
MEPs call for a firmer response to Russian threats to European security

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- EU should increase military help to Ukraine, including lethal and heavy weaponry
 - MEPs urge German Chancellor Scholz to authorise the delivery of Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine
 - Scrap unanimity voting for decisions without military implications, in particular on sanctions and human rights
 - MEPs call for a permanent EU seat in the UN Security Council
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War in Ukraine, rising global authoritarianism, a more assertive China and the climate emergency have caused a tectonic shift in the geopolitical landscape, MEPs warn.

The EU and its member states need to increase their military, political and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and strengthen their defence in countering Russian threats to European security, MEPs say in their annual [Common Foreign and Security Policy report](#) adopted on Wednesday by 407 votes in favour, 92 against and 142 abstentions.

The EU's response to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is being closely watched by autocracies around the world and will greatly influence how they behave on the international stage, MEPs warn.

EU must make decision-making more flexible and efficient

They call on the EU to use provisions within the Treaty of the European Union that would allow the Council to take certain decisions, without military implications, in particular those concerning sanctions and human rights, by qualified majority rather than unanimity.

The report also calls on the EU institutions to make a proposal on how the EU could secure a permanent seat in all multilateral forums, including the UN Security Council.

Reduce EU's dependence on energy resources

The security of the EU is closely linked to accelerating the enlargement process, while respecting accession criteria and reforming the EU's neighbourhood policy, MEPs argue. They also urge the EU to become less dependent on energy resources and other materials critical to our infrastructure that are imported from third countries - in particular those which do not share the European Union's values or with which the EU finds itself in a state of systemic rivalry.

Deliver Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine, say MEPs

In the annual [2022 report on the implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy \(CSDP\)](#), adopted on Wednesday by 459 votes in favour, 93 against and 85 abstentions, MEPs call for the immediate deployment of modern weapons and a next-generation air defence system, urging German Chancellor Scholz to authorise the delivery of Leopard 2 main battle tanks to Ukraine without further delay. They stress that Ukraine is defending its territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and urgently needs military aid and heavy weaponry to win the war.

The report welcomes new EU initiatives to enhance European security and defence, notably the [Versailles declaration](#), the [Strategic Compass](#), the [joint communication on defence investment gaps](#), and the Commission's proposal for a regulation to incentivise joint procurement ([EDIRPA](#)). Member states should continue developing the EU's cyber-defence policy and capabilities, MEPs add, and establish security and defence partnerships with like-minded partners worldwide.

Quotes

The rapporteur on Common Foreign and Security Policy, [David McAllister](#) (EPP, DE), said: "To come of age as a genuine geopolitical actor, the European Union must reinforce our foreign policy instruments and strengthen the institutional set-up. Unanimity voting, for example, clearly constrains the EU's ability to react rapidly. The trade-off between the ideal of unity and the high costs of unanimity in terms of effectiveness must be seen more critically".

The rapporteur on Common Security and Defence Policy, [Tom Vandenkendelaere](#) (EPP, BE) said: "European security has dramatically deteriorated due to Russia's war in Ukraine. In this context, the EU has to increase and speed up military help to Ukraine and improve the functioning of its defence policy while continuing and strengthening its cooperation with NATO. Among other changes, it should fast-track the decision-making process on defence issues and reduce its dependence on third countries."

Further information

[Committee on Foreign Affairs](#)

[Video recording of the press conference by the rapporteurs David McAllister and Tom Vandenkendelaere, 18.01.2023](#)

[CFSP report will be available here, 18.01.2023](#)

[Video recording of the debate on CFSP and CSDP reports, 17.01.2023](#)

[CSDP report will be available here, 18.01.2023](#)


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