



WHITE PAPER:

THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN SECURITY

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting, Helsinki, Finland on the 17th of December 2016

In global foreign relations, there have been some significant changes in last decade.

Russia has adopted an aggressive approach in relations with its neighbors.

Populist politicians have strengthened their support globally and have been winning elections and referenda in several states, consequently having an impact on foreign policy and international relations.

The European Security and Defense Policy aims to strengthen the EU's external ability to act through the development of civilian and military capabilities in Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management.

There has long been an on-going debate about principle of subsidiarity and many politicians have also rightly argued that we should respect the integrity of members and not centralize efficient policy-making away from the local level. YEPP sees foreign policy and security matters as very clear parts of European level decision making. There is arguably an increased need for more international military cooperation.

The complexity of current internal, external and cross-border threats for our Member States and the European Union makes it harder to face them.

Young people must pay a crucial part in holding up the stability of our region. As heirs to the political realities that are unfolding we cannot be silent about how our continent is relating to the outside world.

Based on NATO estimate from 2014, US military spending on 2016 is estimated to be 664 billion \$ of NATO countries total spending of 918 billion \$. These numbers quite clearly point out that the entirety of NATO security is based largely on US support. It is essential to strengthen the European presence in NATO.

Building European Defense Forces

Peaceful democratic communities don't build armies for war but to prevent [] war. Influential foreign policy is based on strong integrity, effective institutions and powerful capability for military operations. The EU is an economic superpower and that can only exist if the EU has an influential foreign policy.

Future generations worldwide are more peaceful than ever but too often they lack the power to take the control and establish society based on liberal economy, human rights, civil society and freedom of press. It is the duty of European Union to support these European values wherever they are offended.

European countries have very small militaries compared to size of the economy. Based on the European Defense Agency (EDA) report (2012), total military spending in all EU countries is 195 billion euro (EDA) while, according to the Stockholm international peace research institute, China is spending 215 billion and Saudi Arabia is spending 87 billion. EU military budgets are 1,42% of GDP while NATO members are obligated to spend at least 2% of the GDP. Most of the generals in the EU have criticized the levels of military spending in European Union countries. YEPP recognizes this as a major problem as the capability is decreasing meanwhile potential threats are increasing.

European armies are often described as technologically advanced. There are multiple arms producers in Europe, almost every country has their own national company. As there are multiple players, there is more competition but also much of the technological knowledge is divided. Now the market is getting more centralized and it mostly supports the needs of armed forces around Europe.

The most advanced equipment, like larger naval vessels or next generation fighters are mostly held by France and Great Britain. As other EU countries don't hold the same potential, they don't have the same opportunity to play their part in potential crises that might have strong EU implications. On the other hand, most [] EU countries do not take part in sharing the costs of looking after European security intentions.

YEPP calls on:

- *Member states to increase military budgets to at least 2% of the GDP*
- *EU to support liberal economy, human rights, civil society and freedom of press in Europe but also elsewhere in the world*

Building European Defense Cooperation

European security policy has followed several different paths, developing simultaneously within the Western European Union, NATO and the European Union itself.

The EU already has several relevant structures and initiatives in the area of security and defense. Reinforcing cooperation with the EU and deepening existing frameworks of cooperation is important. This includes the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its defense branch, the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP).

A part of the CSDP structures is the 18 battalion-sized (1500) EU Battlegroups. The initial motion for specific Battlegroups began at the European Council summit in December 1999 in Helsinki and these Battlegroups reached full operational capacity on January 2007. The groups rotate actively and there are two battalions ready for deployment at all times. The forces are under the direct control of the Council of the European Union.

22 of the 28 EU member states are also members of NATO and it has been a contentious issue to develop CSDP any further due to the NATO platform that already exists for most of the EU member states. Now the world has changed substantially and it is clear that stronger EU cooperation is strongly needed. NATO members in the EU need more structured cooperation with each other as well as with other EU countries. The Defense Forces of all EU countries are already NATO compatible. However, it is important not to create double structures but supporting ones.

New upcoming security threats like cybersecurity matters need more concentration and stronger cooperation. In particular, it is advisable to develop the concept of making better use of existing national or multinational deployable headquarters that are made available to the EU, on a rotational basis, with a focus on training, mentoring and advising.

YEPP calls on:

- *Enhance CSDP's awareness and responsiveness in all phases during potential conflicts*
- *The EU and Member States to develop common strategy to tackle cyber security threats*

Building Long-term security

Building security with aid

The world is facing the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War. The people in Syria, Iraq and other countries in the MENA region are suffering enormously from war and conflicts. Many people are seeking security and a better life in the EU, but most of them are refugees in their own country or neighboring countries, and the humanitarian needs are substantial. The EU must improve its engagement in humanitarian aid in conflict areas and around these areas.

The EU is the biggest aid donor in the world and contributes [] half of all official global aid. Every year the tax payers in the EU donate approximately 12 billion euro to international aid. It is therefore crucial that every euro is invested properly in order to decrease [] suffering and to fight poverty.

The EU also needs to put more effort into supporting activists, NGO's and political organizations that are striving for real change and democracy in their countries. In the transition from war to peace and from an authoritarian state to free elections in a fragile state or post-conflict state, political alternatives need to emerge that can start true democratization and stable state-building. Otherwise these countries will never get rid of conflicts and poverty. Apart from [] humanitarian aid, the EU needs to invest in people that have the courage and support to lead their countries into security, stability and democracy. There needs to be an increase in the aid given by the European Commission and the EU member states to support democracy-building with a contiguous reduction in economic aid and the EU embassies needs to have a stronger role in supporting local democratic forces.

YEPP calls on:

- *The EU Commission and the Member States to focus and allocate more of their aid budgets to humanitarian aid and specifically to support refugees in conflict areas in EU's neighborhood.*
- *The EU Commission and the Member States to increase the support to democratic forces in fragile and failed states in the EU's neighborhood.*

Promoting peace through trade

Economic growth and trade is an important tool to reduce poverty and to build peaceful societies in the long-term. Countries that trade with each other are less likely to start wars against each other. The instability and the failed states in the neighboring regions of the EU are not only lacking democracy and institutional stability but also economic growth and investments. A well-functioning market economy can not only be restricted to work within the European Union or only between Western countries. Trade is mutually beneficial for all parts involved which the EU itself is the best proof of. The EU should strive to continue removing trade barriers through Free Trade Agreements with non-EU market economies. That's the only way to give poor countries the chance to accomplish peace, welfare and to become real actors in the world economy. The EU itself has been best proof of how European countries have stopped the tradition of wars and poverty by trading with each other.

The European Parliament has an important role in enabling free trade and boosting investments in poor countries. Unfortunately, we have seen many examples where the socialist and green parties in the European Parliament have voted against and have tried to stop agreements that would facilitate trade between the EU and poor countries. This is not only a tragedy for these poor countries but also missed opportunities for European businesses and growth. The EPP in the European Parliament needs therefore to push the free trade agenda more robustly and to advocate louder for the positive impacts that free trade has for peace and welfare in poor countries around the EU and for the economic growth and job opportunities within Europe.

YEPP calls on:

- *The EU to intensify negotiations of trade agreements with non-EU countries.*
- *The EPP to prioritize free trade in their political agenda as an important tool to promote peace and poverty reduction in EU's neighboring regions and to boost the economies in the EU.*