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Preparatory Action on Defence Research Information Day

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Brussels

(check against delivery!)

- Good morning and welcome to this Information Day. Today, we will do our best to explain all aspects of the Preparatory Action on Defence Research (PADR) to you.
- This event is the first in a series of information days on this topic to be organized by the European Defence Agency together with the European Commission. Each future Preparatory Action on Defence Research call will also be followed by an information day. I would like to express my gratitude to the Commission, and to Philippe Brunet for contributing to this event. Your cooperation is really appreciated!
- It is a real pleasure to see so many of you here this morning. We have 400 registered participants from more than 300 companies and research organisations, representing 26 EU Member States and

Norway. And many more wanted to be here but could, unfortunately, not be accommodated due to space restrictions.

- This tremendous interest in the Preparatory Action from industry across the continent is a testimony to the role industry and research organisations can and must play in delivering present and future European defence capabilities.
- The European Defence Agency is committed to enhance our engagement with European industry at all levels in support of innovative capability development and innovation. The European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) is strong and we work closely with National Defence Industry Associations (NDIAs) as well as with the ASD to keep it that way, but it is also necessary to reach out to innovation holders beyond the traditional scope of defence industry. I am therefore pleased to see a very diverse group of companies and research organisations here today.
- Almost exactly a year ago, the Global Strategy for the Union's Foreign and Security Policy was presented providing a shared vision of the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. Now, as High Representative Mogherini said at the Prague conference on security and defence on 9 June, this is the time to get things done!

- The first steps have already been taken. The political impetus given by the Global Strategy and the following Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, the European Defence Action Plan and the EU-NATO Joint Declaration are all mutually reinforcing parts of a coherent package aimed at strengthening European defence through more cooperation.
- With this Preparatory Action - the first substantial EU funded Action for Defence Research - the Commission, supported by EDA, is making an important contribution to European defence that must:
 - provide European added value; the PA should focus on capability priorities at the European level and in areas where Member States can no longer afford to go alone.
 - benefit all Member States;
 - serve agreed capability priorities, notably through the CDP;
 - and provide incentives for more cooperation at European level, both among governments and industry.
- We should not forget that our presence here today was made possible by the Pilot Project - for which the Commission and EDA signed a first Delegation Agreement on 16 November 2015. While the Pilot Project itself was small, it was a milestone as it was the first time that the EU budget funded defence research activities. Equally important, the Pilot Project

allowed us to test ways of working together - the Member States, the Commission and the EDA.

- The main purpose of the Pilot Project and the Preparatory Action is to pave the way for a fully-fledged European Defence Research Programme in the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2020. I am inclined to say that the PP and the PA are successful endeavours so far, and some lessons can already be learned.
- Clearly, governance has to be provided by the Commission. This includes the modalities of the processes and for the participants. EDA, in turn, is well placed to provide expertise and best practice advice during the whole upstream process, but also as reflected in the articles of the Treaty of Lisbon and as Member States requested in the Long Term Review of EDA endorsed by Ministers last month.
- For both the Commission and EDA, we have to keep the Defence Specificities in mind. The modalities and the defence research topics are widely affected by them. The PP and PA related work in the Committees and Meetings have showed that already.
- We should also build on the good cooperation so far between the Commission and EDA and to make the best use possible of EDA's expertise, networks and processes, such as the CDP and OSRA, also for a future EDRP in order to not duplicate existing structures. That is for me a major conclusion that can be drawn already.

- Research and Technology is key for defence. Without necessary research and technologies, there are no defence capabilities. With the Preparatory Action, we are strengthening European cooperation in defence research and throughout the defence supply chain. This will help the European defence industrial base to remain competitive and better able to provide the necessary capabilities for our armed forces.
- As such, the Preparatory Action is a crucial testbed towards the European Defence Research Programme (EDRP) in the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework beginning in 2021.
- EDA is grateful to the Commission for the launch of the European Defence Action Plan (EDAP) and the European Defence Fund (EDF) in which the Preparatory Action is a central part of the Research Window.
- Our work in carrying forward the PA will be in line with EDA's role as central operator for EU funded defence related activities, as well as the preferred cooperation forum and management support structure at EU level for participating Member States to engage in technology and capability development activities, highlighted at EDA's Ministerial Steering Board in May.
- However, the Preparatory Action cannot and should not substitute ongoing collaboration or national

funding in research of the Member States. It has to focus on European priorities and address areas where the Member States will or should not act alone and where critical mass needs to be achieved.

- The activities under the Preparatory Action are already well under way. Three calls for proposals were issued in the first week of June, each of them covering a different topic and with different objectives.
- The first topic focuses on the added value of unmanned systems in enhancing situational awareness, while operating alongside and communicating with other manned and unmanned systems. The second topic relates to force protection and soldier systems. While, the third topic called for proposals to start the strategic technology foresight in view of the planned European Defence Research Programme.
- These topics also reflect that with Member States, the EDA is already working in an upstream role in Work Programme 2018. We are meeting to this end with research representatives of the Member States starting this month, and work on technical specificities in our CapTechs. There is also an important downstream role for the Agency in the uptake of results.

- Today's agenda focuses on the abovementioned topics and I hope that you will receive all the information you need to build excellent and innovative proposals leading to concrete European Defence capabilities.
- Let me now say a few words on the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP), which forms the key part of the Capability window of the European Defence Fund.
- The proposal of an EDIDP aims at supporting defence industrial collaboration through providing co-funding to consortia consisting of at least 3 entities from at least two Member States. It will cover the development phase of the capability development cycle, focusing on prototypes, but also upgrading can benefit from this Programme. The test phase will be conducted between 2019-2020, and a more robust Programme is planned based on the lessons learnt under the next MFF.
- In parallel to EDA's successful work so far in managing the Pilot Project and in setting up the Preparatory Action, we are preparing for the Agency's contributions in the Capability Window, both in upstream and downstream roles. EDA will also have a key role to play in the identification of the capability priorities, as well as in harmonisation of technical requirements in the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP). Moreover, projects conducted under the EDA

framework can be considered for support under the Programme.

- Through our upstream role in the EDIDP, we can ensure two important aspects that are central to get the appropriate buy-in by Member States:
 - First, a structural and transparent process to choose the priority projects that the Commission will agree to fund;
 - Second, to ensure that these projects have a clear link to the prioritisation mechanism, CDP, and through that they provide a coherent output vis-a-vis NATO processes.

Member States, EU entities, and defence industry have a shared responsibility to strengthen European autonomy and security. Mutual support, complementarity, coherence among initiatives and implementation are indispensable ingredients to not just get things done, but to get things right!

In this context, it is really worth to repeat, there must be an inclusive approach, providing opportunities for a wide range of industrial actors, including SMEs, for example through cross-border access to supply chains.

- But an inclusive approach in the R&T domain also means national or European research institutes and universities should be part of the game.
- In view of the highly strategic and political value of the Preparatory Action, we have made an effort to put in place a mechanism to support the formation of strong consortia. After the information sessions this morning, you are invited to a “Brokerage Event” where you can meet and get to know each other, and perhaps, begin to create one of the winning consortia for the Preparatory Action.
- European defence is going through a crucial period. The expectations are high, and to meet them will not be an easy task. But by making cooperation the norm, based on sufficient funding, agreed priorities and innovation, we can achieve a real step change. Your ideas and contributions to making this possible are indispensable.
- Thank you for coming to Brussels and I wish you an informative and fruitful Information Day!