



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 10.8.2017
C(2017) 5704 final*

*Mr Pietro GRASSO
President of the
Senato della Repubblica
Piazza Madama I
IT – 00186 ROME*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion on the European Defence Action Plan {COM(2016) 950 final}. The Commission welcomes the Senato della Repubblica's broad support for the aims of the initiative.

This Action Plan represents a milestone in the Commission's policy to support Europe's defence industry and to enhance European defence cooperation. It outlines measures to support the competitiveness and innovative capability of Europe's defence industry and to strengthen the Single Market in the sector within the scope of the Treaties.

This is a priority for the Commission given the increasing and complex nature of the security threats facing Member States and, tragically, often Europe's citizens directly. Through the implementation of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy of June 2016 and the Joint European Union/NATO Declaration of July 2016, Member States are looking at ways to enhance and sustain defence and security cooperation. With the adoption of the Action Plan, the Commission seeks to underpin these efforts with concrete measures.

This support was enhanced on 7 June 2017, when the Commission firstly announced details of the European Defence Fund¹ to facilitate collaborative defence research and development programmes in which the European Defence Agency will play an important role via its expertise and, secondly, launched its reflection paper on the future of European Defence.²

The Commission has taken due note of the views expressed by the Senato della Repubblica in its Opinion and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Karmenu Vella

Member of the Commission

¹ Communication from the Commission 'Launching the European Defence Fund' {COM(2017) 295 final}.

² COM(2017) 315 final of 7 June 2017.