



**Second conference of the third phase of the  
Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and  
Security Sector (CF SEDSS)**

**16–17 JUNE 2021, VTC**

**SPEECH BY EDA CHIEF EXECUTIVE JIŘI ŠEDIVÝ**

**PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY !**

*Dear conference participants,*

- It is a great pleasure for me to again join the Minister of National Defence of Portugal, Mr Gomes Cravinho. In April, we jointly opened a high-level conference on the **impact of emerging disruptive technologies on defence**, and a few weeks ago I had the pleasure of participating in the **informal meeting of Defence Ministers** gracefully hosted by him in Portugal.
- Today, I am joining Minister Gomes Cravinho in welcoming you to the **second conference of the Energy Consultation Forum's third phase**. Today's event, organised under the auspices of the **Portuguese Presidency of the EU** and the **Portuguese Ministry of National Defence**, demonstrates the Member States' commitment to strengthening the **EU's technology sovereignty** and ensuring its **transition to climate-neutrality by 2050**.



- For the first time, I also welcome **Ms Paula Pinho**, the new Director at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy to the Forum. I am looking forward to continuing our **fruitful and exemplary collaboration** with DG Energy in assisting our stakeholders in lowering defence carbon and ecological footprints through synergies and sharing of best practices.
- Last April, we organised the first **high-level defence and energy meeting**. This meeting demonstrated the eagerness of the two communities to establish contact and share insights in tackling energy and climate challenges, it also paved the way for further exploring how to complement efforts to advance sustainable energy. **EDA** and **DG ENER** will continue **fostering this collaboration**, aiming at providing **practical defence energy solutions** at the national and EU level.
- The establishment of the **European Defence Fund** reflects **the Union's strong commitment to defence**. It is expected that this Fund will encompass concrete actions for addressing defence energy and climate-related topics, reinforcing the national defence efforts in these vital fields.
- Building on this momentum and the outstanding work of the Energy Consultation Forum, the European Commission and EDA are currently exploring the initiation of one of the **first actions** under **Horizon Europe supporting defence**. **The potential action will enable the development of offshore renewable energy projects** in maritime areas reserved for defence activities or used by defence. These opportunities reflect the EU's increased



interest at the highest level to support EU Member States in moving towards a more circular, sustainable and resilient defence sector.

- Let me share a **few reflections on the COVID-19 pandemic**. This crisis has proven to go beyond health, affecting our daily lives, businesses, economy and even security as cybercriminals exploit coronavirus disruptions to spread malware, gain access to credentials and cause chaos. Lessons learned already show that countries need to improve their preventive, responsive, and recovery mechanisms. The pandemic has taught us that the **understanding of security nowadays cannot neglect less conventional threats, either from a virus, or climate change, or energy concerns**.
  
- Last October, during the opening of our first conference, I discussed **four potential areas where the Consultation Forum could contribute to advancing energy and green transition despite these unprecedented conditions**. Today, I want to commend the working group members, their team leaders and moderators for the progress achieved so far. I am impressed with the volume and the high quality of your work, considering that it has been done remotely and in such a brief period. Let me share a few elements of this work:
  - **On defence building-stock**
    - **Working Group-1** is currently analysing the essential aspects of energy efficiency and buildings energy performance with a primary focus on **i) policies and**



legislation, **ii)** technological solutions, and **iii)** behaviour aspects and human factors.

- Exploring these three vital pillars will be an essential leap to underpin the policy and decision-making processes of the MoDs to increase energy efficiency and ensure the coherence of activities in implementing the EU's energy and climate targets. I look forward to receiving an update on this central work strand.
- **On renewables**
  - **Working Group-2** elaborates a series of significant ideas to maximise renewable energy sources (RES) value of defence lands and properties, increase the resilience of isolated installations and reduce external energy supply and total costs while minimising environmental impact. Research also focuses on identifying the most suitable energy storage solutions and hydrogen applications to defence. EDA and Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH JU) stand ready to assist the relevant work further.



- **On critical energy infrastructures**
  - I also want to highlight the ongoing research of **Working Group-3** in exploring the effects of pandemics on defence-related critical energy infrastructures and the impact on defence readiness to address similar risks, such as natural hazards and hybrid threats. Ensuring the functioning of those infrastructures during a crisis is vital for defence sustainability and effectiveness. EDA appreciates the support of the Joint Research Centre to identify capability gaps and evaluate vulnerabilities.
  
- **On technologies, policies and funding,**
  - although the **Transversal Working Group** is a new addition to the Forum, it is with great pleasure I have been informed about the progress on ideas related to energy digitalisation, virtual development of advanced energy efficiency, energy modelling and benchmarking. I also value the work to build digital defence energy profiles to enable the Member States to create synergies and help the industry to better understand defence' energy future requirements.
  
  - I can also underline the ongoing work on investigating the conditions and feasibility of establishing a suitable mechanism at the EU level for assisting the MoDs in a more structured and permanent level to implement national defence energy and climate targets.



*Dear members of the Consultation Forum,*

- It is evident by doing this impressive and multi-dimensional work, you are not only assisting MoDs to address national challenges, but you also contribute to the EU's energy security and resilience. The output of this work is already an essential input in addressing the wider links between defence and the climate nexus. Hence, via the Energy and Environment working group, the Consultation Forum and the upcoming Incubation Forum on Circular Economy in European Defence, EDA is contributing to implementing the [Climate Change and Defence Roadmap](#), the **first EU action plan to address the links between defence and climate change**;
- The **diverse contribution of the Energy Consultation Forum** has also been recently acknowledged in the Commission's "[Action Plan on synergies between civil, defence and space industries](#)", where it has been identified as one of the several EU-funded initiatives that "*lay the ground for cross-sectoral synergies*" unlocking opportunities for launching new projects. The Forum also has the expertise to support EU flagship priorities to address energy and climate-related topics in the context of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and in the Strategic Compass.



- In conclusion, on behalf of EDA and the Consultation Forum I wish to express my appreciation to EASME, the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise, which for the last five years supported EDA in establishing and implementing the Consultation Forum. As of 1<sup>st</sup> April, the granting authority of the Consultation Forum will be CINEA, the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency. EDA looks forward to continuing working with CINEA.
- Many thanks to the Portuguese Presidency of the EU and particularly to the Ministry of National Defence for embracing the valuable work of the Consultation Forum by hosting this event.
- Lastly, I want to assure you that along with the colleagues from the European Commission, and the support of the Working Group team leaders and moderators, EDA will continue working to meet your expectations for enhancing the energy resilience of the defence sector while contributing to implementing the wider efforts of the EU for achieving climate neutrality by 2050.
- I wish you a fruitful conference, and I hope to meet you all in Ljubljana at the 3<sup>rd</sup> conference.
- Thank you for your attention.