

*Tracking European Commission priority initiatives in 2017 – Number 1*

## A global strategy on foreign and security policy for the EU

### SUMMARY

The letter from Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, of 31 January 2017, notes that ‘the challenges currently facing the European Union are more dangerous than ever before in the time since the signature of the Treaty of Rome’. Indeed, the current evolving international environment and geopolitical shifts highlight the need for effective and coherent implementation of the EU global strategy.

The top strategic priorities for the implementation of the strategy, as decided by the Foreign Affairs Council on 17 October 2016 include: security and defence; building resilience and an integrated approach to conflicts and crises; addressing the internal/external security nexus; updating existing strategies and preparing new ones; and enhancing public diplomacy. Strengthening EU cooperation on external security and defence was also discussed at the European Council meeting in December 2016. Heads of State or Government focused on three priorities: implementation of the EU global strategy in the security and defence area, the European defence action plan, and the implementation of the EU-NATO Joint Declaration signed in Warsaw in July 2016. The first implementation report is expected in June 2017.

*This is an updated edition of a [briefing](#) published in April 2016.*



### In this briefing:

- EU as a global player: a new strategy
- Towards a new strategy  
*Assessment of the global environment*  
*Strategic reflection*
- The EU global strategy  
*Priorities*  
*Implementation*
- Stakeholders' concerns
- Way forward
- Main references

## EU as a global player: a new strategy

The story of the EU's role as a global actor is one of constant evolution and adjustment – both to internal changes (e.g. the EU has almost tripled in size since 1993) and external challenges (the Balkan wars in the 1990s, 9/11 terrorist attacks, and war in Iraq) – resulting in several Treaty revisions. But it is also a story of an ambitious and difficult project, where the ideal of a coherent and effective foreign and security policy has often been at odds with Member States' national interests. Today, faced with instability in its southern and eastern neighbourhoods, the limited effectiveness of global institutions, and new challenges to rule-based international order, the EU is once again engaged in the process of strategic reflection to allow it to shape future events. A new EU global strategy, presented by the High Representative and Commission Vice-President Federica Mogherini in June 2016, is expected to serve as a compass in navigating the uncertain security environment.

## Towards a new strategy

The objective of making the EU a stronger global actor through a more effective and flexible use of Europe's external action tools features among [ten priority areas](#) listed in the [political guidelines](#) set out by European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker. Based on the mandate received from the European Council, Federica Mogherini, in her capacity as High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission, engaged in a **two-step process**, [aimed](#) firstly at assessment of the EU's global environment (December 2014-June 2015), and secondly at strategic reflection, with a view to preparing a global strategy on foreign and security policy (June 2015-June 2016). At the European Council in December 2014, the Heads of State or Government [invited](#) the High Representative, in close cooperation with the European Commission, and following consultations with the Member States, to assess the challenges and opportunities arising for the Union in the evolving **global environment**. Based on the assessment presented at the June 2015 European Council, Member States [approved](#) a mandate for High Representative Mogherini to continue the process of **strategic reflection**, with a view to preparing an 'EU global strategy on foreign and security policy', in close cooperation with the Member States. Speaking at the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) Annual Conference in October 2015, Mogherini [presented](#) the philosophy guiding the process, which should have a clear sense of direction and well-defined priorities in order to maximise the EU's capacity to 'make a difference'. In a later speech to the European Defence Agency, Mogherini [reiterated](#) that the EU cannot act without a rational strategy and a vision of what it wants to achieve, and how.

## Assessment of the global environment: challenges and implications

In June 2015, Mogherini [presented](#) a strategic assessment of the global security environment. The corresponding report, entitled 'The European Union in a changing global environment' – prepared by an interinstitutional group of officials under Mogherini's leadership – stressed that the European Union has the capability to become an influential global player in the future, if it acts collectively. Based on analysis of the current global environment, the [document](#) outlined the most important challenges and opportunities for the EU, and made the case for a strategy to steer the Union's global action and set priorities in a rapidly changing environment. The document identifies three main features of today's global environment:

- A more **connected** world, in which a surge in global connectivity and human mobility challenges traditional approaches to migration, citizenship, development and health, while simultaneously facilitating crime, terrorism and trafficking.
- A more **contested** world, in which fragile states and ungoverned spaces are expanding, as a result of instability and violence triggered by poverty, lawlessness, corruption and conflict-ridden electoral politics.
- A more **complex** world, where power is shifting towards other regional players in the developing world and is increasingly shared between state and non-state actors.

