



# Conclusions and recommendations for the CFSP conference

## “Deepening of the EU’s Security and Defence Cooperation in a Multi-Speed Europe”

June 6, 2017 Belgrade

As part of its multiyear program, “CFSP and Serbia’s Accession to the EU”, ISAC organized its 3rd high level conference “CFSP: Deepening of the EU’s Security and Defence Cooperation in a Multi-Speed Europe” on June 6, 2017. The conference was focused on several related topics: the announced reforms in the areas of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), and the potential creation of a Multi-Speed Europe. The participants also addressed the impacts of this process to the region, in the context of the accession of the Western Balkan countries, in particular Serbia, and the fulfilment of obligations under Chapter 31: Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy of the pre-accession negotiations.

The conclusions and recommendations are based on the conference presentations and debates, and reflect the expressed opinions. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of each individual participant. Dr. Igor Novaković, the Research Director of the Centre for International and Security Affairs - ISAC Fund, is responsible for the content of this document. Mr. Chris Welland, Ms. Ivana Lazarovski and Mr. Uroš Begović also participated in the drafting of this document.

### *Improving cooperation in the field of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy and implications for the Western Balkans and Serbia*

1. Brexit and the election of Donald Trump have greatly inhibited the possibilities of European defence. Europe cannot have strong defence without the support of the United States. But at the same time, this crisis may actually act as a catalyst for the implementation of the EU’s Global Strategy as Europe is pushed to take matters into its own hands. Sometimes the best progress occurs in times of crisis.
2. Deeper defence cooperation between EU Member States is necessary, however, there are a number of significant obstacles, primarily due to the weak political and institutional capacities for such actions. It is therefore important that Member States have a unique vision about the future of the Union in this domain in order to create a powerful political impulse for change. The mitigating circumstance is the fact that the awareness that the security challenges are common is increasing, and that they could be only jointly addressed. This awareness is strengthened by the increasing visibility of the security challenges and the recognition that the EU’s former solutions to its security issues are no longer sufficient.
3. “Europe must take greater responsibility for its defence. Two-thirds of Europeans believe that a CSDP is needed, since that is the only way to maintain stability and togetherness.” In this context, the real issue is not to allocate more funds for defence but to use the existing funds more wisely. Second to the US, the EU is collectively contributing the most resources for defence, or more precisely, the cumulative allocation of EU Member States amounts to almost half of the US allocation. However, the EU and its Member States receive only about 15% of the security funding that the US does, since there is duplication of capacity and equipment. These challenges can be addressed in a manner already pursued by European institutions: by strengthening capacities and capabilities, by fostering joint military planning, by resolving the issue of financing of battle groups, by creating a European Defense Fund (through which the Member States can better plan the costs at the national level and

then synchronize them at the EU level) and better coordination between internal and external policies. Also, although the Lisbon Treaty foresees the Permanent Structured Cooperation in security and defence field (PESCO), which can be created by the interested Member States, the EU should also address the challenge of ensuring the participation of the other Member States that will not enter PESCO (once it is created).

4. The practice of national politicians criticizing the EU without rational arguments is unsustainable. In reality all of the decisions in the field of foreign affairs, security and defence are adopted with the consensus of the European Council. Heads of states and government must be actively involved in the process of deepening security and defence cooperation, but also in communicating to their citizens any new developments.
5. Common security challenges for the EU do not only come from the East (conflict along the East-West axis). Regardless of the perceived threat that these challenges pose for some Member States, especially for the post-communist ones, there are challenges along the North-South axis too. The nature of these challenges has already been shown by the recent migration waves, as well by some quasi-states and terrorist organizations that have more power than we thought. Therefore, the relations between all relevant groups, including the United States, Russia and China, as well as with growing regional powers, are essential to maintain peace in Europe. And certainly, we should not forget that the UK that is in the process of leaving the EU. It is necessary to maintain communication channels with all of the aforementioned states. In this sense, partners and neighbours sharing common security challenges with the EU are very important.
6. It is impossible to create a common security policy of the EU without the involvement of neighbouring countries, since security and defence start from the EU's neighbours. If the EU is supposed to be structured in concentric circles, solidarity and enhanced cooperation with neighbours is needed. The best example is the cooperation between the Czech and German armies in military matters. No state can change its neighbours; therefore strengthening mutual trust, enhancing cooperation and mutual integration are essential.

## ***Serbia, Western Balkans and the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy***

1. At this moment, Serbia does not want to decide on a unique identity and wants to link the broken lines of the East and the West, potentially allowing Serbia to benefit from its ties to both sides. However, Serbia's foreign policy certainly feels the consequences of the broken relationship between the two sides and Serbia should gradually harmonize its foreign policy with the EU. Serbian officials raise the issues of territorial integrity and the recognition of Kosovo's independence as the main reasons for not aligning with the restrictive measures against Russia and China, since these two countries support Serbia in the UN Security Council.
2. Serbia's progress in aligning with the obligations in Chapter 31 should not be measured only by how much it conforms with the restrictive measures of the EU against Russia, but also through the other elements and practical contributions that Serbia offers. Serbia's goal is to achieve the greatest progress under Chapter 31. In this Chapter, Serbia has from the outset put a focus on security and defence issues. The aim is to contribute to European security in a comprehensive manner, both with the experiences Serbia has gained so far and in the experience of experts who will participate in civilian missions of the EU. At the moment, Serbia shares intelligence information with the EU and participates in multinational operations and missions of the Union. Serbia ranks eighth in Europe and first in the Western Balkans in contributions to military missions. Also, Serbia has established an administrative arrangement with the European Defence Agency which allows Serbia to develop capabilities that are not only primarily in the interest of Serbia, but also in the interest of the EU as well.
3. The countries of the Western Balkans are not just neighbours but are part of Europe and should be treated as such by EU institutions. All countries have a high opinion of the potential benefits of EU membership. However, it is worth pointing out that after Brexit and other populist challenges, the main priority of the EU is the safety of its citizens. It is now necessary to deepen cooperation between the Western Balkans and the EU, and also between individual Western Balkan states.
4. It is necessary to further deepen regional cooperation in the Western Balkans so that citizens feel real benefits in their everyday lives. The main tool for this is certainly the Berlin process, but cooperation should not remain exclusively at the political level. It should also occur at the level of citizens, youth and students.
5. Serbia has the sovereign right to remain neutral, but it is only natural that Serbia cooperates more with the countries that are of most importance: neighbouring countries and the EU Member States. Serbia is a security link and an indispensable factor for the security of its neighbouring countries, though neighbouring countries will continue play a major role in their own security.
6. At the moment, the most important thing for Serbia is the adoption of a new National Security Strategy and it is crucial to involve all stakeholders in the country in this process.

7. The significance of asymmetric security challenges for the region is increasing and the EU is the framework through which it can be answered. For example, cyber challenges influence a much wider area than national borders, and both Serbia and the countries of the region should learn from countries that are better off in this sphere
8. Since the Dayton agreement, the EU integrations of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) had the biggest advance in the Chapter 31. BiH is a significant as a recipient and contributor to CSDP. There are currently 30 soldiers of BiH in the EU Mission Central African Republic. Regarding harmonization with foreign policy declarations and measures, BiH aligned in 2014 with 52%, while in 2016, it aligned with 66% of declarations and measures. Like its neighbour Serbia, BiH has not yet joined sanctions against Russia.
9. The best solution for the Western Balkans is to become part of a wider structure. Today's fragmented Western Balkans is not sustainable, but only calls for new crises in the future. The EU enlargement is one of the biggest incentives for reducing security risks and institution building in the Western Balkans.