) OJ C 493, 27.12.2022, p. 136.
([20]) OJ C 132, 14.4.2023, p. 115.
([21]) OJ C 167, 11.5.2023, p. 105.
([22]) OJ C, C/2023/448, 1.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/448/oj.
([23]) OJ C 150, 28.5.1999, p. 164.

A. whereas the European continent is facing the most complex combination of both military and non-military threats caused by Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine that has severely endangered the security and stability of the EU; whereas Russian aggression violates international law, the principles of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, and is an attack on the international rules-based order, endangering the key principle of non-recourse to force in international relations; whereas Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, in parallel with the weaponisation of other issues such as energy, food supplies and information, has signalled the advent of a more competitive and less secure international geopolitical environment;

B. whereas these non-military threats include disinformation, cyberattacks, economic pressure, food and energy blackmailing, the instrumentalisation of migration, and subversive political influence to seek support for Russia's illegitimate military operations;

C. whereas Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the increased assertiveness of other regional and global actors, such as China, Iran and certain Gulf countries, are destabilising the immediate neighbourhood of the EU, including through strategic investments and disinformation campaigns, but also, in some cases, through the provision of political, financial, operational and logistical support to hostile entities in the region; whereas the EU needs to ensure greater support, especially for candidate countries, in order to preserve stability and security and increase defence cooperation, especially in terms of the fight against disinformation and hybrid warfare; whereas the future of the Western Balkans and the countries in the Eastern Neighbourhood lies in the EU;

D. whereas Russia's persistent attempts to destabilise the EU and to undermine the European security architecture requires the EU to substantially enhance the cohesion and effectiveness of its foreign, security and defence policy and its strategic sovereignty, set its own strategic objectives, defend its interests, values and citizens both within and outside its borders, in the Western Balkans and its immediate Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood, to deliver peace, human security, sustainable development and democracy, and support its partners;

E. whereas the strategic environment of the European continent as a whole is highly volatile, with open or latent conflicts in most neighbouring regions, from the Caucasus to the Sahel and from the Middle East to certain areas of North Africa; whereas, in addition to the annexation of Crimea and the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions in Ukraine, Russia continues to occupy the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia and the Transnistria region in the Republic of Moldova, which demonstrates a need for an ongoing CSDP presence in the region;

F. whereas the EU's cooperation with certain African countries is being contested; whereas the EU and its Member States need to evaluate the effectiveness of EU CSDP missions and operations;

G. whereas Ukraine needs to be provided with the necessary military capabilities for as long as it takes for Ukraine to have a decisive military victory to end Russia's illegal war of aggression, restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and deter any future aggression; whereas Ukraine, in defending itself, is also protecting and fighting for European values and core security interests; whereas EU-NATO cooperation has been fundamental in coordinating weapons deliveries to Ukraine;

H. whereas there is a new urgency for the EU to boost its capabilities, including by building on the unprecedented support for Ukraine and by increasing the funding of the European Defence Fund (EDF), Military Mobility and, in particular, the European Peace Facility (EPF), through which the EU has provided Ukraine with over EUR 5 billion worth of military equipment, as well as through Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects and CSDP military and civilian missions; whereas the EU needs to further boost research, technological development and innovation in security and defence, but also in cyber security;

I. whereas in 2023, Parliament and the Council concluded agreements on the European defence industry through common procurement act (EDIRPA) and the Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP), which aim to encourage the joint procurement of defence products, ramp up the European defence industry's production capacity, replenish depleted stocks and reduce fragmentation in the defence-procurement sector; whereas further initiatives are needed to establish genuine European defence integration, including a European Defence Investment Programme (EDIP) and a European defence industrial strategy;

J. whereas without substantial budgetary efforts, these defence tools will not have the expected effect on either military support for Ukraine or the development of a genuine European defence capability and a competitive EU defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB); whereas the multiannual financial framework (MFF) and its revision do not make any improvement to the budget allocated to European defence; whereas proposals have been formulated for the creation of a EUR 100 billion common defence fund, which would be aimed at immediately ramping up domestic arms and ammunition production and would be financed with European bonds;

K. whereas maximising the EU's and the Member States' defence capabilities requires smarter spending and greater joint procurement; whereas building capabilities and adapting them to military needs requires a common strategic culture, threat perception and solutions to be developed and combined in doctrines and concepts; whereas the EU needs to prepare its future framework for defence cooperation on military capabilities, ranging from their conception, through to their development and operational employment, with a view to increasing our defence readiness in a joint effort;

L. whereas the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has reaffirmed the role of NATO as the cornerstone of the collective defence of its members and the indispensability of a strong transatlantic bond; whereas the war has also underlined the lack of investment in security and defence in numerous EU and NATO member states; whereas the decision of NATO leaders to commit a minimum of 2 % of GDP to defence spending has only been implemented by a few NATO member states; whereas the 2 % spending goal should represent a minimum for EU NATO countries and not a ceiling for defence spending;

M. whereas the terrorist attacks by Hamas against Israel have highlighted the volatile and dynamic security situation in the Middle East and the need for the EU and other international actors to assume greater responsibility and assist governments and civil society organisations of the region with reaching durable and sustainable peace, in particular by continuing to support a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine, as well as by countering terrorism and radicalisation in the region; whereas on 7 October 2023, 1 139 Israelis and foreign citizens were killed and 240 people were taken hostage during the despicable terrorist attack by Hamas; whereas tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians and hundreds of UN staff, medical personnel and journalists have been killed in the Gaza Strip as a result of the Israeli Government's response; whereas the continuous bombardment and forced evacuation of Palestinians to the south of the Gaza Strip have created a dire and rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation; whereas attacks by Israeli forces and settlers have killed at least 330 Palestinians in the West Bank since 7 October 2023;

N. whereas the ongoing attacks in the Red Sea launched from the Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, with the support of Iran, pose a significant threat to freedom of navigation, maritime security and international trade; whereas additional attacks by various Iran-backed militia in Iraq and Syria are further increasing the risk of regional escalation; whereas the risk of escalation in the region is the highest in decades;

O. whereas the Strategic Compass aims to equip the EU with the necessary strategic guidance and realistic and operational tools to move towards a coherent and credible defence policy, based on significantly increased military cooperation between Member States, and to make it an effective and capable security provider and an assertive global actor, also in view of the new security context, with the ability to rapidly respond to crises outside the EU; whereas EU leaders have committed to developing modalities for more flexible decision-making, particularly through Article 44 TEU, which allows 'coalitions of the willing' to conduct missions and operations on behalf of the EU; whereas to navigate the current international environment, the EU needs to adopt a holistic approach to face all the threats it is confronted with;

P. whereas the Strategic Compass makes a positive contribution to global and transatlantic security, and it needs to be coherent and compatible with NATO's Strategic Concept; whereas EU-NATO cooperation has recently improved significantly; whereas Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and Article 42(7) TEU entail a mutual defence clause for members; whereas Article 222 TFEU further specifies a 'solidarity clause' among EU Member States;

Q. whereas, as outlined in the Strategic Compass, the EU must move further in its ambition to achieve an open strategic autonomy and technological sovereignty, while also reinforcing its partnerships with like-minded partners in order to safeguard its values and interests, as well as those of its allies and neighbours;

R. whereas the CSDP has nine military missions and 13 civilian missions with over 4 000 personnel; whereas CSDP missions and operations often lack rapid decision-making and suffer from excessive micro-management from the Council, as well as limited financial, logistical and human resources; whereas Member States are deploying fewer personnel to the missions and operations; whereas these obstacles limit the overall effectiveness of CSDP missions and operations; whereas one of the objectives of the Strategic Compass is to reinforce EU civilian and military CSDP missions and operations by providing them with more robust and flexible mandates, promoting rapid and more flexible decision-making processes and ensuring greater financial solidarity;

S. whereas CSDP missions and operations aim to strengthen the resilience and stability of the European neighbourhood, such as in the Mediterranean, the South Caucasus and the Black Sea Region, the Western Balkans and in the Horn of Africa, by providing services such as military, police, coast guard, border management training and capacity building; whereas if CSDP missions are to achieve mission objectives, they must begin giving advice and training in coping with emerging and disruptive technologies that are rapidly entering the 'frozen conflict' environment;

T. whereas the EU's integrated approach to external conflicts and crises provides for the coherent use of the EU's different capacities, within which its security and defence policy should complement and be complemented by other civilian tools in order to contribute to human security and sustainable peace in Europe and the wider world;

U. whereas conflicts disproportionately affect women and girls and, among other things, intensify gender-based violence, as also demonstrated by Russia's unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine; whereas women are heavily underrepresented in civilian CSDP missions, military missions and military operations; whereas the participation of women in peacekeeping and military operations should be encouraged and bolstered;

V. whereas the EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM) has demonstrated the positive impact that CSDP missions and operations have with the necessary resources and contributions from Member States; whereas EUMAM has already reached the target of 30 000 Ukrainian soldiers trained; whereas, based on current results and trends, EUMAM stands ready to train more Ukrainian military personnel to reach the target of 60 000 soldiers; whereas the mission is also prepared to integrate air and maritime training as appropriate and to react to any other urgent Ukrainian training requests;

