

MINISTERS PRESENTED WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOINT MILITARY CAPABILITIES TO OVERCOME FRAGMENTED EUROPEAN DEFENCE LANDSCAPE

Brussels, 20 November 2020. **The first ever overview of the European defence landscape, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) report, identifies significant avenues for European defence cooperation with 55 new opportunities for countries to develop defence capabilities together. It recommends six next generation high impact capabilities as focus areas for joint European development efforts. The review also finds that the European defence landscape is characterised by high levels of fragmentation and low investment in cooperation.**

The European Defence Agency (EDA) presented EDA Ministers of Defence today with the first CARD report developed in close coordination with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Military Staff (EUMS) over the past 12 months.

Head of the Agency, High Representative/Vice-President, **Josep Borrell** said: *“For the first time, we have a unique overview of all 26 EDA Member States’ national defence planning and capability development efforts. This is the result of an in-depth dialogue with national defence planners at EU level. It provides Member States with areas in which there is great potential for European defence cooperation, providing Member States forces with modern equipment and improving their interoperability, including in CSDP missions and operations”.*

PREPARING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Based on Member States’ own planning and dialogues with national defence planners, the report identifies clear opportunities for multinational cooperation and has identified 55 opportunities across all military domains: Land (17); Air (14); Maritime (12); Cyberspace (3); Space (4) and Joint and Enabler (5). The report concludes many have the potential to deliver a significant impact on the European capability landscape, provide operational benefits and support EU’s strategic autonomy. It also recommends an additional 56 related collaborative opportunities for Research & Technology (R&T). Member States approved the recommendations of the CARD cycle during today’s EDA Ministerial Steering Board.

The report identifies six next generation capabilities as focus areas for Member States to concentrate capability efforts on as they have a high potential of boosting the EU’s and its Member States’ operational performance in the short and medium term, while also ensuring industrial know-how. These areas are considered to have good potential to be addressed through cooperation, based on Member States’ own considerations, and would allow for broad participation of nations at system and subsystem level. The six focus areas are:

Main Battle Tank (MBT) – CARD recommends the joint development and acquisition of a next generation MBT in the long term (entry into service mid-2030s), and joint modernisation and upgrades of existing capabilities in the short-term. If Member States cooperate in upgrading or collaborate when

PRESS RELEASE

introducing new ones, a 30% reduction of types and variants can be obtained by the mid-2030s. 11 countries expressed an interest in cooperation going forward.

European Patrol Class Surface Ship - CARD recommends replacing coastal and offshore patrol vessels within the next decade and developing an EU-wide approach for modular naval platforms. Opportunities for cooperation in joint off-the-shelf procurement, common logistics for similar vessels, common future functional requirements were found, with 7 Member States expressing an interest in cooperation.

Soldier Systems - CARD recommends modernising soldier systems through joint procurement of existing systems in the short term, including harmonising requirements, developing a user group for Joint Virtual Training & Exercises utilising common IT tools. In the long-term, it recommends developing commonly shared architecture by the mid-2020s for all subsystems using cutting-edge technology. 10 countries expressed an interest in cooperation going forward.

Counter UAS/ Anti Access/Area Denial - CARD recommends developing a European capability to counter unmanned aerial systems (UAS) to improve force protection, as well as contributing to establish a European standard for Anti Access/Area Denial (A2/AD). CARD concludes that European capability approaches towards A2/AD are clearly at a crossroads, whereby the capability is either developed in a collaborative manner or the capability will not be developed for European forces.

Defence in Space - CARD recommends developing a European approach to defence in space to improve access to space services and protection of assets in space. As an emerging operational domain, more collaboration would contribute to a greater involvement of Ministries of Defence and recognition of military requirements in wider space programmes conducted at EU level.

Enhanced Military Mobility - CARD recommends more active participation of all Member States in military mobility programmes, notably air and sea lift transportation, logistic facilities and increased resilience of related IT systems and processes under hybrid warfare conditions, by the mid-2020s.

EUROPEAN DEFENCE LANDSCAPE

The report finds that the European defence landscape is characterised by fragmentation, incoherence, and by defence cooperation spending falling well below agreed collective benchmarks. This includes military capability development, R&T efforts, defence industry support and operational aspects. It concludes that continuous efforts will be needed over a long period in defence spending, planning and cooperation to overcome costly fragmentation and benefit from synergies and enhanced military interoperability. Additionally, the CARD analysis finds that:

- high diversity of types of military equipment and different levels of modernisation and interoperability drives the fragmentation and lack of coherence of the European landscape. This has a negative impact on the ability of Member States forces to operate together efficiently.

PRESS RELEASE

- commitment to CSDP missions and operations is very low, with strong disparities between Member States in terms of engagement frameworks and overall operational effort.
- CARD's identified areas for cooperation would yield significant benefits in addressing Member States declared national priorities, due to a match in their planning and interests. Over time, this would generate significant operational advantage, especially when Member States deploy and operate forces together.

TAKING COOPERATION FORWARD

CARD may result in new cooperation projects launched by Member States in various formats - under PESCO, within EDA or in other bilateral or multinational frameworks - should they choose to take them forward. The full report and its findings have been circulated among Member States.

PRESS RELEASE

NOTES FOR EDITORS

- 1) Press Release is available in 23 EU languages
- 2) [Factsheet with further information on 6 focus areas recommended by CARD](#)
- 3) [CARD Report including its executive summary is available here](#)
- 4) [How CARD works video explainer](#)
- 5) [Webnews on EDA Steering Board](#)
- 6) 26 Participating Member States of EDA and CARD are all 27 EU Member States, except Denmark.
- 7) The European Defence Agency (EDA), the hub for European defence cooperation:
 - i. Created in 2004 to support and facilitate defence cooperation in Europe, EDA has become the place where countries willing to develop their defence capabilities collaboratively can do so.
 - ii. EDA's expertise and activities cover the whole spectrum of cooperation: from harmonising requirements to delivering operational capabilities; from research & technology (R&T) and innovation to developing technology demonstrators; from training and exercises to support to CSDP operations.
 - iii. EDA also closely engages with the European defence industry to enhance Europe's defence technological and industrial base and help make the industry stronger and more competitive.
 - iv. The Agency's role and impact have constantly grown, especially with the implementation of the EU's Global Strategy (2016) which also led Member States to reinforce the Agency's mission in 2017.
- 8) Follow #EUdefence on social media for more and visit our website www.eda.europa.eu.

PRESS CONTACTS EDA

Elisabeth SCHOEFFMANN

Head of Media & Communication
Tel: +32 470 87 01 65

Paul QUINN

Media & Communications Officer
Tel: +32 2 504 28 24