



Brussels, 27.7.2015  
C(2015) 5003 final

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion concerning the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU's comprehensive approach to external conflicts and crises {JOIN(2013) 30 final}.*

*The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's overall support to the content of the Joint Communication and its suggestions on how the European Union should respond to external conflict and crises.*

*As a preliminary comment the Commission wishes to point out that the main political purpose of the Joint Communication is to ensure that EU actors work better together, and to enhance the coherence, effectiveness and impact of the EU's policy and action, in particular in crisis and conflict situations. In that context the Communication is not about "what to do", but more about "how to do it" and how to make best use of the EU's collective resources and instruments.*

*As regards the Camera Deputaților's comment that the European Union should strengthen its identity as a relevant actor in the field of defence, the Commission wishes to recall that the Council, in its Conclusions from May 2014, placed emphasis on early, joined-up analysis of conflict or crisis situations, the need for enhanced engagement at all stages of the conflict cycle, the ambition to better link up the EU's instruments across different policy domains (internal as well as external policies) and the need to ensure that CSDP efforts build on existing EU engagements and that their results and impact are sustained. The Council Conclusions also tasked the High Representative/Vice President and the Commission to prepare an Action Plan, outlining how key actions and processes will be taken forward, and ensuring that the basic ideas of the comprehensive approach increasingly become the guiding principles for the EU's external action. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of April this year the 2015 Comprehensive Approach Action Plan was presented in Council. It was welcomed by Member States who expressed support for the priorities set out and emphasised the importance of the*

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*implementation being a joint responsibility of the EEAS, Commission services and Member States.*

*The Comprehensive Approach has already been brought forward in terms of defining strategic orientations in specific countries and regions for example in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and in Central America.*

*The Commission would further like to recall that the European Council, in its December 2013 conclusions on CSDP, emphasised the need to improve the EU rapid response capabilities, including through more flexible and deployable EU Battlegroups as Member States so decide. Work is ongoing, in close cooperation with the Member States at all levels, including ministerial, to ensure swift implementation of this guidance (which also includes the detailed Foreign Affairs Council conclusions from November 2013).*

*Finally, regarding the crisis situation management and the creation of a fast response mechanism, the Commission would like to highlight that the effective coordination of relevant EU institutions is critical throughout the crisis cycle in order to ensure that the responses of different EU institutions to crises are both timely and adequate.*

*In this respect, i.a. the EEAS has set up the Crisis Platform, a crucial mechanism that is activated to provide the EU institutions with a clear political and/or strategic guidance for the management of a given crisis. It is convened on an ad hoc basis and brings together all the relevant stakeholders from the EEAS and the Commission. Over the past four years, the Crisis Platform was activated more than 40 times on the crises in Syria, Mali, Myanmar, Guinea-Bissau, South-Sudan, Iraq, etc. On regional and protracted crises, the EEAS gathers Special Crisis Platforms to ensure coordination and maintain a rhythm in the EU's response.*

*The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaților and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Federica Mogherini  
High Representative/Vice-President*