W. whereas CSDP missions and operations are often targeted by hybrid threats, including foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) campaigns, putting at risk their effectiveness in stabilising the country in which they are deployed; whereas the EU's Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) and the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) must consider how to protect a deployed force against hybrid threats;

X. whereas Russia makes use of private military companies (PMCs), such as the Wagner Group, as part of a hybrid warfare toolbox to maintain plausible deniability, while successfully exerting influence in various regions and gaining access to natural resources and critical infrastructures; whereas the Wagner Group has reportedly committed atrocities in Ukraine, Mali, Libya, Syria and the Central African Republic; whereas it has reinforced anti-European sentiments, especially in countries with a strong EU presence or that host CSDP missions; whereas in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger the situation is marked by the non-cooperative stance of the putschists towards other partners, including EU Training Mission (EUTM) Mali, regional organizations, as well as MINUSMA;

Y. whereas following the July coup in Niger, the putschists have taken a decision to prepare a case to prosecute the legitimate Nigerien President, Mohamed Bazoum, for 'high treason'; whereas the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has followed a 'two-track' policy – mediation while applying sanctions (trade, banking and individual); whereas the EU has expressed strong support for ECOWAS, a readiness to prepare an autonomous sanctions regime and a willingness to look at any request that might come from ECOWAS for further support; whereas following the coup, both CSDP missions (EU Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) Sahel Niger and the EU Military Partnership Mission (EUMPM) in Niger) have suspended their operational activities and have kept only necessary core staff in the country; whereas the ongoing four assistance measures from the EPF (EUR 74 million in total) have been suspended; whereas the EUTM and EUCAP missions in the Sahel and in the Central African Republic have not yielded the expected results;

Z. whereas the instability and insecurity in the Southern Neighbourhood and the Sahel region is closely interlinked with and remains an ongoing challenge for European external border management; whereas the EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya and the EU Naval Force Mediterranean Operation (IRINI) are contributing to efforts made for sustainable peace, security and stability by implementing the arms embargo and fighting illicit weapons and human trafficking;

AA. whereas malign foreign interference and disinformation campaigns, in particular sponsored by Russia, and in some cases other actors such as China and Iran, are a significant challenge to the EU's foreign policy;

AB. whereas the rise in the use of hybrid attacks and threats, as demonstrated by Russia's activities in the EU, in Ukraine, in Africa and elsewhere, necessitate the development of comprehensive instruments to detect, prevent and react to such incidents and protect the Union's citizens and assets, through transforming traditional military capacities, improving the security of critical infrastructure, countering FIMI and further developing a common high level of cybersecurity; whereas China has also demonstrated an increased use of hybrid warfare tactics, including in the Indo-Pacific and South China Sea, aimed at undermining the stability and security of the EU;

AC. whereas hybrid threats in the years to come will see increased use of the systematic combination of information warfare, agile force manoeuvre, mass cyber warfare and emerging and disruptive technologies, from seabed to space, with the deployment of advanced space-based surveillance and strike systems, all of which will be enabled by advanced artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, increasingly 'intelligent' drone swarm technologies, offensive cyber capabilities, hypersonic missile systems, and nano-tech and bio-warfare;

AD. whereas approximately 90 % of the Union's external trade is transported by sea; whereas around two thirds of the world's oil and gas supply is extracted at sea or transported by sea; whereas up to 90 % of international data and communications transfers are carried via undersea cables; whereas organised crime and drug traffickers carry out a significant part of their activities by sea, and even use submersible or semi-submersible vehicles or equipment that are difficult for law enforcement agencies to apprehend;

AE. whereas security and defence cooperation with partners and allies are crucial to the EU's ambition to become an international security provider; whereas cooperation with organisations such as the UN, NATO, the African Union (AU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, as well as numerous allies and like-minded partners, is crucial to the successful implementation of the CSDP;

AF. whereas the United States is the EU's most important ally; whereas joint EU-US cooperation, partnership and friendship, mirrored, among other things, through our joint cooperation within NATO, are the backbone of our shared freedom, prosperity, democracy and security;

AG. whereas Latin America is a strategic partner for the EU and whereas there is a lot of untapped potential for building a true strategic partnership, including in security cooperation;

AH. whereas the Commission and Parliament are committed to reinforcing the EU as an external actor that is able to act more strategically and autonomously;

AI. whereas the Arctic region is becoming increasingly important for geopolitics, economic development and transport, while at the same time it is facing challenges linked to climate change and militarisation;

AJ. whereas China's increasingly aggressive behaviour, in particular in its own neighbourhood, such as the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, poses a risk to regional and global security; whereas China has for many years promoted an alternative narrative, challenging democratic values, open markets and the rules-based international order; whereas China's increasing influence in international organisations has impeded positive progress and further excluded Taiwan from rightful and meaningful participation;

AK. whereas the United States, Japan and South Korea held a historic first trilateral meeting on 18 August 2023; whereas mutual cooperation among like-minded countries, in particular in the Indo-Pacific region, is fundamental to ensuring the peaceful and prosperous development of the region; whereas the EU should also strive to enhance its security collaboration with these like-minded countries in the region;

AL. whereas Kosovo and the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue are facing threats of destabilisation; whereas the operation EUFOR Althea plays a pivotal role in the security and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region;

AM. whereas cultural heritage has a universal dimension as a testimony of history inseparable from peoples' identity, which the international community has to protect and preserve for future generations;

AN. whereas there is a need for a comprehensive peace-building approach involving civilian specialists in order to implement practical measures for peace; whereas local and international non-governmental organisations perform crucial activities aimed at preventing conflicts and resolving conflicts peacefully, and it is of the utmost importance to make the most of their experience;

1. Expresses its concern about the rapidly deteriorating global security situation and believes that in these times of high uncertainty European and transatlantic unity, as well as close collaboration with like-minded partners across the globe, is more necessary than ever in order to address the challenges created by multiple global crises, act proactively and react decisively to threats to the international rules-based order and facilitate the effective implementation of the CSDP;

2. Stands united with Ukraine and resolutely condemns Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression; deplores the global consequences of Russia's illegal war of aggression which is hitting countries and vulnerable societies around the world through increased energy prices and food shortages and which also grossly violates and endangers international law and the principles of the UN Charter and undermines European and global security and stability; recognises that Russia is continuing its war of aggression against Ukraine with the support of Belarus, Iran and North Korea, and maintains an active military presence where it deems it strategically important;

3. Condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the despicable terrorist attacks committed by the terrorist group Hamas against Israel, including the taking of hostages; expresses its support for the State of Israel and its people and for the Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank; calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages who have been taken by the terrorist group Hamas and for the bodies of deceased hostages to be returned; emphasises Israel's right to defend itself in line with international law and international humanitarian law; stresses that all parties must distinguish, at all times, between combatants and civilians and that parties may only attack combatants and military targets; asks the Israeli Government not to take military action in Rafah that would worsen an already catastrophic humanitarian situation and prevent the urgently needed provision of basic services and humanitarian assistance; expresses its deepest sorrow and full solidarity with the innocent victims on both sides, their families and loved ones; calls for those responsible for terrorist acts and for violations of international law to be held to account; calls for a thorough investigation into the role played by third countries, including Iran and Qatar, and non-state entities in providing financial, material and operational support to Hamas;

4. Strongly condemns the ongoing attacks on maritime activities in the Red Sea launched from Houthi-controlled territories in Yemen, with the support of Iran; welcomes the decision by the Member States to launch a maritime CSDP operation, under the name ASPIDES, to protect merchant vessels, by strengthening maritime situational awareness and accompanying vessels to deter attacks; further condemns the attacks by Iran-backed military groups from Lebanon, Syria and Iraq;

Providing Ukraine with the defence capabilities it needs

5. Confirms that the EU will continue to support Ukraine by providing the necessary military means to end Russia's war of aggression and restore Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, enabling it to effectively exercise its sovereignty, protect its citizens, document and investigate war crimes and bring those responsible to justice, and fulfil the wish of the people of Ukraine for Euro-Atlantic integration, in particular EU membership grounded in the strong identification with European values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law, and NATO membership; stresses that Ukraine's military victory and its EU and NATO memberships are needed for overall security, stability and sustainable peace on the European continent;

6. Stresses the importance of the EPF, which has supported the Ukrainian armed forces by financing and delivering military equipment and training while providing coordination for all stakeholders through the Clearing House Mechanism hosted by the EU Military Staff (EUMS); encourages Member States to create a scenario-based and predictable inventory of military capabilities that can be provided under the EPF to ensure rapid sourcing of short- and long-term provision of capabilities; calls for the financial sustainability and durability of the EPF to be ensured in order to provide Ukraine and other EU partners around the world with the support they request; calls for a further increase in and speeding up of financial and military assistance to Ukraine and for the immediate deployment of modern equipment, weapons and next-generation air defence and surface-to-surface systems;

7. Urges the larger Member States with significant defence industry capacities, such as France, Spain and Italy, to significantly and urgently increase military assistance to Ukraine;

8. Urges the Member States' governments to immediately enter into dialogue with defence companies in order to guarantee that production and delivery, in particular, of ammunition, shells and missiles for Ukraine are prioritised over orders from other third countries;