The assessment of the evolving environment resulted in identification of broad sets of challenges and opportunities. Firstly, the document calls on the EU to continue support for reforms in the **neighbourhood** (i.e. Western Balkans, Turkey and the Eastern Partners) through integration and association policies. It also identifies a need to address destabilising actions on the EU's borders, while also engaging with Russia 'to restore [a] sustainable European security architecture and address global challenges'. Secondly, the assessment suggests that addressing the root causes of conflict, sharpening EU tools to address the internal-external security nexus, and addressing immediate humanitarian crises, are necessary to cope with challenges in **North Africa and the Middle East**. Thirdly, in order to unlock **Africa's** potential, the document proposes the EU develop 'the right mix of migration and mobility policies', and promote fair trade and economic cooperation, as well as reinforcing cooperation with regional organisations. With regard to the **Atlantic partnership**, the document promotes a 'strong and sound privileged relationship' across the Atlantic, including through bilateral partnerships and inter-regional arrangements with Latin American and Caribbean countries. Finally, the document highlights the positive role that the EU might play in **Asia** as a supporter of regional cooperation and a rules-based approach to conflict management.

Against that background, the document presented by Mogherini in June 2015, suggested a number of adjustments in the way the EU conducts its foreign and security policy. It stressed that 'an effective response depends on the Union's ability to make choices and prioritise areas where it is willing and able to make a difference'. As such, the document called for: 1) bolstering of a number of EU policies (e.g. common security and defence policy, enlargement, counter-terrorism) with a **new sense of direction**; 2) improving the effectiveness of EU assistance to third countries, by making the mechanisms **more flexible**; 3) strengthening the EU's **leverage** in trade and development policy to protect its interests; 4) improving **coordination** of policies and funding among Member States, EU institutions, and other stakeholders; and 5) developing, aligning and exploiting **capabilities** in a more efficient way. The document also stresses the importance of destroying vertical and horizontal silos within the EU that hamper its global role.

#### **Strategic reflection: process and content**

Mogherini [presented](#) the main elements of the strategic reflection process in October 2015. In her view, a new strategy needs to provide a direction for the future, to tackle future crises and to prevent new ones. Consequently, the strategic reflection process was launched, to set a new level of ambition for EU foreign policy in an open and inclusive way.

#### *The role of Member States*

To ensure **Member States'** co-ownership of the reflection, each country appointed a national contact point (NCP) for the duration of the process. The NCPs meet on a monthly basis to discuss and provide input on specific aspects of the strategy, including global

governance, rethinking the EU's approach to conflict and crises, and strengthening state and societal resilience. The elements of the global strategy were also discussed with Member States' representatives within the Council, including in the Foreign Affairs Council itself, and in Coreper and the Political and Security Committee. Mogherini also discussed the global strategy with Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers at the informal Council meeting (Gymnich) in Amsterdam in February 2016. The fact that the European Council's discussions of the new strategy stretched over three years is in itself an indication that the Member States' views regarding the process were – and remain – [ambiguous](#). The inclusive nature of the process under Mogherini's leadership has been welcomed by Member States, however some informally voiced concerns that there was too much focus on the process and academic-style debates, rather than on a concrete text. To feed the process, several Member States have provided input, which primarily stressed the importance of the EU's action on security and defence. In June 2015, the Visegrad Group countries – Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia – [insisted](#) on the key role of CSDP, more synergy between CSDP and the Area of Freedom Security and Justice, and effective coordination of different EU policies. The G4 countries – France, Italy, Germany and Spain – also circulated a non-paper, in which they stressed that the next strategy will need to define a strong EU posture and a central role for CSDP. As part of the debate on future priorities, France has also circulated a non-paper on 'digital security – towards European strategic autonomy', in which it stresses the need to defend Europe against threats to its digital space and develop Europe's strategic autonomy in the field of technology, industry and services. Several countries – including Austria, Cyprus, France, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden – have also submitted their comments on the general objectives and priorities presented to date.

