



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 11.1.2018
C(2018) 39 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence {COM(2017) 315 final}.

This Reflection Paper follows the White Paper on the Future of Europe, presented on 1 March 2017, which sets out the main challenges and opportunities for Europe, and marks the beginning of a process of reflection on the future of the European Union.

This Reflection Paper was also part of a package adopted by the Commission on 7 June, which comprised a Communication on Launching the European Defence Fund and a Commission proposal for a Regulation on a European Defence Industrial Development Programme.

The Commission welcomes the opinion of the Senát and agrees that the new geostrategic and geopolitical circumstances more than ever call for a stronger and better coordinated European defence.

Concerning EU-NATO complementarity, the Commission fully shares the Senát's assessment that close cooperation between the European Union and NATO is a foundation of Europe's collective security. In July 2016, Presidents Juncker and Tusk and NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg signed in Warsaw a Joint Declaration, which outlined seven priority areas for cooperation and was complemented by a list of 42 actions. The implementation of the Declaration was reviewed in the spring of 2017 and follow-up actions are being conducted, inter alia through the identification of further actions to be carried out jointly.

*Mr Milan ŠTĚCH
President of the Senát
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The Commission takes note of the Senát's support of the establishment of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), for which the common notification was signed on 13 November by 23 Member States.

The Commission thanks the Senát for its expressed support and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Elżbieta Bieńkowska
Member of the Commission*