



**The Chairman of the European Union Military
Committee**



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"The Role of the EU in the Global Scenario"

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- Dear Ambassador Mahmood (Khalid, Chairman Board of Governors ISSI)
- Dear Ambassador Kaminara,
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.
- As many of you know, I am Chairman of the EU Military Committee, the highest military body within the EU institutions, composed of the 28 Chiefs of Defence of the EU Member States, of which I am also the spokesperson.
- I am very pleased to be here with you today, in this prestigious institute, with almost 50 years of in-depth analyses of regional and global strategic issues, related IN PARTICULAR to international peace and security.
- A subject very dear to me, very dear to the European Union.
- In fact, in the past three days, I had the honour to meet with the highest political and military authorities in Islamabad, and discuss on these matters.

- Among others, we strongly acknowledge one point: if we want to properly tackle security issues of common concern, interaction between us cannot be just an option...
- Allow me to quote His Excellency, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, when he said:
- *“It is only with united effort and faith in our destiny that we shall be able to translate the Pakistan of our dreams into reality.”*
- Well, with all due respect, I think that the EU approach toward its goals follows a very similar principle...
- Particularly in the field of security and defence.
- Back in 1951, 6 European countries joined up for economic reasons and understood very quickly that a peaceful and globally respected Europe would also need a common defence.
- It seemed just a dream, at that time.
- It is true, the founding nations' first attempts did not give the desired result, but what I can ensure you is that not only their thinking is still valid, but that we are proving it to be real.
- Some years ago, when the new security challenges increased in quantity, but above all changed in quality, like transnational terrorism, failed states, human and arms smuggling, without replacing but adding to the previous ones, and requiring a diversified approach, the EU found itself at a crossroads:
- Keep the status quo or engage another gear?
- New diversified security threats, the annexation of Crimea by Russia, the evolution of transatlantic relations, the appearance on

the scene of new powers claiming a more important role, the return of the competition between great powers, have given new impetus and strength to the EU on defence matters.

- Consequently, European leaders did seriously reconsider the defence as a priority strategic sector, delivering the new Global Strategy, a vision for Europe's place in the world, promoting greater coherence in our Union's external action.
- The Global Strategy raised the Level Of Ambition of the EU, with the aim of promoting a stronger and more secure union, so that it could be identified as an effective actor in the global security scenario, not only in defence of its citizens but as a promoter of security and stability at a global level.
- The new Level of Ambition defined three strategic priorities for EU security and defence:
 - to respond to external conflicts and crises,
 - to protect the EU and its citizens,
 - to help building the capacities of our partners, making them able to stand on their feet after a period of crisis.
- And its role, taking into account the capacities expressed in Collective Defence by the main partner, namely NATO, has been addressed mainly at a specific activity: the Capacity Building.
- WHAT is the Capacity Building?
- It is the overall process aimed at helping the countries in crisis "to get back on their feet", supporting them from a military point of

view, but also in terms of economic development and reconstruction of the institutional apparatus.

- In this activity, the EU can be particularly effective, thanks to a unique set of tools, diplomatic, economic, political and military, acting in an autonomous space to provide training and assistance, in a truly integrated manner, as demonstrated by our engagements in military missions and operations.
- But there is another important new point introduced by the Global Strategy: the “Strategic Autonomy”, not an autonomy "from" someone or something, but rather an autonomy "to do" something, the ability to decide if-where-when to intervene, with partners where possible, but also in full autonomy, if necessary.
- And since the global strategy has never been thought as a mere theoretical exercise, but rather as a compass to guide our actions - as recently mentioned by the EU High Representative Mogherini, of whom I act as military advisor - we have recently witnessed a "snowball effect", with a series of innovative initiatives and efforts, at all the mentioned levels: diplomatic, political, economic and military.
- In terms of capability to act, for instance, for managing missions, we established the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), enabling us to react in a faster, more efficient and effective manner as a security provider outside our borders.

- In term of capacities, on the other hand, EU started working from the evaluation of needs for defence and security, defining the so called Headline Goals, the immediately needed capabilities.
- We then set up the appropriate planning and financial mechanisms to support all the Member States (and consequently the EU), with several initiatives.
- The first one to mention is definitely PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation), a framework to create a more integrated cooperation among member states, by developing and acquiring defence capabilities and making those capabilities easily available for EU military missions and operations.
- Then, the CARD (Coordinated Annual Review on Defence), a useful tool for mapping defence spending and capability planning by member States, in order to highlight areas at risk of duplication or opportunities for cooperation.
- Finally, the EDF (European Defence Fund) and the EDIDP (European Defence Industry Development Programme), which complement the previous tools, providing the means and the financial support to achieve projects and objectives, making cooperation more attractive to participating states.
- A very ambitious Global Strategy, but also a responsible answer to the increasing expectations by European citizens (70% of Europeans support a strong EU role in the world) and by the international community, all asking for a Europe that can & wants to be a trusted Security Partner.