#### *The role of the European Parliament*

With the aim of ensuring dialogue between **EU institutions**, a task force of staff from various European Commission departments was set up as a consultative body in the process leading to the presentation of the global strategy. The issue has also been [discussed](#) in the college of Commissioners. Although not formally a member of this group, the **European Parliament** and parliamentarians from Member States had several exchanges of views with Mogherini and her representatives at different stages of the process. However, given the vague wording of the mandate in the June 2015 European Council conclusions, it is not entirely clear what exactly was expected of the Commission and the European Parliament. Nonetheless, the European Parliament adopted several resolutions feeding into the debate on the future of the European Union's foreign and security policy, throughout 2015 and 2016:

- Resolution on [financing for development](#) of 19 May 2015, recalling that the reduction and eventual eradication of poverty is the EU's primary objective in the development field, while the defence of human rights, gender equality, social cohesion and the fight against inequalities should remain at the core of development activities, and emphasising the importance of setting clear priorities for expenditure, with a special focus on measures in the areas of health, education, energy, water supply and infrastructure. The European Parliament called on the EU to ensure that financing for development and climate change contributes to building resilience and preparedness, while achieving the global goal of leaving no one behind.
- Resolution on the [implementation](#) of the common security and defence policy of 21 May 2015, affirming the crucial role of financing for CSDP missions and operations for CSDP in general. The Parliament invited the Commission to explore innovative

sources of financing for CSDP to put missions on a long-term footing with efficient mandates and objectives suited for the situations with which they are confronted (i.e. including the provision of financial and material assistance for training) and further the work under the 'Train and Equip' and 'E2I' initiatives.

- Resolution on [financing](#) the common security and defence policy of 21 May 2015, calling on the HRVP and the Member States 'to unleash the full potential of the Lisbon Treaty ... with regard to a faster and more flexible use of the CSDP missions and operations'. Parliament also welcomed the 'Train and Equip' initiative, which would ensure the capacity-building of partners, as part of a transition or exit strategy, by facilitating the financing of various forms of hardware and non-lethal equipment for security and defence forces of third countries, and expressed support for a joint approach by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission on the matter.
- Resolution on the EU in a changing [global environment](#) – a more connected, contested and complex world, of 13 April 2016, stressing that development is not possible without security, and security is not possible without development. Parliament pointed out that EU development policy needs to be an essential part of the EU global strategy on foreign and security policy, and called on the VP/HR, the Commission and the Member States to establish a clear link between the EU global strategy and the structure and priorities of the EU budget, including enhanced own resources. The resolution focuses on four main themes: defending the European Union's people, states, societies and values; stabilising Europe's wider neighbourhood; strengthening multilateral global governance; and engaging with the EU, national parliaments and European citizens.

The European Parliament's [resolution](#) of 23 November 2016 on the implementation of the common security and defence policy makes several specific observations concerning security sector reform (SSR) and capacity-building in support of security and development (CBSD) proposals. In the resolution, the European Parliament:

- considers that CSDP capacity-building missions must be coordinated with security sector reform and rule of law work by the European Commission;
- notes the Commission's proposal to amend Regulation (EU) No 230/2014 (establishing an Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace), in order to extend the Union's assistance to equipping military actors in partner countries, and stresses that this should be carried out only in exceptional circumstances to contribute to sustainable development, good governance and the rule of law;
- encourages the EEAS and the Commission to speed up implementation of the CBSD initiative, to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of CSDP missions; and
- underlines the need to identify other financial instruments to enhance partners' capacity-building in the security and defence field.

#### *The role of civil society*

The **public consultation** process kicked off with an international conference organised by the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS). A series of over 30 events followed, addressing specific issues, including security and defence, climate, cybersecurity, and developments in specific regions. Organised across the EU and in cooperation with national governments, think tanks and research institutes, this has provided a unique opportunity to stimulate pan-European debate. Mogherini participated personally in many of these meetings, in addition to the [citizens' dialogues](#) organised with the

European Commission. To ensure that different views and opinions are heard throughout the process, EUISS has also invited experts and policy-makers from both EU and non-EU countries to share their [views](#) on future EU priorities and ways to achieve them.