9. Welcomes VP/HR Borrell's initial proposal, building on Parliament's previous call, for the creation of a EUR 20 billion assistance fund within the EPF, dedicated to supporting the Ukrainian armed forces with up to EUR 5 billion per year between 2023 and 2027; regrets that the Member Stateshave lowered this ambition to a EUR 5 billion top-up and urges them to reach a rapid agreement in this regard; strongly condemns efforts made by Hungary to block recent attempts to top up the EPF and the VP/HR's proposal for the special assistance fund for Ukraine; emphasises that all military assistance and weapons deliveries by the EPF must fully comply with the EU Common Position on arms exports, international human rights law and humanitarian law, and must provide adequate transparency and accountability; regrets the unnecessary delay in the United States' approval of the next tranche of urgently needed assistance to Ukraine;

10. Welcomes the setting up of the Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) and its role in enhancing the military effectiveness of Ukraine's armed forces so that they can defend their territorial integrity within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders and allow the country to effectively exercise its sovereignty and protection of civilians; stresses the need to provide the necessary personnel and infrastructure to the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) to exercise planning and command of this important training mission;

11. Welcomes EUMAM Ukraine's capacity to address Ukrainian training needs in a flexible way; expects it to bring added value by expanding training offers and to be synchronised with other training initiatives already underway; insists on adapting training modules to lessons learnt in order to adequately correspond to the Ukrainian forces' needs; congratulates the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Member States for successfully training more than 30 000 troops before the end of 2023; welcomes the VP/HR's proposal of an increased target of 60 000 Ukrainian soldiers to be trained in 2024; stresses the importance of continuously adjusting and reviewing training modules based on the lessons learnt from the battlefield, as well as of a sustained focus on addressing current and future challenges, including counter unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), UAV system training, air defence, mine detection, combined arms and specialised training, and developing the capacities of current and future officers of the Ukrainian armed forces across all levels and in accordance with their needs; welcomes, further, the rapid conclusion of deliberations and strong participation by Member States in launching EUMAM Ukraine, which can be described as a template for future military training missions, and calls on them to demonstrate similar ambition and contributions to other current and future CSDP missions and operations;

12. Commends the flexibility and adaptability of the European Union Advisory Mission in Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine) in implementing, in difficult conditions, its revised mandate, including its support for the investigation and prosecution of international crimes committed in the context of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine; calls for the EU to ensure it can operate with the adequate financial, logistical and human means to meet Ukraine's needs and welcomes non-EU country participation in this regard;

13. Underlines the EU's concrete support to Ukraine through the 'three ammunition tracks'; urges faster delivery of ammunition from Member States' existing stocks through the EPF; draws attention to track two of the 'three ammunition tracks', which aims to provide one million artillery rounds to Ukraine by March 2024, and expresses concern about recent statements which indicate that the deadline will not be met; calls on the VP/HR, the Commission and the Member States for the joint procurement of ammunition for Ukraine to be sped up and stresses the need to ramp up the manufacturing capacities of the European industry by ensuring rapid and effective implementation of the Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP); encourages the Member States to provide specialised opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the European defence sector so that they have the capacity to participate in the bidding process; calls on the EU Member States to accelerate the development of military ammunition production capacities, with particular focus on joint projects with Ukraine and to make sure that orders for Ukraine are prioritised without any further delay; further stresses that concrete steps should be taken towards Ukraine's integration in EU defence and cybersecurity policies and programmes during the EU membership process, building on cooperation and exchanges with the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), on the existing agreement with the European Defence Agency (EDA) and on the possibility for Member States to procure on behalf of Ukraine as a recipient of additional quantities within the European defence industry reinforcement through common procurement act (EDIRPA); calls on the EEAS and the Commission to come forward with a plan for a sustainable and long-term package of security commitments for Ukraine that is complementary to ensuring the increasing security requirements of the EU; welcomes the setting up of the 'Ukraine Facility' and urges all actors to work for its implementation;

14. Stresses the importance of the global condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which violates international law and the principles of the UN Charter and undermines global security and stability; calls on the Commission's Special Envoy for the Implementation of EU Sanctions to thoroughly investigate the circumvention of EU sanctions against Russian entities, especially concerning dual-use goods in connection with its war of aggression against Ukraine; condemns the presence of non-EU country soldiers, including from Cuba, Serbia and Syria, fighting for Russia in its war of aggression in Ukraine, and demands their immediate withdrawal;

15. Underlines the outcome of NATO's Vilnius Summit that clearly confirms Ukraine's future is in the alliance; welcomes the Summit's support package for Ukraine and the establishment of the NATO-Ukraine Council that will prepare Ukraine for NATO membership, after the war is over and to be finalised as soon as possible; supports continued transatlantic efforts and coordination on military assistance and weapons deliveries to Ukraine;

16. Underlines that the EU and NATO's commitments to Ukraine are part of a wider internationally coordinated package of security guarantees for Ukraine, including the G7's launch of a multilateral framework for the negotiation of bilateral security commitments and arrangements for Ukraine;

17. Emphasises the importance of continuing to operationalise Article 42(7) TEU on mutual assistance and calls for concrete steps in order to develop a true EU solidarity policy, including by clarifying the coherence between this and Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, considering that not all EU Member States are NATO members;

Strengthening European defence in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine;

18. Underlines and expresses its unwavering support for the commitment of the EU's heads of state and government, made in the Versailles Declaration, to provide all the necessary support needed by Ukraine and to take greater responsibility for European security by bolstering Member States' and EU defence capabilities; encourages greater coordination with transatlantic allies and NATO in this respect; considers it necessary to update the Strategic Compass in order to incorporate the lessons learned from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine that began days before its adoption, as well as in the light of recent events in the Middle East; calls on the EU and its Member States, following this review, which should become a regular exercise, to deliver on the Versailles Declaration commitment by accelerating the full implementation of the Strategic Compass via a massive boost of European military cooperation at industrial and armed forces level, in order to make the European Union a stronger and more capable security provider which is interoperable and complementary with NATO;

19. Takes note of the debate on nuclear deterrence in Europe and calls for a constructive and open-minded European discussion on this core element of territorial defence and deterrence, which is needed to ensure the long-term security of the European continent and its peoples;

20. Recalls that, as clearly stated in the Strategic Compass, the EU's objective is to be able to act rapidly and robustly whenever a crisis erupts, alone when necessary or within a partnership, and that the Strategic Compass must not be a substitute for postponing vital investments in the EU's security and defence capabilities; stresses that the Strategic Compass' ambitious aims and milestones can only be achieved with corresponding political willingness and action on behalf of Member States and the EU institutions, as well as the necessary financial contributions where necessary; calls, therefore, on the Member States to engage in systematic, regular updates of the threat analysis;

21. Reaffirms that, in order to become a credible geopolitical player, the EU should reform its decision-making system; regrets that the potential for fast, efficient and effective foreign, security and defence action, as provided for by the passerelle clauses of the TEU, has been used only in a very limited manner; reiterates its call for the Council to gradually switch to qualified majority voting for decisions on the CFSP and CSDP, at least in those areas that do not have military implications; reiterates its call for the establishment of regular EU defence minister Council meetings and calls for setting up joint civil-military headquarters at European level that combines civil and military instruments in order to make full use of the EU's integrated approach in crisis management right from strategic planning to the actual conduct of the mission or operation;

22. Calls for the appointment of a Defence Union Commissioner (DUC), within the next Commission who is responsible for the finalisation of a true European Defence Union and all defence-related matters, including CSDP, following a clear division of tasks with the VP/HR; believes that, together with the to-be-established fully-fledged Security and Defence Committee in the Parliament, the DUC should jointly oversee a dedicated and substantial Defence Union budget;

The Strategic Compass: 'ACT'

23. Reminds the respective EU bodies and Member States of their commitment to strengthening the MPCC and achieving full operational capability, including through the provision of adequate premises, sufficient staff and reorganisation of the EU Military Staff; demands that its full operational capability be reached by 2025, as stated in the Strategic Compass, and despite the Council conclusions of 19 November 2018 which envisaged a 2020 deadline; further demands that the MPCC's staffing level should be increased considerably up to 250 personnel; emphasises the urgent need to establish the MPCC as the preferred command and control structure for EU military operations, including for the use of the future Rapid Deployment Capacity (RDC); stresses that one of the current four national operational headquarters can also be designated for this task;

24. Reiterates the importance of the full implementation of the RDC with at least 5 000 troops and relevant capabilities according to its modular nature, available for crisis situations in non-permissive environments, such as rescue and evacuation tasks, initial entry and stabilisation operations or temporary reinforcement of missions; considers that without a firm political commitment and more resources, the ambition for the RDC to be operational by 2025 is at risk; calls on the Member States to take into account the practical modalities for implementing Article 44 TEU during the operationalisation of the RDC, as well as in other CSDP operational engagements, where relevant, in order to allow a group of willing and able Member States to plan and conduct a mission or operation within the EU framework and, thereby, ensure the swift activation of the RDC; reiterates that the RDC should be organised around different 'notice to move' deadlines for different parts of the RDC, with some having a 'notice to move' of 5 to 10 days; notes that an exact number for minimum troops can only be assessed after conceptual planners have all analysed potential scenarios; considers that the EU RDC has great potential to substantially improve and build on the lessons learnt from the previous EU battlegroups, address and overcome their various shortcomings, strengthen the EU's strategic autonomy and positively contribute to the EU's integrated approach to security and peace;