- And I said Partner in purpose, because that's the role EU wants to be play, as a partner, stressing one point: partnerships are a "give & get" relationships, a mutual-benefit activity where the EU should never be given for granted.
 - The EU firmly believes that investing in these friendships, partnerships and like-minded relationships, bringing the relevant regional and global powers to the negotiating table, is a key and successful activity.
 - It takes a strong commitment, true, with uninterrupted diplomatic efforts, at the political and military level.
 - One point I'd like to emphasize, in this context: from my experience, perhaps because of a common language, I truly believe that military dialogue keeps on representing a very practical channel for EU external relationships.
 - As Chairman of the Military Committee, I constantly engage with my counterparts (among the EU Member States and outside the EU¹) and this trip falls exactly in this approach.
 - As we have seen, then, partnerships are a strategic necessity, in the widespread certainty that the dispersion of efforts weakens everyone in face of crises that develop on global scales and multidimensional environments, often in a hybrid manner.
 - The value we give to partnership is very high in OUR OWN REGION, starting with our neighbourhood, the Western Balkans, but ALSO FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD.
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- Like in South East Asia, a region where the EU is already deeply engaged, as testified - for instance - by the commitments with the ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), but where we are also looking for more cooperation, with single nations or organizations, for common security issues.
- In this region, we know that Pakistan is playing an important role for security and stability, particularly in promoting an intra-Afghan dialogue on peace and encouraging a secure environment.
- And in situations like this one, the EU can engage and propose itself as a facilitator, but not only:
- Other areas where we could eventually join our efforts are the threat of terrorism, *from which Pakistan has suffered a lot*, or the issue of Non Proliferation and Disarmament, or the Rule of Law.
- But there are activities where the EU and Pakistan are already interacting, starting from the good relationship with the Pakistani Embassy in Brussels.
- Of course, we look forward to a similar cooperation here in Islamabad, between the EU designated Ambassador and the Pakistani government.
- Or the annual staff talks, conducted in Islamabad in July 2018 and in Brussels in June this year.
- As I said during the meetings with national authorities here in Islamabad, as EU, we welcome and value Pakistan's continued interest in the EU common security and defence policy.

- The recently signed Strategic Engagement Plan provides a very solid basis for cooperation that needs to be fully exploited, starting from the vital issue of information exchange at different levels.
- Additionally, the Pakistani Armed Forces have been invited to send participants to courses at the European Security and Defence College, like the CSDP Orientation Course, very valuable for Defence Attaches based in Europe.
- Concerning military interactions in the field, we welcome the idea that Pakistan may contribute to operation Atalanta, in the Gulf of Aden, fighting piracy at sea, agreeing on patrol zones and conducting exercises.
- Atalanta, let me remind you, is one of the 6 military activities currently run by the EU and providing contributes to our operations and missions is indeed one of the first ways for a nation to demonstrate sharing of intents.
- EU runs 3 executive operations (Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sophia in the Mediterranean and the mentioned Atalanta in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden). Then we have 3 non-executive missions, in Mali, Central African Republic and Somalia, providing training and advice to those country's armed forces and military leadership.
- One important point I'd like to highlight about our military activities is that 5 out of 6 are around the African continent, which is where the EU is providing its main effort, as the root causes of many existing challenges lie there and where the “triangular” relationship

between the security variables - Terrorism-Migration-Instability - is more evident.

- Let me stress that, although there is not a direct connection between terrorism and migration, and recalling that immigrants as such are not criminals, we cannot mitigate the consequences of migration without supporting the countries of origin, particularly with those capacity building activities.
- Another common factor, now for all our 6 operations and missions, is the problem related to force generation: due to their complexity and the contested environment where they occur, we are constantly committed to match the operational needs with the contribution of forces, funds and other assets.
- Drawing from my personal experience on the ground as Battalion Commander in Mozambique, Multinational Brigade Commander in Afghanistan in NATO's ISAF and in particular as Force Commander for UNIFIL in Lebanon, I know very well that the credibility of a mission, during time, is also provided by a solid provision of forces.
- But not only: a multinational participation confirms the perception of a shared project, with a wider, concrete support.
- This is why, beside the commitment of Member States, we encourage and welcome partners contribution, also taking advantage of tools like the European Peace Facility, a proposal by the HR for a fund that will enable the financing of operational activities under the Common Foreign and Security Policy that have military or defense implications.

- The European Peace Facility aims at increasing effectiveness of operations, supporting partners, and carry out broader actions, as the mentioned Capacity Building, provision of training, equipment or infrastructure. The EPF will assist in building the capacities of partner countries' armed forces to preserve peace, prevent conflict and address security challenges.
- The good news is that several partners are already providing some vital assets in EU-led military operations and training missions.
- In this context, let me take this opportunity to commend all women and men in uniform serving under EU and other international organizations flag, for their commitment to peace and security, and their great achievements on the ground.
- Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to leave some time for a debate, now.
- But before opening the floor, let me conclude by reiterating that nowadays the EU is facing opportunities that cannot be missed, fulfilling expectations and making that dream come true, working side by side with the international community and all those willing to share its objectives.
- As EU, we will be able to do that by assuring ourselves all the necessary skills and capacities, intervening better, whenever and wherever necessary, speaking with a single voice.
- By doing so, we will also increase our credibility toward existing and potential partners, who are constantly looking at us to provide concrete answer to common needs.
- This is the European Union of security and defence that we are creating, based on autonomy but also on partnership, two coherent

and complementary concepts for a strategy that the HR called the European way to peace and security.

- And I say "creating", of course, because the big steps we've taken are part of a bigger journey that we need to undergo with tenacity, convergence of intent and political will.
- Again, thank you, Ambassador Mahmood and many thanks to you all.
- I stand ready for your questions, if any.