### The EU global strategy

The revised strategy is driven by Mogherini's conviction that in the face of increasingly uncertain and evolving security, no individual EU Member State has the strength or the resources 'to address these threats and seize the opportunities of our time alone'. Consequently, 'global' is used in the strategy not only in a geographical sense but also refers to the wide array of military and civilian policies and instruments that the strategy promotes with the aim of achieving EU 'strategic autonomy'. The strategy also includes a commitment to 'principled pragmatism' as one of the guiding principles for the EU's external action. In addition, the basic principles include unity, engagement, responsibility, and partnership. The strategy recognises unity across institutions, states and peoples as a vital and urgent condition to deliver security, prosperity and democracy to EU citizens. Engagement with other actors is a pre-condition for managing global interdependencies.

### Priorities

The final document reaffirmed the EU's commitment to five broad priorities.

#### *Security of the Union*

Recognising that the Europeans must take greater responsibility for their security (i.e. in respect of terrorism, hybrid threats, climate change, economic volatility or energy insecurity), the strategy calls for stronger security and defence cooperation in full compliance with human rights and the rule of law. To achieve this, Europeans must be better equipped. Defence spending output can be improved through deeper defence cooperation that engenders interoperability, effectiveness, efficiency and trust. The strategy acknowledges that NATO remains the primary framework when it comes to collective defence, but stresses that the EU should be able to act autonomously while also contributing to and undertaking actions in cooperation with NATO. With regard to counter-terrorism cooperation, the strategy calls for greater information sharing and intelligence cooperation between Member States and EU agencies, including sharing alerts on violent extremism, terrorist networks and foreign terrorist fighters, as well as monitoring and removing unlawful content from the media. Regarding counter-terrorism cooperation with third countries, the strategy commits to further developing human rights-compliant anti-terrorism cooperation with North Africa, the Middle East, the Western Balkans and Turkey, among others. Another important topic recognised in the strategy is cybersecurity, whereby the EU will work to equip the EU and assist Member States to protect themselves against cyber threats, while maintaining an open, free and safe cyberspace. The internal and external dimensions of energy security will be pursued through further diversification of EU energy sources, routes and suppliers, particularly in the gas domain. Finally, in order to connect EU foreign policy with citizens and partners, the EU will enhance its strategic communication by focusing on joining-up public diplomacy across different fields.

#### *State and societal resilience in the EU's eastern and southern neighbourhood*

Recognising that fragility beyond EU borders threatens its interests, the EU will promote resilience in third countries and their societies as means to ensure their growth and stability. This objective will be pursued through the 'credible enlargement policy' based on strict and fair conditionality, elements of resilience in the European neighbourhood policy, and development policy. Regarding the latter, the EU intends to 'adopt a joined-

up approach to its humanitarian, development, migration, trade, investment, infrastructure, education, health and research policies, as well as improve horizontal coherence between the EU and its Member States'. In this spirit, the strategy focuses on a more effective migration policy by developing common and tailor-made approaches to migration, combining the instruments of development, diplomacy, mobility, legal migration, border management, and re-admission and return policies. To address the root causes of migration and associated phenomena, such as trans-border crime, the EU will work towards a more efficient deployment of development instruments, through trust funds, preventive diplomacy and mediation.

#### *Integrated approach to conflict and crises*

The strategy recognises the importance of an 'integrated approach' to strengthening the EU's particular role in preventing conflict, stabilisation, and conflict settlement. The strategy embraces the notion of 'pre-emptive peace' – monitoring root causes, such as human rights violations, inequality, resource stress, and climate change – as a means to prevent conflicts from breaking out. The EU will pursue these objectives through a multi-dimensional, multi-phased, multi-level, and multi-lateral approach.

#### *Cooperative regional orders*

According to the strategy, regions represent critical spaces of governance in a de-centred world. In response to security concerns and in order to reap the economic gains of globalisation, the EU will promote and support cooperative regional orders worldwide, including in the Mediterranean, Middle East and parts of sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the strategy stresses the importance of a solid transatlantic partnership through NATO, and with the United States and Canada, to strengthen resilience, address conflicts, and contribute to effective global governance.

#### *Global governance*

The strategy includes the EU's commitment to a global order based on international law, including the principles of the UN Charter, which ensure peace, human rights, sustainable development and lasting access to the global commons. To achieve that aim, the EU will aspire to 'transform rather than simply preserve' the existing system, including through a strong UN and the determination to reform the UN, including the Security Council, and the International Financial Institutions (IFIs). According to the strategy, 'without global norms and the means to enforce them, peace and security, prosperity and democracy ... are at risk'.

