

Let's get rid of "Europe of defense" Towards a European Defense

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"*The Europe of defence*" is dead. We need to stop using the term. The expression was originally conceived to get around the obstacle of national sovereignty, and to clarify the relationship between the European Union and NATO. Yet it was nothing but a "*pipe dream*" that was directly responsible for the current stalemate with regard to European defence.

At the meeting of the European Council in December 2013, heads of state and government will need to adopt a "*roadmap*" covering a broad range of issues, from operations and capability to industry and institutions. This report sets out a series of concrete measures in this respect. We know, however, that more needs to be done. Practical measures can never be a substitute for vision and ambition. Now is the time to revive the European political project and close the gap between the Union and its citizens. Europe can no longer be little more than a glorified market. If it wants to become a genuine world power and make its mark on history, it needs its own, independent defence capability.

This end goal will take some time to achieve. For now, the senators propose the creation of a breakaway group, a so-called "*Defence Eurogroup*", open to all countries that are willing and able to push the agenda and move towards a common European defence system. This breakaway group would enable Europe to engage in military operations outside its own borders, using its own independent means, and fulfil its duty to defend its collective territory. It would comprise the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and all other nations that wish to play their part. It would bridge the ever-widening chasm between "*the Europe of defence*" and "*European defence*", between national sovereignty and the federal project, in the same vein as the euro single currency project and the Schengen border control abolition project.

Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and the Armed Forces

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