

Question for written answer E-013235/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - EU offensive capabilities

The European Union is in the process of expanding its military capabilities in a number of technologically advanced areas, most notably cyber security and remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS), or drones. While the role that such technologies could play within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy may be important, the legal and democratic framework to provide proper oversight over the offensive use of such systems is lacking. It remains unclear whether the EU is developing offensive cyber capabilities. The VP/HR's recent report on the future of CFSP refers to the 'operational capacities' of drones: presumably this would also include offensive capabilities.¹ Democratic oversight and clarity on these developments are crucial.

1. Can the VP/HR clarify whether the EU is developing an offensive cyber capability? If so, how is democratic oversight of this capability ensured?
2. How does the VP/HR view the following quote, from the Dutch National Cyber Security Research Agenda, 'in most advanced countries [...] interest in a pro-active strike force is growing'?
3. Can the VP/HR clarify what is meant by the operational capacity of RPAS and whether this would include armed action? If not, why not?
4. How will abuse of the use of force, surveillance and intelligence-gathering be prevented?
5. How does the VP/HR plan to promote a European approach for developing RPAS, as stated in the report on the future of CFSP?
6. Who would authorise the use of any offensive capabilities on behalf of the EU?
7. How will the VP/HR inform and involve the European Parliament with regard to offensive capabilities?
8. How do the above-mentioned offensive capabilities relate to the development of a European army, and to NATO cooperation?

¹ http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131015_02_en.pdf