ST A T E M E N T

by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on her
Final Report on the CSDP

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"I was asked by the European Council in December 2012 to present proposals to further strengthen the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), ahead of a discussion by leaders in December of this year. I presented an interim report in July and I am now issuing the final report.

This debate among leaders comes at an opportune moment. The EU needs to protect its interests and promote its values, and it needs to be able to act as a security provider both in its neighbourhood and at the international level. To be credible, this requires capabilities and a strong industrial base.

This is both a challenge and an opportunity. Defence cooperation is never straightforward, but there is certainly scope for further enhancing cooperation among the Member States to develop and deploy capabilities. In addition, the defence industry can be a driver for jobs, growth and innovation.

The report sets out proposals and actions in three areas:

- Strengthening CSDP: the Union needs to be able to respond rapidly to security challenges - cyber, space, energy, maritime and border security. To act as a security provider we need to be able to engage with partners, and to build the capacity of partner organisations and third states, using all the tools of our external action. This is the idea of our comprehensive approach.
- **Enhancing European defence capabilities:** cooperation has become essential to the maintenance of capabilities and to the success of CSDP. It allows Member States to develop, acquire, operate and maintain capabilities together, making best use of potential economies of scale.

- **Reinforcing Europe’s defence industry:** a strong and healthy industrial base is a prerequisite for developing and sustaining defence capabilities and securing Europe’s strategic autonomy. The European Commission put forward a Communication “Towards a more competitive and efficient European defence and security sector” in July. The proposals in my report complement the Commission’s work.”

Click here for the [Final Report by the High Representative/Head of the EDA on the Common Security and Defence Policy](https://example.com)