

## **European Group of Five (E5) Defence Ministers' meeting in Paris (12 March 2025) – Joint Statement**

Europe's security is at a turning point. The balance of our world is being redefined to an extent not seen for many decades. We, the Ministers of Defence of France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Poland, gathered in Paris today, assert that peace in Ukraine and the defense of Europe are the most urgent necessities of our time. We recognize that our security is not separate, but shared, and that our ultimate strength relies on our unwavering commitment to one another.

Today, we were joined by Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Defence Serhii Boiev (via videoconference), European Commissioner for Defence and Space Andrius Kubilius, Deputy Secretary General Charles Fries of the European External Action Service, and NATO Deputy Secretary General Radmila Shekerinska.

Following up on our previous meetings in Berlin on 25 November 2024 and Helenów on 13 January 2025, as well as in Brussels on 13 February 2025, we discussed support to Ukraine and the need to guarantee stronger European capabilities to ensure European security and defence, in the spirit of fair transatlantic burden-sharing.

We agreed that a strong, independent and democratic Ukraine is vital for the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area, and that it deserves a just peace and a secure future. In this regard, we welcome the progress made during the discussions between the United States of America and Ukraine held in Jeddah on 11 March, particularly regarding the idea of a 30-day ceasefire. The ball is now clearly in Russia's court.

We were also briefed by Commissioner Kubilius on progress towards a European ambition on strengthening European Defence, including recent proposals on funding by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the upcoming White Paper.

Reaffirming our Joint Statement adopted at Helenów on 13 January 2025, we further decided to :

### **1/ Step up European support for peace in Ukraine**

- Continue to support Ukraine to defend itself today and deter Russian aggression in the future ;
- Make rapid progress on defence industrial cooperation ventures with Ukraine, including design, development, production, common acquisition, and sustainment;
- Maintain leadership in the capability coalitions that remain an important forum for capacity building and modernisation of Ukraine's Armed Forces;

- Advocate for a continuous role of the United States in support of Ukraine, altogether with a significant contribution of Europe, coordinated via the Ukraine Defence Contact Group, in order to foster interoperability, promote unity of effort and avoid duplication;
- Strengthen the role of European Allies and NATO in fulfilling urgent Ukrainian requirements by coordinating increased support through the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine (NSATU), in close coordination with the EU Military Assistance Mission (EUMAM);
- Encourage Ukraine to use available funding, including the G7 loans (ERA initiative), with prioritization of military needs, as well as continue to access future European funding (especially for the Ukraine Support Instrument – USI) to be mobilised in support to Ukraine ;
- Work towards the establishment of security guarantees for a lasting peace in Ukraine.

## **2/ Consolidate our common approach to European defence within NATO and EU frameworks**

- Keep the transatlantic bond strong, while at the same time significantly increasing the European contribution to deterrence and defence;
- Remain committed to NATO as the cornerstone of collective defence and its continued military adaptation, including through increased spending on capabilities and the use of multinational procurement initiatives and tools such as the Defence Production Action Plan. US engagement is essential in that regard ;
- Work together to ensure that concrete initiatives on those issues are sufficiently reflected in the deliverables of the June 2025 Summit in the Hague and the preceding NATO Defence Ministerial meeting ;
- Strengthen Europe's defence industrial base by working towards:
  - o speeding up procurement processes by sharing best practices and adapting European legal frameworks where appropriate, for example to facilitate and accelerate joint procurement initiatives;
  - o overcoming artificial barriers in financing, e.g. by reviewing European regulations and finance mechanisms that discriminate against military purposes;
  - o streamlining of procurement methods and procedures, leveraging, as applicable, the European industrial toolbox (especially existing EU tools such as EDF, EDIRPA, and the upcoming EDIP) and having a common approach of cooperation for third countries where appropriate;
- Remain open for cooperation in the above mentioned areas with the partners outside of the EU, able to contribute to our efforts;

- Assess EU and where applicable national laws, regulations and directives that do not reflect current geopolitical requirements and hinder or slow down defense readiness at European level with a view to simplifying development and procurement processes;
- Streamline capability requirements by:
  - o harmonising capability requirements and specifications, enhancing interoperability through implementation of NATO standards;
  - o fostering coherence and complementarity between respective EU and NATO capability development processes ;
  - o shortening qualification and certification processes through related data sharing and harmonizing regulations;
- Make progress on funding for dual-use capabilities, including through adapting lending practices and the acceleration of military mobility ;
- Advocate for priority capability domains to be promoted together in appropriate cooperation frameworks at European level, based on the requirements defined by the national defence ministries, such as long-range strikes and air defence;
- Spearhead the process of a significant increase in European defence spending through a variety of financial instruments and EU regulations.

We are convinced that through these major lines of effort we will strengthen Europe, the EU and NATO and set the preconditions for maintaining peace through strength. Our nations intend to draw on the lessons from ongoing conflicts and from history, which show that Europe must step up and do more to guarantee our security. Today, we are more determined than ever to defend, shoulder to shoulder, our collective security and to ensure peace on our continent tomorrow. We are ready to take our responsibility and are calling on other European nations to join us in these efforts.