

Finding Direction with a Strategic Compass?

Reflections on the Future of EU Security and Defence



A high-level conference co-organised by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS).

09:30-13:00 CET – 19 February 2021

CONCEPT

For four years the EU moved at breakneck speed to create new tools for its security and defence, but, beyond the documents and mechanisms produced, two fundamental questions remain: what should EU security and defence look like today? What objectives should it help the Union pursue? **No one doubts today that the EU finds itself in a strategically precarious position, yet there continues to be an impression that the Union is incapable of really learning the language of power.** Building on the vision and energy of the past few years, there is a need to project a vision of a capable Union that is willing to confront geopolitical challenges and secure its global interests.

The Strategic Compass offers the EU and its member states a window of opportunity to reflect on its security and defence, even though in reality threats will not wait for the Union to get its act together. Looking ahead to 2021, there is a need for the EU to show clarity in and ambition for its security and defence. This is also **an opportunity for the EU to signal to the world and partners that the Union has the ability and willingness to adapt to and thrive in a geopolitically contested environment.**

Along with the development of the Strategic Compass come pressing questions about the nature of the EU's global ambitions. This is not just a question of what capabilities or resources the Union needs, but rather a **deeper reflection on whether the Union can forge a common strategic culture over time** and whether it has the wherewithal to deal with a post-Covid world, strengthen multilateralism and partnerships, check the rise of authoritarian regimes, manage rapid and uncertain technological shifts, and more.

To tackle these questions, the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU and the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) will convene a high-level conference. **João Gomes Cravinho**, Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Portugal, will join the event to discuss the future of EU security and defence.

PROGRAMME

09:30-09:35

Welcome address

Gustav LINDSTROM

Director, EU Institute for Security Studies

09:35-10:15

Panel I - The Strategic Compass: how does the EU move from ideas to action?

Keynote addresses and exchange of views

João Gomes CRAVINHO

Minister of National Defence, Republic of Portugal

Charles FRIES

Deputy Secretary General, CSDP and Crisis Response, European External Action Service

Moderator

Gustav LINDSTROM

Director, EU Institute for Security Studies

10:15-10:25

Break

10:25-11:30

Panel II - Setting a course: what are the national perspectives on the way ahead?

Speakers

Mateja KIRN

Head of Division, European Affairs Division, Defence Policy Directorate, Ministry of
Defence, Slovenia

Noemia PIZARRO

EU Presidency Coordinator, Ministry of National Defence, Portugal

Claire RAULIN

Ambassador, Permanent Representative of France to the Political and Security Committee,
Republic of France

Jean-Pierre VAN AUBEL

Expert on Defence Policy and Strategy, Security and Defence Policy Division, European
External Action Service

Benedikta VON SEHERR-THOB

Head of EU/CSDP Directorate and EU Representative, Federal Ministry of Defence,
Germany

Moderator

Daniel FIOTT

Security and Defence Editor, EU Institute for Security Studies

11:30-11:45

From words to deeds in EU security and defence

Keynote address

Jiri SEDIVY

Chief Executive, European Defence Agency

11:45-11:55

Break

11:55-12:55

Panel III - Getting our bearings: where is the needle pointing for EU security and defence?

Speakers

Diego DE OJEDA GARCIA-PARDO

Representative to the Political and Security Committee, European Commission

Nicole KOENIG

Deputy Director, Jacques Delors Centre, Hertie School

Elena LAZAROU

Acting Head, External Policies Unit, European Parliamentary Research Service

Claudia MAJOR

Head of the International Security Research Division, SWP Berlin

Bruno REIS

Special Advisor, Ministry of National Defence, Portugal

Lars SCHUMANN

Branch Chief, Concepts and Strategy, EU Military Staff

Moderator

Daniel FIOTT

Security and Defence Editor, EU Institute for Security Studies

12:55-13:00

Closing remarks

Gustav LINDSTROM

Director, EU Institute for Security Studies