

European Security and Defence Policy

Contribution by Ivan Korčok,
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Dear Colleagues,

I'd like to congratulate both Mr. Dehaene and Mr. Barnier for their contribution and leadership under which two important reports were prepared and presented to us.

On defence very briefly:

- It is legitimate to tackle the issue of defence for one of our common aims within the Convention is to make the Union a more visible and influential international player.
- If the EU is to become a political Union, and Slovakia supports this objective, effective Foreign Policy is one of the prerequisites, at the same time foreign policy and diplomacy can hardly be effective unless they are backed by force. Of course it is not the only instrument but there are situations in international relations when use of force is unavoidable.
- In this context let me appreciate that the report has focused on capabilities and I completely agree with the opinions expressed by Mr. Hain and my Dutch colleague Mr. de Vries. In my views when speaking about military dimension of the EU nobody underestimates the importance of institutional arrangements however capabilities are decisive.
- In terms of capabilities we recently have seen two important decisions which are steps in the right direction.
The first was the last week agreement between NATO and the EU. This agreement is a good evidence that ESDI of NATO and ESDP of EU can be mutually supportive.
Secondly – Another example of complementarity between NATO and EU in the area of capabilities is the fact that countries which were invited to join NATO at the Prague Summit and will join EU as well are bringing very tangible capabilities EU can use in its future operations. These capabilities would not be possible if there had not been a vision of NATO membership.

Finally

- Yes to solidarity clause especially for the cases of terrorist threats.
- No to the introduction of a collective defence commitments within the EU not only because of the lack of military capabilities, but first of all because defence commitments are best served within the transatlantic framework.