

A European vision of collective defence

The Lisbon Treaty has provided a number of important tools to help Member States resolve these challenges. Through its innovative system of permanent structured co-operation, the Treaty allows Member States to advance in parallel and at different speeds in order to achieve specific aims, depending on their willingness and capacity. Pioneer groups of states will now be able to increase their ambition level in terms of the deployability, interoperability and sustainability of their forces, allowing them to field more capabilities for CSDP, NATO, UN and other missions.

The Lisbon Treaty should also enable Member States to overcome shortcomings relating to the CSDP's funding by calling for the deployment of an 'initial fund' to support common missions, which would then be supported by the payment of 'urgent funds' during the planning of operations.

However, whether one talks about increasing common funding for CSDP missions, encouraging Member States to volunteer more troops or fill the vacuum in EU strategic planning, the main shortcoming facing the EU in the defence field is the divergent strategic outlooks which exist among and between Member States. There is still no consensus in European capitals about the overall purpose of increasing EU defence capabilities.

The EU needs to agree on a long-term vision of EU defence, which could be laid out in a White Paper with clearly defined priorities in terms of threats, engagement criteria and earmarked resources. This vision must spell out a coherent division of responsibilities between NATO and the EU, based on an objective assessment of the comparative advantages of each. Unless EU Member States are able to agree on a workable strategic concept for the EU, the latter will be unable to fill the existing gap between the expectations of CSDP and its operational capabilities and resources.

González et al. *Project Europe 2030: challenges and opportunities*. May 2010. p. 40 – 41.