#### **Implementation**

To ensure the identified priorities are achieved effectively, the EU will mobilise all tools at its disposal in a coherent and coordinated way, by investing in a credible, responsive and joined-up Union. A credible Union calls for a strengthening of all dimensions of foreign policy (e.g. research, climate, mobility, trade, sanctions, diplomacy and development) by improving the effectiveness and consistency of the EU's other policies in accordance with its values. Responsiveness, on the other hand, requires a more rapid and flexible response to the unknown, through diplomatic, military and development instruments aligned with EU interests. Finally, a more joined-up approach between internal and external policies – diplomacy and justice and home affairs, security and development – offers a suitable response to security challenges such as terrorism, hybrid threats and organised crime.

<b>Concrete proposals in the strategy</b>
<p><b>Credibility of security and defence/Defence cooperation as the norm</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet collective commitment to devote 20 % of defence budget spending to the procurement of equipment and research and technology.</li> <li>• A sectoral strategy, to be agreed by the Council, should further specify the civil-military level of ambition, tasks, requirements and capability priorities.</li> <li>• Improve the monitoring and control of flows which have security implications, including by investing in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, including remotely piloted aircraft systems, satellite communications, and autonomous access to space.</li> <li>• Invest in digital capabilities to secure data, networks and critical infrastructure within the European digital space.</li> <li>• Develop full-spectrum land, air, space and maritime capabilities, including strategic enablers.</li> <li>• Conduct annual coordinated review process at EU level to discuss Member States' military spending plans.</li> <li>• Strengthening the European Defence Agency (EDA) capability development plan and regular assessments of EDA benchmarks.</li> <li>• Ensuring participation of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the defence sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>More rapid and flexible response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diplomatic action fully grounded in the Lisbon Treaty.</li> <li>• CSDP must become more rapid and effective, including through enhancing the deployability and interoperability of Member States' armed forces through training and exercises.</li> <li>• Developing civilian missions – a trademark of CSDP – by encouraging force generation, speeding up deployment, and providing adequate training based on EU-wide curricula.</li> <li>• Strengthening operational planning and conduct structures, and building closer connections between civilian and military structures and missions.</li> <li>• Collective commitment to achieve the 0.7 % ODA/GNI target, in line with Development Assistance Committee (DAC) principles. Across the Commission, flexibility will be built into financial instruments, allowing for the use of uncommitted funds in any given year to be carried on to subsequent years to respond to crises. That includes possible reduction in the number of instruments to enhance coherence and flexibility, while raising the overall amount dedicated to development.</li> <li>• The EU will invest in the EEAS and coordinate better across institutions and Member States to deepen situational awareness.</li> <li>• Delegations will be equipped with the necessary expertise, including on sectoral issues and in local languages, valuing experience in and of a region, beefing-up the political sections of delegations, and encouraging operational staff to use their expertise more politically.</li> <li>• Greater information-sharing and joint reporting, analysis and response planning between Member State embassies, EU Delegations, Commission services, EU Special Representatives and CSDP missions.</li> <li>• Encourage cross-fertilisation between EU and regional and international organisations, civil society, academia, think tanks and the private sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>A joined-up response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater coordination between the EU and Member States, the EIB and the private sector.</li> <li>• A balanced and human rights-compliant policy mix, addressing the management of migrant flows and the structural causes.</li> <li>• Develop stronger links between humanitarian and development efforts through joint risk analysis, and multiannual programming and financing.</li> </ul>

- Make different external policies and instruments migration-sensitive – from diplomacy and CSDP to development and climate – and ensure their coherence with internal policies regarding border management, homeland security, asylum, employment, culture and education.
- Tighter institutional links between EU external action and the internal area of freedom, security and justice. Closer ties will be fostered through joint Council meetings and joint task forces between the EEAS and the Commission. Defence policy also needs to be better linked to policies covering the internal market, industry and space.
- Use the full potential of Europol and Eurojust, and provide greater support for the EU Intelligence Centre. The EU must feed and coordinate intelligence extracted from European databases, and put ICT – including big data analysis – at the service of deeper situational awareness.
- More joined-up EU security and development policies. CSDP capacity building missions must be coordinated with security sector and rule of law work by the Commission. Capacity-building for security and development can play a key role in empowering and enabling EU partners to prevent and respond to crises, and will need to be supported financially by the EU.
- Long-term work on pre-emptive peace, resilience and human rights must be tied to crisis response through humanitarian aid, CSDP, sanctions and diplomacy.
- Systematically mainstream human rights and gender issues across policy sectors and institutions, as well as foster closer coordination regarding digital matters. Greater awareness and expertise on such issues is needed within the EEAS and the Commission.