25. Welcomes the first ever live exercise, as part of MILEX (Crisis Management Military Exercise) 2023, for the RDC, that took place in October 2023 in Spain and looks forward to further live exercises in the future aimed at improving its capabilities, increasing interoperability between Member States and effectively testing the utilisation of the RDC in various scenarios; calls on the Member States and the EEAS to ensure that such training and certification exercises can benefit from the common costs mechanism to ensure adequate participation in the future;

26. Highlights that the RDC should be established as one of the types of EU military capability for crisis response with its own legal identity, to allow for setting up the RDC as a force that is permanently available and trains together with the goal of becoming a standing force; notes that the RDC should conduct regular joint exercises at strategic, joint forces and tactical level within an EU framework based on operational scenarios and following uniform training and certification standards, such as within NATO, in order to improve readiness and interoperability; stresses that the exercises should be scheduled by the EUMS and planned and conducted by the MPCC; calls on the Member States to commit to substantially narrowing critical gaps in strategic enablers by 2025, in particular those linked to the RDC, such as strategic airlift, space communication assets, medical assets, cyber-defence capabilities and intelligence and reconnaissance; welcomes the force generation gap recently filled by the Member States, enabling the RDC and its battlegroups to become fully operational by 2025;

27. Recalls that the EU has set a long-term goal to significantly increase its ambitions and work towards developing its capacities to deploy up to 60 000 troops from Member States, on a voluntary basis, in EU-led operations as set out in the 1999 Helsinki Headline Goal;

28. Highlights the urgent need to substantially enhance and invest in the military mobility of our armed forces, prioritising investments and removing bottlenecks and missing links; commends efforts made by Member States, allies, the EU and NATO in advancing military mobility across central and eastern Europe; calls on the Members States to further act to simplify and harmonise procedures for military mobility and shorten the timelines for granting permissions to enable the EU Member States to act faster and increase their efficiency of response, in line with their defence needs and responsibilities, both in the context of CSDP missions and operations, as well as national and multinational activities;

29. Calls to strengthen the EDA, to manage advanced research and capability development and to foster joint procurement in order to strengthen the EU's defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB), while not obstructing procurement of any equipment from like-minded countries; calls for improving defence financing through exploring a potential reform of the European Investment Bank's lending policy; calls for the strengthening of the industries' access to private funding to ensure that the European defence industry has sufficient access to public and private finance and investment on a sustainable basis; calls on the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, to consider developing parameters for a financial product that aims to support investments in European security, including actions by the defence industry; welcomes the joint effort by the European Investment Bank and the Commission to launch the Defence Equity Facility, with EUR 175 million, to stimulate the development of dual-use technologies; welcomes the new revamped fiscal rules on budget deficits, which enable extra military spending in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine;

30. Calls on the VP/HR and Member States to deliver more robust, flexible, efficient and modular CSDP missions and operations that can adapt to the changing security context, taking into account the integrated approach principle, and that builds on the synergies and complementarities of the civilian and military dimensions of CSDP; highlights the importance of civilian CSDP missions for coordinating with other international partners engaged in similar activities in the host country; emphasises the importance of setting out clear and achievable goals for each mission and operation, supplemented by the necessary financial, logistical and human resources according to the progress achieved towards each goal; stresses that each mission and operation has to be effectively tailored to the needs and requirements of each host country, ensuring the creation of the necessary conditions for the mission to achieve its stated goals and to maintain a strong partnership with the local population and national authorities; underlines the significance of the 'train and equip' and 'train the trainer' approaches to missions and operations to ensure their long-term success and impact on the host country;

31. Welcomes the adoption of the new Civilian CSDP Compact and the commitment to increasing the effectiveness, flexibility and responsiveness of civilian missions, including through speeding up decision-making, strengthening operational planning, as well as improving the selection and recruitment of personnel, emphasising greater gender equality and improving responsiveness tools; believes that civilian and military missions need to focus more on the key elements of human security; welcomes the commitment by the EEAS and the Member States, in close consultation with the Commission, to set up a regular and structured civilian capability development process in 2024;

32. Calls on the creation of detailed impact assessments for all missions and operations to be held at a frequent intervals, in combination with the Strategic Review exercise, in order to more effectively evaluate the short-, medium- and long-term effects on the host country, as well as to examine whether the missions and operations have achieved their desired impact; calls for these impact assessments to be shared with Parliament; stresses the particular need for all missions and operations to have sunset provisions to allow a sustainable termination if necessary;

33. Calls on the Council and the EEAS to include a cultural heritage protection component in their CSDP missions and operations in order to provide assistance and education to local partners in addressing security challenges related to the preservation and protection of cultural heritage; calls on the Council and the EEAS to include a preventive diplomacy component in their CSDP missions and operations in order to better analyse situations in the given areas, avert the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflicts, and mediate between parties that are on the brink of violence, helping to achieve reconciliation and build resilient and inclusive societies;

34. Recalls that mainstreaming and operationalising gender perspectives in external relations and implementing the women, peace and security agenda are long-standing priorities for the EU; insists, therefore, on the importance of delivering on all commitments made, including those in the EU's Gender Action Plan (GAP) III (2020-2024) and in the Strategic Compass, including by promoting gender equality and by systematically mainstreaming a gender perspective, based on data-driven gender analysis, in all civilian and military CSDP planning and actions; welcomes, in this context, the appointment of Gender Advisors in all CSDP missions and operations and the establishment of a network of gender focal points; calls for the full implementation of the commitments made in the new Civilian CSDP Compact, which includes significantly increasing women's participation in civilian CSDP among international staff, with the aim of reaching at least 40 % representation while striving for gender parity; underlines, nevertheless, that more needs to be done to ensure gender equality and the full and meaningful participation of women in CSDP, especially in military missions; calls on the Member States to take steps towards minimising career obstacles for women within their respective defence forces; urges the EEAS to provide regular reports on its progress in implementing gender-related actions to the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE);

35. Emphasises the essential role of gender equality and women's rights in the fundamental aspects of security and defence measures; strongly condemns the perpetration of war crimes against civilian populations, particularly the use of sexual violence as a tool of warfare; highlights the significance of cybersecurity measures in monitoring and preventing the trafficking of women affected by conflict;

36. Stresses that apart from the provision of security guarantees and assistance to Ukraine, measures must be in place to deal with mental health problems that arise and will continue to arise among military personnel and citizens as a consequence of the war;

37. Welcomes the joint communication of June 2023 on a new outlook on the climate and security nexus, which outlines concrete actions to address the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on security and European defence, including CSDP; stresses the need to move forward with its comprehensive implementation with a view to enhancing operational effectiveness, including the deployment of environmental advisors to all CSDP missions and operations by 2025 and support for the Member States in addressing any gaps, barriers and incentives to prepare their armed forces for climate change, as called for in the Strategic Compass;

38. Reiterates the important role of young people and youth organisations in maintaining and promoting peace and security and calls on the EEAS to commit to more systematically integrate young people into its youth, peace and security agenda;

39. Emphasises the importance of adequate, flexible and sustainable funding for all security and defence programs and initiatives, including the CFSP budget and the EPF; regrets the fact that the CFSP budget has only marginally increased from the multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2014-2020 to the MFF 2021-2027, while the number of CSDP mission tasks has increased; calls for a substantive increase in funding for the CFSP budget, including a dedicated CFSP budget line establishing a civilian support facility to provide partner countries with equipment and services to enhance their civilian capabilities; welcomes the agreement by the European Council to reinforce new priorities by EUR 64,6 billion in a revised EU MFF, including an increase of EUR 1,5 billion allocated to European Defence Fund (EDF) under the new Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP)); invites the Member States to bring forward the re-assessment of the scope and definition of common costs to enhance solidarity and stimulate participation in military missions and operations, as well as exercise-related costs in line with the Strategic Compass; calls, further, on the Member States to amend the EPF financing process to ensure adequate and sustainable support for partners, allies and CSDP operations;

The Strategic Compass: 'INVEST'

40. Welcomes the increased budgets and investment in defence by EU Member States and institutions, and calls for their impact to be maximised in order to deliver the needed capabilities to Europe's armed forces through increased joint procurement and joint investment in defence research and development; deplores, however, that neither Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine nor the current EU-level defence industrial programmes have led to a real shift towards making EU-level cooperation the norm; urges the Member States to boost defence industrial cooperation and set, as minimum targets, the 35 % European collaborative defence equipment procurement benchmark and the 20 % European collaborative defence research and technology benchmark, as agreed by all Member States within the EDA, declared as early as 2007; deplores, further, that in order to finance the EDIRPA and ASAP, the Commission resorted to cannibalising existing resources dedicated to other security and defence initiatives or other programmes, thereby undermining other existing initiatives and emphasising the need to dedicate further resources to Heading 5 of the MFF; calls on the Member States and the Commission to dedicate further financial and human resources to the EEAS to ensure that it can effectively conduct its role as the EU's diplomatic service in light of the highly volatile geopolitical context and the increased demands on its limited capacities in recent years; stresses, however, that increased investments must be sustainable and must address emerging threats;

