

**Question for written answer E-008665/2014**  
**to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**  
Rule 130  
**Philippe Juvin (PPE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Independent European defence

The EU has certainly proven its ability to mount civilian and military operations, but European defence seems to be in limbo at the moment. This is particularly surprising given that the Lisbon Treaty introduced the concept of a European capabilities and armaments policy.

Given the security challenges we face, national defence budget cuts and increasing American involvement across the world, there is now an undeniable need for Europe to have shared defences with operational armed forces. Furthermore, 72% of Europeans are in favour of a common security and defence policy. But only the British and the French have the large-scale, organised response capabilities needed for long-term involvement, and the political will to mobilise those capabilities.

1. What is the Commission intending to do to ensure that one day Europe will be able to act as a sovereign power, independently of those two countries?
2. In the meantime, what is the Commission intending to do to help those two powers keep their military apparatus operational?
3. Is the Commission intending to encourage Member States to use the untapped potential inherent in permanent structured cooperation and to review the Athena mechanism to make it possible for the costs of EU military operations to be spread more fairly?