### Stakeholders' concerns

The period of strategic reflection launched by Mogherini has provided additional impetus to the European foreign and security policy [community](#). Given the scope of the exercise, the range of [analysis](#) and comments generated over recent months covers both thematic and regional issues. The main preoccupations – given experience with the 2008 review process – are if the final text will be [focused](#) or [strategic](#) enough and, more importantly, whether and under what conditions the EU can be a powerful foreign policy [player](#) at all. Several proposals were put on the table with regard to a broadly conceived [process](#) of strategy-making, as well as concrete proposals concerning future [priorities](#) or [building blocks](#). Some analysts are also trying to anticipate the next steps in the process by [suggesting](#) that one likely implication of the global strategy would be the requirement to develop a defence sub-strategy or 'white book'. Such a document could address the type of operations the EU should conduct and the capabilities required.

#### *Member States' reactions*

The strategy has triggered reactions from individual Member States. Its initial impact was, from the very beginning, tainted by the rather unfortunate timing, immediately following the United Kingdom (UK) referendum on membership of the European Union. Consequently, most political attention was devoted to the consequences of the 'leave' vote for the EU's role in the world, rather than on the strategy itself. The French Foreign Minister, Jean-Marc Ayrault, and then German Federal Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, issued a [joint contribution](#) in which they confirmed their belief that the European Union 'provides a unique and indispensable framework for the pursuit of freedom, prosperity and security in Europe' and that the EU is 'the only framework capable of providing appropriate collective answers to the changing international environment'. In the statement, France and Germany reaffirmed their commitment to a 'shared vision of Europe as a security union based on solidarity and mutual assistance between Member States in support of common security and defence policy'. The

concrete initiatives proposed in the statement include sharing a common analysis of the EU's strategic environment and common understanding of the EU's interests through regular reviews conducted by the EU and supported by an independent situation assessment capability. France and Germany also stressed the importance of stepping up European cooperation on defence and the need for more investment in preventing conflict, in promoting human security and in stabilising the EU's neighbourhood and regions affected by crisis worldwide. Building on this statement, in September 2016, Defence Ministers, Ursula Von der Leyen (Germany) and Jean-Yves Le Drian (France) presented a '[road map](#)', in which they stressed that, in order to more effectively protect the citizens and borders of Europe, the EU should reinforce its solidarity and European defence capabilities. Concrete steps [include](#) a joint military HQ for EU military missions, creating a new command centre for coordinating medical assistance, a logistics centre for sharing 'strategic' assets, and sharing satellite reconnaissance data. Furthermore, the paper notes that such cooperation could move forward on the basis of Articles 42 and 46 of the EU Treaty on 'permanent structured cooperation'. In the past, any initiatives suggesting the creation of an EU army, or duplication of NATO structures were opposed by the UK. Furthermore, a [joint declaration](#) by the Foreign Ministers of the Weimar Triangle (France, Germany and Poland), issued in August 2016, welcomed the global strategy, and stressed the need to take the necessary steps to implement the strategy. With a particular focus on security and defence, the ministers advocated an annual meeting of the European Council in the format of a 'European Security Council', looking at strategic issues in internal and external security.