41. Recalls that the EU and the Member States now have a comprehensive set of tools to enhance a strategic approach to capability development, namely under the guidance of the Joint Defence Procurement Task Force and using the EDA's Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the Capability Development Plan (CDP) and the defence investment gap analysis; underlines that these tools must now be used to their full potential, demonstrate their coherence and effectiveness, and deliver tangible results; calls on the Commission and the VP/HR to present an update of the defence investment gap analysis and to identify the capabilities and programmes that will be developed with EU support by the end of the decade; recalls the need for the development of a European capabilities and armaments policy to that end; calls on the Council and the Commission to boost investment in defence innovation;

42. Welcomes the revision and presentation of the CDP for 2023; regrets the limited progress in capability development since the first CDP in 2008; stresses that, especially in the light of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine and the threat to European security, stronger and more joint efforts by EU Member States are needed in order to deter aggressors and protect European citizens and interests;

43. Considers that the EDF is regrettably still underfinanced, yet shows the added-value of EU-level action in European defence; recommends the extension of Commission proposals in all defence-related fields of EU policy in coordination with Member States; calls for a further increase of EUR 1 billion to the EDF budget, in addition to the agreed EUR 1,5 billion, as part of the proposal for STEP; urges maximum consistency and coordination between various initiatives in the field of security and defence, such as the CARD, EDF, EDIRPA, ASAP, PESCO and Military Mobility among others, to prevent overlaps, guarantee efficient public investments and address the critical capabilities gap;

44. Stresses the importance of reducing dependencies in critical technologies and value chains in order for the EU to move towards greater technological autonomy to be able to develop, produce and deploy its own technologies in critical areas; welcomes, in that regard, the Critical Raw Materials Act, which is crucial in fulfilling the principles of the Versailles Declaration and strengthening the resilience of supply chains for the European defence industries; stresses that fostering joint procurement at European level is a logical complement to the EDF by covering the whole circle from research and development to procurement, thereby consolidating demand that improves the interoperability of Member States' armed forces, achieving economies of scale and ultimately strengthening European defence; notes that defence products should be assembled in companies in Europe, where possible, which will support the European industry, especially SMEs;

45. Points out that the EDIRPA and ASAP can only be a first step towards improving the EDTIB's capacities to supply Member States with the products and quantities needed and should be complemented with further initiatives, including a European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS) coupled with the envisaged long-term and comprehensive EDIP for which adequate funding needs to be ensured, as well as an effective regulatory framework aimed at encouraging innovation, boosting production and ensuring smarter and more efficient public investments; calls, in that regard, on the EU Member States to provide the necessary funds to all European defence instruments in the upcoming MFF revision; regrets that the EDIP has still not been proposed by the Commission; calls for the fast and efficient implementation of the EDIRPA and ASAP; fully supports the proposed creation of a EUR 100 billion common defence fund aimed at immediately ramping up domestic arms and ammunition production;

46. Calls on the Commission to draw on the European Union Military Committee's (EUMC) expertise in defining the defence industries' priorities and formulating defence initiatives in order to ensure military coherence at industrial level;

47. Calls on the Member States to increase and ensure sustainable levels of defence spending to adjust to the current geopolitical situation and address the significant threats towards the Union's security; calls on the EU NATO Member States to increase their military budgets, based on an assessment of their own requirements, and to spend at least 2 % of GDP, in a well-coordinated and comprehensive manner, which achieves economies of scale and interoperability, also when recalling the strong increase in defence spending by other rivals, such as Russia and China, and in order to remedy shortfalls and meet the requirements across all domains arising from a more contested security order and considering the impact of historic under-investment and spiralling inflation on defence budgets; underlines the EDTIB's essential role in equipping Member States' armed forces in order to enable them to protect European citizens and interests;

48. Underlines that European armed forces face severe recruitment and retention problems; considers it necessary to analyse these challenges and therefore invites the HR/VP to task the EUMC with gathering and analysing data across the EU Member States on these issues in order to identify possible counter-measures; points out that a true European Defence Union cannot be built without a common military culture and calls therefore on the VP/HR to task the European Security and Defence College with modernising and expanding the educational modules for military personnel from the Member States' armed forces;

49. Highlights the importance of PESCO in improving the EU's defence capabilities and welcomes the progress achieved so far through the PESCO initiative projects, such as in cyber defence, unmanned systems, medical services, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear surveillance, as well as the further progress achieved across projects in all military domains, as recorded by the PESCO Secretariat's annual projects progress report; regrets, however, the fact that the Member States are still not making full use of the PESCO framework and that progress on implementation still falls far short of expectations; calls on the VP/HR and the Member States to conduct a continuous, thorough review of the projects and their prospects, which should also include the possibility of merging, regrouping and even closing projects that lack sufficient progress and redirecting efforts towards a small number of priority projects intended to lead to concrete actions, as stated in the Strategic Compass; strongly regrets that Parliament is not in a situation to exercise proper scrutiny of PESCO projects; calls on the Member States to regularly, at least twice per year, provide Parliament with an assessment of progress made within PESCO;

50. Calls on the Council to launch the project to establish a European Civil Peace Corps bringing together the expertise of institutional and non-institutional actors in conflict prevention, peaceful conflict resolution and reconciliation with a view to making EU civilian crisis management more credible, consistent, effective, flexible and visible;

The Strategic Compass: 'ANTICIPATE and SECURE'

51. Highlights that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is part of a wider strategy to undermine the rules-based international order; calls for the EU to enhance its capacities for responding to hybrid warfare, including the detection and response to Russia, and other state and non-state actors carrying out FIMI campaigns which challenge our interests, values and security, including by spreading false-narratives about the EU or by targeting CSDP missions and operations in strategic areas; expresses serious concerns about the dangers that AI-driven disinformation and information manipulation campaigns, including through the creation of fake websites and generation of fake images, pose to democratic processes, especially in the lead-up to elections; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to closely cooperate with the private sector, civil society, as well as the academic and technical community in countering these malign influence campaigns and addressing the weaponisation of new technologies;

52. Calls, in that regard, on all Member States and EU candidate countries to implement the recommendations of Parliament's resolutions on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation ([24]);

53. Highlights that China has established a 'no-limits friendship' with Russia, that includes significant transfer of technology and military capabilities, and poses an increasing number of security challenges to the EU, especially in the fields of cyber and FIMI; stresses the need for the EU to strengthen the security and integrity of its critical infrastructures, de-risking and promoting EU's technological edge in critical sectors, including measures to restrict or exclude high-risk suppliers, especially actors linked to the Chinese Government;

54. Recalls that dependencies on high-risk suppliers of critical products with digital elements pose a strategic risk that should be addressed at Union level; stresses the need to further strengthen the FDI-screening procedures with due-diligence standards to identify leverage by governments of states which would contravene the security and defence interests of the Union and its Member States as established in the framework of the CFSP pursuant to Title V TEU over investors in EU critical infrastructure, such as European ports and in undersea cables in the Baltic, Mediterranean, as well as in the Arctic seas; underlines that this approach should apply equally to candidate and potential candidate countries; believes additional legislation is needed to effectively protect the security of the European information and communications technology supply chain from risky vendors and cyber-enabled intellectual property theft; calls for the creation of a European framework aiming to closely regulate and set minimum standards and conditions relating to the export of intellectual property and technologies which are critical to the security and defence of the Union, including among others, dual-use goods;

([24]) (2020/2268(INI)) and (2022/2075(INI));
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0064_EN.html;
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0219_EN.html.

55. Expresses concern over China's aggressive military posturing in the South China Sea, including island-building, harassment and dangerous manoeuvres conducted by its navy, coast guard and maritime militia, as well as its continued military pressure, assault exercises, airspace violations and other grey-zone military actions, including cyber and disinformation campaigns against Taiwan; calls for greater Coordinated Maritime Presence (CMP) and capacity building with the EU's partners in the region; calls on China to cease all of these activities, which endanger the stability of the entire region and, in the broader context, directly affect European security; encourages the Member States to increase the frequency of freedom of navigation operations in the Taiwan Strait and deepen security dialogues with Taiwan to deter Chinese aggression against the democratic island; emphasises collaboration with Taiwan and the leveraging of its expertise and technological edge against Chinese cyber threats, given the regional and EU security concerns; welcomes the recent agreement between the leaders of China and the US to resume high-level military-to-military communications;

56. Notes that a large portion of African infrastructure, including its communication infrastructure, has been financed and constructed by Chinese state-owned enterprises; expresses concern that this Chinese model is clearly attractive to many countries that cannot satisfy EU requirements for accessing equivalent levels of finance, thereby expanding Chinese influence to the detriment of EU partnerships; strongly believes, in this context, that the EU should further enhance its cooperation with African partners and increase both the visibility and the tangible benefits of its support for the local population; calls for a long-term and forward-looking EU security strategy towards China, the Mediterranean and Africa;

