



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2017) 6115 final*

Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the Commission's Communication on the European Defence Action Plan {COM(2016) 950 final}.

The Commission is pleased that the Assembleia da República shares the view that the initiatives at the European Union level outlined in the Communication will contribute to addressing the existing obstacles that prevent the European defence industry from being more competitive and thereby enable the European Union to face emerging challenges and threats in a more efficient manner.

As pointed out by the Assembleia da República, the Action Plan was published at a time of growing concern about the security of the Union and the ability of the European defence industry to contribute to the political objectives related to the Union's defence capacity. The actions proposed by the Commission are intended to leverage the competitiveness of the sector by promoting, using financing from the newly-established European Defence Fund, collaboration between enterprises and Member States. The actions proposed should mitigate the existing inefficiency resulting from a significant fragmentation of the market, which coupled with falling spending on defence, hamper the competitiveness of the European defence industry and render the Union more vulnerable to both internal and external threats.

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Since the publication of the Action Plan, the Commission has announced details of the European Defence Fund¹ to facilitate collaborative defence research and development programmes and has issued a reflection paper on the future of European Defence.² A call for proposals under the Preparatory Action for Defence Research Programme has also been published. These initiatives are evidence of the Commission's determination to provide its strong support for strengthening the European Union's defence industrial base and improving the defence sector's competitiveness.

The Commission looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

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.