#### *Reaction of the think-tank community*

The foreign policy and security community has been involved from the very beginning of the process. The strategy has been generally well-received by foreign policy and security experts. Jan Techau of Carnegie Europe [described](#) the document as 'unusually thoughtful and rich EU document' and praised its 'principled pragmatism', which anchors its prescription in a realism. Techau also expressed appreciation for a large number of concrete proposals which point toward action, rather than good intentions. The Egmont Institute's Sven Biscop, on the other hand, noted that the overbearing language on democracy promotion has [disappeared](#) from the new document, and that there is a growing realisation of the importance of hard power, which should provide new opportunities for cooperation. At the same time, commentators have pointed to some of the weaknesses of the document. One of them is its 'half hearted' approach to strategic autonomy for the EU, which although highly desirable, is still not sufficiently advanced. In a collection of essays [published](#) by the EU Institute for Security Studies, several foreign policy and security analysts tackle the question of implementation of the strategy. The volume includes several concrete recommendations for further action, such as strengthening the capabilities of partner countries; initiating a genuine assessment of the EU's available capabilities and a workable consensus on common tools, joint projects and additional capabilities; and an operational headquarters (OHQ) that would be able to provide all types of operational planning at all times.

#### **Way forward**

European Council President Donald Tusk's [letter](#) of 31 January 2017 notes that 'the challenges currently facing the European Union are more dangerous than ever before in the time since the signature of the Treaty of Rome'. Indeed, the evolving international environment and [geopolitical shifts](#) highlight the need for an effective and coherent implementation of the global strategy.

Since the early stages of the strategic reflection process, Mogherini [signalled](#) that, once the global strategy is completed, it will have to be implemented through additional sectoral papers. In addition to the discussion about the global strategy itself, the European Commission [work programme](#) for 2016 included several initiatives (e.g. [capacity-building](#) in third countries, an EU-wide strategic framework for supporting [security sector reform](#), [European defence action plan](#), and a [space strategy](#) for Europe) that have a direct or indirect impact on the EU's future foreign and security policy. In October 2016, the Council adopted conclusions on the implementation of the strategy.

The [Bratislava roadmap](#) approved following the European Council on 16 September 2016, has recognised strengthening EU cooperation on external security and defence as one of the key objectives. The most important strategic priorities for the implementation of the strategy as [decided](#) by the Foreign Affairs Council on 17 October 2016 include: security and defence; building resilience and taking an integrated approach to conflicts and crises; addressing the internal/external security nexus; updating existing strategies and preparing new ones; and enhancing public diplomacy. Progress has been fastest on the security and defence [package](#). In November 2016, EU Foreign and Defence Ministers decided on key steps to upgrade cooperation, based on Federica Mogherini's [implementation plan](#) on security and defence. This aims to improve the protection of the EU and its citizens, help governments build military capacity jointly, and develop a better response to crises. Strengthening EU cooperation on external security and defence was also [discussed](#) at the European Council summit in December 2016. The Heads of State or Government focused on three priorities: the implementation of the EU global strategy in the area of security and defence, the [European defence action plan](#), and the [implementation](#) of the EU-NATO [Joint Declaration](#) signed in Warsaw in July 2016. Regarding the latter, on 6 December 2016, the Council of the EU and NATO Foreign Affairs Ministers endorsed a set of 42 concrete proposals for implementation of the declaration. The Commission work programme for 2017 also mentions implementation of the strategy, as well as a new strategy for Syria, as its objectives. The first implementation report is expected in June 2017.

#### Relevant publications by the European Parliamentary Research Service

##### Regional

- La Politique européenne de voisinage, [Briefing](#), December 2016.
- EU strategy in the Horn of Africa, [At a Glance](#), December 2016.
- A guide to EU procedures for the conclusion of international trade agreements, [Briefing](#), October 2016.

##### Thematic

- Hybrid threats: EU-NATO cooperation, [Briefing](#), February 2017.
- EU-NATO cooperation and European defence after the Warsaw Summit, [Briefing](#), December 2016.
- Resilience in the EU's foreign and security policy, [Briefing](#), June 2016.
- Preparatory action on defence research, [At a Glance](#), October 2016.
- Europe of defence? Views on the future of defence cooperation, [Briefing](#), July 2016.

##### Oversight and added value

- The European Council and European defence cooperation: developments since June 2016, [European Council in Action](#), December 2016.
- EU defence policy: the sleeping giant, [European Added Value in Action](#), December 2016.

## Main references

A. Missiroli (ed.) *Towards an EU Global Strategy. Background, process, references*, [EUISS](#), 2015.

J. J. Andersson, D. Fiott, A. Missiroli (eds.) *After the EU Global Strategy – Consulting the experts – Security and defence*, [EUISS](#), 2016.

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