57. Calls for supplementary progress on further improving the EU Hybrid Toolbox, specifically addressing activities involving cyber-attacks and FIMI, and the revision of the implementing guidelines of the EU's cyber diplomacy toolbox; welcomes the commitment set out in the Strategic Compass and the new Civilian Compact to provide the necessary capabilities to enable CSDP missions and operations to respond to hybrid attacks, including FIMI and cyberattacks, by 2024, as well as to develop a coherent and clear communication strategy; reiterates the urgent necessity for ensuring the expertise and capacity for secure information and communications technologies for all CSDP missions and operations to communicate securely in theatre and with all EU institutions; welcomes, in this regard, the EEAS and Member States' commitment to implement, by 2025, a Rapid Deployable Communication and Information System to securely connect force and mission headquarters in the theatre of operations with Brussels; recognises the important role that emerging disruptive technologies, such as quantum computing and AI, will play in this regard; calls on the EEAS and the Commission to increase their cooperation and coordination with other missions and operations of like-minded partners and organisations, including the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, in countering FIMI operations in the field;

58. Calls on the Member States and the EEAS to upgrade their strategy and to take concrete actions to systematically include financial and human resources, tools and training aimed at countering FIMI-related threats in all EU delegations and CSDP missions and operations as part of their broader mandate in host countries and their resilience against hybrid threats and FIMI; calls for enhancing visibility and strategic communication on the benefits, presence and role of the CSDP missions;

59. Calls on the Member States, the EEAS and the Commission to consider creating a well-resourced and independent structure tasked with identifying, analysing and documenting FIMI threats against the EU as a whole, in order to increase situational awareness and threat intelligence-sharing, and develop attribution capabilities and countermeasures in relation to FIMI; considers that this structure would serve as a reference point and specialised knowledge hub to facilitate and foster operational exchange between Member States' authorities, EU institutions and EU agencies, as well as to enable the exchange of best practices with like-minded partners across the globe; stresses that the structure should clarify and enhance the role of the EEAS StratCom division and its taskforces as the strategic body of the EU's diplomatic service and prevent the overlap of activities;

60. Stresses that to combat the increasing threats and the rise of anti-European narratives by non-EU countries in the EU's immediate neighbourhood, the EU has to step up its efforts in providing support, training and capacity-building for like-minded partners, including by countering FIMI campaigns; calls to increase resilience against disinformation and disruptive campaigns designed to undermine democratic processes and create divisions, and encourage candidate countries to take decisive steps to tackle manipulative disinformation, malign propaganda and other hybrid threats; calls for strategic and proactive measures to counter hybrid threats and to prevent third party interference in the political, electoral and other democratic processes of the accession countries, in particular malicious acts aimed at manipulating public opinion and undermining European integration;

61. Condemns and is concerned by the hybrid warfare activities of PMCs and state-sponsored proxies such as the Wagner Group and other armed groups, militias and proxies in exerting influence in several countries across the world; calls on the EEAS to create an initiative with like-minded partners to counter malign non-state and state-sponsored actor groups, such as Wagner; emphasises that the existing EU toolboxes should include responses, such as sanctions, to non-EU states financing or cooperating with private military companies in vulnerable regions;

62. Condemns the policies of aggression, including the pre-planned military attack of Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh; recalls that this attack follows months of organised starvation and isolation of the Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh through the blockade of the Lachin corridor; underlines that the so-called Russian peacekeepers on site did not take any action to prevent or end the blockade or to stop the Azeri military assault against Nagorno-Karabakh; condemns the military support provided by non-EU countries to Azerbaijan; is seriously concerned about the consequences on the civilian population which amount to de-facto ethnic cleansing; reiterates its view that the attack carried out by Azerbaijan cannot remain without consequences, and calls for the EU to take sanctions against the Azerbaijani authorities responsible for multiple ceasefire violations and to suspend the Memorandum of Understanding on Energy; calls for the EU to suspend negotiations over a new partnership agreement with Azerbaijan in the light of recent events and the country's dramatic human rights situation;

63. Welcomes the establishment of the civilian European Union Mission in Armenia (EUMA), which aims to help increase security in the region by decreasing the number of incidents in conflict-affected and border areas in Armenia, to reduce the level of risks for the population living in such areas and thereby to contribute to the normalisation of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the ground, while at the same time increasing the visibility of the EU in the region; welcomes the Council's agreement to strengthen the observation capacity of the mission by increasing its presence on the ground; calls on the Council to extend its deployment timeframe for five more years and its geographical scope to potentially include the Armenia-Türkiye border;

64. Calls on the EEAS to be prepared to provide the necessary technical assistance to Armenia through the EPF instrument, in order for Armenia to reconsider its current military alliances, as this would strengthen the resilience of Armenia in the context of ensuring security, independence and sovereignty and lead to more comprehensive and enhanced defence cooperation between the sides; welcomes Armenia's decision to join the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute; requests the EEAS to provide, in confidential mode, the EUMA reports on the situation on the ground to Parliament's Committee of the Foreign Affairs (AFET) and Subcommittee on the Security and Defence (SEDE);

65. Calls on the Council to be prepared to impose targeted and individual sanctions against perpetrators of aggression, including but not limited to the political and military entourage of President Aliyev, and suspend imports of oil and gas from Azerbaijan, in the event of any military aggression against Armenian territorial integrity by Azerbaijan;

66. Welcomes the deployment of the EU CSDP Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova (EUPM Moldova), the first ever CSDP civilian mission dedicated to strengthening the resilience of Moldova's security sector in crisis management and countering hybrid threats; underlines the importance of this innovative CSDP Mission and calls on the Member States to provide the expertise and capabilities necessary for the mission to support Moldova in the face of Russia's use of hybrid warfare; calls on the EEAS to explore the creation of similar missions to other candidate, associate and partner countries, aimed at increasing their resilience against hybrid threats, including cyber threats and FIMI;

67. Reiterates the EU's support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and for the efforts in the framework of the 5+2 negotiation process to reach a peaceful, lasting, comprehensive, political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders, with a special status for Transnistria that would ensure the protection of human rights also on the territories currently not controlled by constitutional authorities; expresses concern that Transnistria continues to serve as a safe haven for human smugglers and organised crime, while recognising that EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) plays an important role in helping to re-open rail freight through Transnistria and has thwarted multiple smuggling operations;

68. Welcomes the Council's decision of 4 May 2023 to allocate EUR 40 million under the EPF to support the Armed Forces of the Republic of Moldova and EUR 30 million to support the Georgian Defence Forces; stresses the need to further increase support to these partner countries, according to their needs;

69. Strongly condemns the illegal occupation of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia by the Russian Federation and stresses that the Russian Federation continues its illegal occupation and effective control over the occupied territories of Georgia through its military presence, continued installation of barbed wire fences and other artificial barriers along the occupation line, frequent illegal detentions and kidnappings of Georgian citizens and other human rights violations on the ground; strongly condemns Russia's plans to build a permanent naval base at the Black Sea port of Ochamchire in the occupied region of Abkhazia and calls on the international community to support all efforts to punish this gross violation of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity; calls on the Russian Federation to fulfil its international obligations under the EU-mediated ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008, in particular its obligation to withdraw all of its military and security personnel from Georgia's occupied territories and to allow the establishment of international security mechanisms therein, and to allow the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) unhindered access to the whole territory of Georgia pursuant to its mandate; reiterates its calls for the EU to continue to pursue its engagement for the peaceful resolution of the Russia-Georgia conflict by effectively using all the instruments available, including the Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia, the Geneva International Discussions, the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms, the EUMM, and its policy of non-recognition and engagement; welcomes EU's assistance to Georgia under the EPF and calls for the EU to further engage in security cooperation with Georgia across the priority areas identified in the Strategic Compass, in particular to strengthen the resilience of Georgia's security sector in the area of crisis management, counter hybrid threats and upgrade defence capabilities;

70. Welcomes the extension of the mandate and underlines the importance of the work of EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in training and supporting the armed forces of BiH (AFBiH); welcomes, further, the cooperation and training contract for 2023 concluded between the AFBiH and EUFOR; calls on BiH to work towards forming multi-ethnic units of the AFBiH; recalls the EU engagement in supporting BiH's defence capacity-building, in particular via the EUR 20 million that has been allocated through the EPF so far; supports the extension of the mandate of EUFOR Althea by the UN Security Council as an established and proven mission; strongly condemns any divisive and/or secessionist rhetoric which further contributes to increasing the vulnerability of the country and emphasises that candidate country status is an opportunity and an obligation for BiH elected representatives to fulfil citizens' expectations and concretely improve the daily life of ordinary people; calls for the further strengthening of EUFOR Althea, particularly through the deployment of further troops and assets, as well as through the creation of a credible presence in the Brčko District;

71. Welcomes the high levels of alignment with the CFSP achieved by most of the countries of the Western Balkans, with the relevant exception of Serbia; calls for the meaningful participation of the Western Balkans in the EU initiatives for cooperative development and procurement of defence capabilities; calls for the conclusion of administrative arrangements between the EDA and the Western Balkan countries that have not yet reached this milestone; welcomes the continued presence of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Kosovo and calls on the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) to strengthen its cooperation with KFOR to prevent organised criminal gangs, paramilitary groups and other disruptive forces from destabilising Kosovo;

72. Recognises Israel's right to self-defence, as enshrined in and constrained by international law, and emphasises that the actions of Israel must therefore strictly comply with international humanitarian law; reiterates the EU's strong support for the International Criminal Court's work; underlines the importance of differentiating between the Palestinian people and their legitimate aspirations on the one hand, and the Hamas terrorist organisation and its acts of terror on the other hand; calls for opening channels for providing humanitarian aid to civilians in the Gaza Strip and for these to be kept permanently open; reiterates its unwavering support for a negotiated two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 lines with two sovereign, democratic states living side by side in peace and guaranteed security, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states, and in full respect of international law; calls for a thorough investigation into the role of Iran, Qatar and Russia in financing and supporting terrorism in the region; strongly disagrees and expresses its disappointment about recent statements made by the President of Türkiye in which he wrongfully claimed that Hamas was not a terrorist organisation;

73. Supports the ongoing work by the EU Police and Rule of Law Mission for the occupied Palestinian territory (EUPOL COPPS) and the EU Border Assistance Mission in Rafah in assisting with the Palestinian Authorities' security and justice sector reform and integrated border management; expresses its appreciation for the missions' officials and staff who continue working under extremely difficult conditions; calls on the EEAS and the Member States to review the two missions' mandates and strengthen their future role, in view of the current situation and their unique position where they maintain dialogue with both the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, in an effort to enhance the EU's peace efforts;

74. Welcomes the joint communication on the EU cyber defence policy and calls on the Member States to stay committed to and implement the ambitious but realistic set of actions proposed by the Commission, including the proposal for a cyber solidarity act to enhance their ability to detect and respond to cybersecurity threats and incidents in the EU, but also to enhance information-sharing and to support the production of high-quality intelligence along with dedicated platforms, resources and funding; notes that the mutual cooperation between the EU Member States, as well as with our allies and partners around the world, is essential for our cybersecurity; urges caution when sharing data, which should only be available to partners with the same values, while management and infrastructure should be entrusted to trusted companies and service providers; notes, in this regard, that the use of Huawei technology in the development of 5G seriously undermines the EU's cyber resilience;

75. Calls for strengthening the resilience and capabilities of the EU institutions in combating cyberattacks, which is an important security issue, particularly ahead of the EU elections;

76. Demands that the Union take effective measures to protect European critical infrastructure, valuable supply chains and democratic institutions from hybrid threats; calls for the EU to put in place effective monitoring and surveillance systems for critical infrastructure such as pipelines and fibre optics cables to ensure the prevention and rapid detection of attacks;

77. Welcomes the findings and high level of ambition in the recommendations proposed in the new EU space strategy in the area of security and defence; considers safe, secure and autonomous access to space to be a critical aspect of the EU's security and defence, as demonstrated by its importance in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine; welcomes, in that regard, the proposal set out in the strategy to draw up a classified annual space threat analysis document;

78. Recalls the need for enhanced intelligence sharing and information exchange among Member States and EU institutions, including Parliament, to improve situational awareness, better anticipate, counter collective security threats and better inform policy making; stresses the need to improve the security protocols of the services working on intelligence and/or with sensitive information in the EU; calls on the VP/HR and the Member States to reinforce the Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity (SIAC) and the European Union Satellite Centre (SatCen); reiterates the call for the deployment of intelligence capacities in all CSDP missions and operations, which would provide information provided to the EU Intelligence and Analysis Centre (EU INTCEN), EUMS and the CPCC; underlines the importance of secure communications for reliable intelligence and welcomes efforts to streamline security rules and regulations in this respect to better protect information, infrastructure and communication systems from foreign interference and attacks; calls on the Member States to reinforce the EU INTCEN as an effective intelligence-sharing body in order to share intelligence safely, formulate a common strategic culture and provide strategic information to better anticipate and respond to crises within and outside the EU;

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79. Expresses its grave concern about the difficult and serious situation in the Sahel, following numerous coups, such as in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, but also in Sudan; deplores the military coup of 26 July 2023 in Niger and calls for the immediate and unconditional release of President Mohamed Bazoum, his family and all those arbitrarily detained, and for the charges against him to be dropped; demands the immediate reinstatement of democratically elected President Bazoum and the restoration of constitutional order;

80. Recalls that stability in the Sahel has direct repercussions for security and stability in Europe; underlines that the EU and its Member States need to re-evaluate their policy towards the strategic region of the Sahel and learn from past mistakes, especially with regard to Russia, but also with regard to the necessity to include holistic approaches to the way in which these policies address long-term social, economic and development variables; considers it necessary, against this backdrop, to provide adequate resources to African partners; calls on the EEAS and the Member States to ensure that their security policies take into account regional and local aspects, including through dialogue with the local population, civil society and democratically elected authorities and regional organisations where possible, adhering to the principle of 'African solutions to African problems'; acknowledges that the various international missions have not yet achieved their primary goal of lasting peace in the region; welcomes the VP/HR's announcement about revising the EU's strategy towards the Sahel; calls for this revision to take place as swiftly as possible and to further strengthen the status of CSDP missions in the region;

81. Strongly supports the decisions made by ECOWAS and the AU in response to the coups and calls on the Member States and the EEAS to explore how to effectively assist them in their efforts where possible;

82. Condemns the presence of PMCs and/or state sponsored proxies, such as the Wagner Group and the Africa Corps, which have played a destabilising role in the Sahel region and have supported various repressive regimes in an attempt to increase Russian influence in Africa; considers that all coup d'états are the result of various, multi-dimensional causes which are not identical in each country and therefore require careful considerations; is nevertheless appalled by expressions of strong anti-European sentiments in certain countries and calls on the Member States and the EEAS to consider increasing people-to-people contact through closer exchanges with local populations and national authorities, more targeted strategic communication in local languages to counter-balance adverse effects and honestly addressing their colonial past where necessary;

83. Encourages the EEAS to continue the progress already made by the European Union Military Training Mission in Mozambique (EUTM Mozambique) in the response to the growing terrorist threat in Cabo Delgado and in the training of Mozambican forces on the ground; is still concerned about the risk of this threat spreading in the area; calls for immediate action to speed up the delivery of non-lethal equipment;

84. Underlines that of the EU's five training missions (EUTM) and military partnership missions (EUMPM) in Africa, three of them (Central African Republic, Mali, Niger) are now proceeding at a much slower pace or have been officially suspended; also points out that some civilian missions providing assistance to domestic security forces are at a standstill (EUCAP Sahel Mali), functioning poorly (EUAM RCA) or withdrawing (EUCAP Sahel Niger); underlines the urgent need for deployed personnel to have access to tools, training, equipment and resources enabling them to provide information and intelligence to the EU and its Member States; considers that the concept of support remains essential in training missions in order to allow European advisers to verify as accurately as possible, on the ground, whether training programmes have been properly conducted and whether they are in line with the operational needs of local armed forces;

85. Calls, further, on the EEAS and the Member States to examine closely the mandate of all CSDP missions in Africa, including their potential termination if necessary, with the aim of providing achievable goals and milestones for each mission given the current political context, as well as exploring whether these missions could be amended in order to more effectively serve a new multi-dimensional and tailored EU strategy in the Sahel and Africa, as part of its integrated approach;

86. Welcomes the launch of the EU security and defence initiative in support of West African countries of the Gulf of Guinea, for an initial duration of two years, in close coordination with Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Benin;

87. Deplores the continued lack of support from a large number of African countries for a UN general assembly resolution condemning Russia, supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity and calling for peace;

88. Welcomes the update of the EU Maritime Strategy and Action Plan and the commitment to strengthen the Union's role as a provider of international maritime security; welcomes the fact that the review includes the reinforcement of current naval operations; is pleased that the update proposes to explore new areas of interest at sea in which to implement the CMP concept based on the experience gained in the Gulf of Guinea and the North-West Indian Ocean; calls on the Member States to engage actively with those initiatives and to build up their military naval capabilities with a view to enhancing the EU's presence and visibility in the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Atlantic, the Indo-Pacific and the global maritime sector as well as to effectively tackle threats and challenges in the Baltic Sea;

89. Highlights the need to ensure the security of the Black Sea region by assisting in demining Ukraine's seawaters and to encourage Member States to offer training exercises in this regard with an emphasis on the development of maritime mine counter measure capabilities and critical seabed infrastructure protection; underlines the fact that similar technology should be tested and deployed in other European seas in which the problem of unexploded ordnance and chemical weapons dumped in the previous century already constitute a threat to security, the environment, health and the economy, such as in the Baltic, Adriatic and North seas; calls on the Commission to increase funding to tackle this growing challenge;

90. Stresses that, given the growing geopolitical maritime tensions, the EU must ensure freedom of navigation, the safety of maritime lines of communication and of its vessels and crews, offshore infrastructure and action to counter illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and ensure that its external maritime borders are monitored effectively in order to prevent illegal activities; stresses the need to step up cooperation between the EU and NATO on maritime security in order to cover all issues of mutual interest in this field;

91. Stresses that, given the growing geopolitical tensions at sea, the EU must ensure that its external maritime borders are monitored effectively to prevent illegal activities; regrets that despite the restrictive measures framework established by the EU on 11 November 2019 in response to Türkiye's illegal drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, these have continued;

92. Welcomes Türkiye's vote in favour of condemning the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine in the UN General Assembly and its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, but deplores, at the same time, the fact that circumvention of EU sanctions by Türkiye undermines their effectiveness and calls on the Commission to examine this; reiterates its call on Türkiye to align with the EU sanctions against Russia;

93. Regrets, while recognising that Türkiye is a country of strategic relevance, Türkiye's positions and policies in certain areas of concern for the EU and in its neighbourhoods, which threaten regional peace, security and stability; strongly condemns Türkiye's illegal activities in Cyprus, such as the continued violation of UN Security Council resolutions 550(1984) and 789(1992), which call on Türkiye to transfer the area of Varosha to its lawful inhabitants under the temporary administration of the UN, and the recent assaults against UN peacekeepers within the buffer zone near the bi-communal village of Pyla/Pile; denounces Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's call for the international community to recognise the secessionist entity in occupied Cyprus, thus abandoning relevant UN Security Council resolutions calling for a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with a single international legal personality, single sovereignty, single citizenship and political equality which is also in accordance with the EU *acquis*;

94. Deplores the fact that despite de-escalation efforts, Türkiye continues its unilateral provocative actions and non-compliance with the UN Security Council resolution on the arms embargo on Libya with regard to operation IRINI, violating international law, including UNCLOS and the sovereign rights of EU Member States, in particular Greece and Cyprus, in the Eastern Mediterranean; welcomes the recent joint declaration of the leaders of Türkyie and Greece on pursuing good neighbourly relations, opening communication, lessening tension through military confidence-building, increasing trade and working to resolve issues in the Aegean Sea; notes that Türkiye is increasingly present in areas where the EU has key security interests and CSDP missions, and calls upon Türkiye to refrain from undermining EU interests and missions in these areas; reiterates its condemnation of the signature of the memoranda of understanding between Türkiye and Libya on comprehensive security and military cooperation and on the delimitation of maritime zones, which are interconnected and are clear violations of international law, the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the sovereign rights of EU Member States;

95. Stresses the urgent need to significantly increase investment in regional and global arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, particularly in multilateral approaches; stresses the need for greater transparency and convergence at national and European level on arms exports; calls on the Member States to fully comply with Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment as amended by Council Decision (CFSP)2019/1560; acknowledges the Member States' competences in their defence procurement policies;

96. Reaffirms its full support for the EU and its Member States' commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime; insists on the need to ensure that the EU plays a strong and constructive role in developing and reinforcing global rules-based non-proliferation efforts and arms control and disarmament architecture;

97. Emphasises that the EU must further develop its own capabilities in all domains to protect the sovereignty of all Member States, but also pave the way for burden shifting in the long run with the EU taking more responsibility for its defence while enhancing its security cooperation with NATO and like-minded partners across the globe; welcomes the establishment of the Schuman Forum for Security and Defence as a platform of exchange among partners based on equality and mutual appreciation;

98. Underlines, in the strongest terms, the importance of the EU-US alliance, which is based on the shared values of democracy, freedom and the rule of law; values the United States' strong commitment and engagement to the territorial defence of Europe, especially in the light of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine that threatens the whole continent; strongly welcomes the intensified partnership with the United States, especially the signing of an administrative arrangement between the EDA and the Department of Defense of the United States (DoD) in April 2023, the EU-US dialogues on security and defence, as well as on China; calls for the EU to continue its active cooperation with the US in the framework of the EU-US strategic dialogue on security and defence, such as on mutual security and defence initiatives, disarmament and non-proliferation, the impact of disruptive technologies, climate change, hybrid threats, cyber defence, military mobility, crisis management and relationships with strategic competitors;

99. Notes the importance of greater collaboration in defence product production and procurement, including through equal market access for the defence industries; welcomes, in this regard, efforts made by the EU to improve its own defence capabilities and take greater responsibility for its own defence;

100. Reiterates its calls for institutionalised security and defence cooperation with the United Kingdom, including through closer collaboration on information sharing, military mobility, mutual security and defence initiatives, crisis management, cybersecurity, hybrid threats, FIMI and our relationship with common strategic competitors; encourages the United Kingdom to seriously engage with the EU on pressing strategic challenges; encourages the VP/HR to invite the United Kingdom to informal Council meetings of foreign affairs (and defence) ministers to exchange views on issues of common concern, while fully protecting the EU's decision-making autonomy;

101. Underlines the importance of the partnership dimension of the Strategic Compass in reinforcing cooperation between the EU and its like-minded allies and partners around the world in order to counter foreign strategies aimed at undermining the EU and destabilising the rules-based international order; welcomes the long-awaited third joint declaration on EU-NATO cooperation which confirms that the EU and NATO are essential partners that share common values and strategic interests and that work in complementarity to ensure that NATO allies benefit from a strong European pillar within NATO; calls, in particular, for synergies and coherence between NATO's Strategic Concept and the EU's Strategic Compass, particularly in the areas of countering Russian aggression, military mobility, hybrid and cyber warfare, including FIMI campaigns, global maritime security, the fight against traditional threats, such as terrorism, and providing support to partners;

102. Welcomes the accession of Finland to NATO; strongly deplores the delaying of the ratification of Sweden's NATO accession; denounces, in this context, further, attempts to undermine democratic freedoms in EU Member States through the instrumentalisation of granting consent to Sweden's accession to NATO; welcomes, in this regard, Türkiye's and Hungary's long-delayed decision to approve Sweden's accession to NATO; urges the Turkish authorities to deliver on their promise of a more constructive partnership in NATO, including in the Eastern Mediterranean;

103. Welcomes the joint communication on an action plan on military mobility 2.0 as a key contribution to strengthening European security, as recognised in the Strategic Compass; highlights the accelerated adoption of dual-use transport infrastructure projects following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine; recalls the importance of ensuring the sufficient availability of financial resources to continue the project pipeline in the coming years;

104. Underlines the importance of developing security and defence dialogues with partners around the world, in particular in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership, but also with key partners in strategic maritime areas such as those stretching from the Southern Neighbourhood and the Indo-Pacific, from the east coast of Africa to the South Pacific and from the Arctic to the Far East; calls for deepening military-security cooperation with countries in the immediate European neighbourhood by strengthening the security dimension and enhancing security and defence policy dialogues; reiterates the call for deeper cooperation with international organisations, such as, but not limited to, the UN, the AU and its peacekeeping missions in joint theatres, and the OSCE on security;

105. Recognises that the Arctic region carries significant strategic and geopolitical importance due to its emerging maritime routes, rich natural resources and opportunities for economic development unlocked by global warming, while being increasingly contested; considers alarming the growing activities and interest by authoritarian regimes, including Russia and China, in the Arctic; underlines the importance of preserving security, stability and cooperation in the Arctic; stresses that the region must remain free from military tensions and natural resource exploitation, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples; reiterates the need to include the Union's Arctic policy in the CSDP and engage in effective cooperation with NATO; calls for the Arctic to be addressed regularly within the Political and Security Committee and Council meetings;

106. Strongly condemns the numerous missile tests conducted by North Korea in 2023; underlines the particular responsibility of China and Russia when it comes to North Korea and calls on them to use their influence to prevent any further escalation; expresses its profound concern about the recent meeting between the North Korean and Russian leaders; strongly condemns the deliveries of North Korean arms and ballistic missiles to Russia, which are being used in the war of aggression against Ukraine, and notes that, through its enhanced military cooperation, Russia is violating UN sanctions and resolutions on North Korea; strongly condemns Iran for supplying Russia with drones and missiles to use in its war of aggression against Ukraine, and underlines that further international efforts, in close cooperation with our partners, are needed regarding Iran;

The role of the European Parliament

107. Calls for the reinforcement of parliamentary democracy and improved scrutiny of non-EU partner countries through parliamentary dialogues on security and defence issues and by building parliamentary resilience against hybrid threats, including cyber and FIMI;

108. Notes that the recent increase in spending on defence policies and programmes at EU level and among the Member States is of particular importance for European defence and security, reflects the necessities of the current security context and indicates the evolution of defence as a genuine EU policy field requiring full parliamentary scrutiny and accountability to ensure that these programmes and policies contribute in the most effective way to the achievement of EU strategic objectives and to the protection of European security and defence interests; reiterates, in this respect, its demand for delegated acts for work programmes of EU-budget funded defence industrial programmes; strongly reiterates its call for the establishment of a fully-fledged European Parliament Committee on Security and Defence with full legislative and budgetary responsibilities on European defence matters, including measures for strengthening the EDTIB, provided that this committee takes a lead on the emerging defence *acquis* in the framework of the EU with scrutiny, legislation and budgetary responsibilities;

109. Stresses, in reference to the successful cooperation between SEDE and the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy in the process of establishing the EDIRPA regulation, that until a fully-fledged committee is established, the subcommittee should be included in all legislative procedures with relevant implications for European defence;

110. Calls on the EEAS to regularly and comprehensively report on the implementation of the Strategic Compass to SEDE;

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111. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Council, the Council, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the President of the Commission and competent Commissioners, the UN Secretary-General, the NATO Secretary-General, the President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the EU security and defence agencies and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.