**DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL’S SPEAKING NOTES**

**EDA CONFERENCE**

**KEY FOR EUROPEAN SECURITY**

**EGMONT PALACE**

**THURSDAY, 7 JUNE 2018**

**8:30-10:00**

* **Thank you to the EDA and to the Bulgarian Presidency for the opportunity to be here with you today, and let me convey Secretary General Stoltenberg’s apologies for being unable to join you.**
* **The NATO Summit next month in Brussels will represent another milestone in the Alliance’s ongoing adaptation to a fundamentally changed security environment.**
* **That journey began in 2014 with the Wales Summit decisions on the Readiness Action plan and the Defence Investment Pledge.**
* **At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, Allied leaders agreed to strengthen the Alliance’s Deterrence and Defence Posture. As a result, we have increased the readiness of our response forces. We have improved our ability to reinforce threatened Allies, in particular by enhancing the NATO Response Force with the “spear-head” force – the Very High Readiness Task Force. And the entire NATO Response Force has been increased up to some 40.000 troops.**
* **We have also improved the responsiveness of NATO in its entirety. We are adapting the NATO Command Structure. Allies have successfully established a limited but combat-ready Forward Presence in the east of NATO’s territory. The four multinational battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland are fully operational and fulfil their role. To address the challenges and the threats emanating from the South, we have established measures to enhance regional situational awareness and improve our capacity to act. In this context, a Regional Hub has been established in Joint Force Command Naples.**
* **All these measures are underpinned by two fundamental political enablers – Allies’ solidarity, and appropriate defence investment. NATO has turned the corner with regard to Defence Expenditure.**
* **Yet while progress has been achieved, more remains to be done. And important decisions will be taken to this end by Allied Defence Ministers today and tomorrow, in preparation for the Brussels Summit.**
* **The credibility and effectiveness of our Posture, including our Forward Presence, depends on the Alliance being capable of rapid and effective reinforcement, whenever and wherever needed. We need forces for reinforcement that are fully manned, equipped, trained and ready to be deployed rapidly.**
* **The NATO Readiness Initiative proposed by US Secretary of Defence Mattis is an important contribution to this effort. It is expected to be endorsed by NATO leaders next month and will considerably improve the pool of our Allies’ high readiness forces.**
* **We are adapting the NATO Command Structure to make it fully fit for purpose, at all times, for deterrence and large-scale collective defence operations at NATO’s borders as well as effective crisis intervention beyond our borders, if so decided. At the Summit, Allied leaders will endorse the adapted NATO Command Structure.**
* **Last but not least, we have to look at SACEUR’s Area of Responsibility in its entirety. In order to be able to rapidly deploy our forces where required, we need to fully enable SACEUR’s Area of Responsibility. This means that NATO must be capable of rapidly moving forces into, across and from Europe in all strategic directions, and from North America to Europe, and sustaining them in theatre.**
* **The capability to move forces will, at the end of the day, determine our speed of response. In the most demanding scenarios, initial elements of our Very High Readiness Task Force will need to be in place in a few days.**
* **Creating the necessary conditions and providing the required support is clearly a much broader challenge and task than military logistics, and goes well beyond the military domain. It requires a whole-of-government approach, with cooperation of civil and military actors across a range of fields. It also requires the engagement of the commercial sector which provides a significant part of the lift capabilities required for the deployment and sustainment of military forces. Furthermore, this whole of government approach is needed not only in a crisis, but already in peacetime, including for training, exercises and general preparedness.**
* **There is a host of challenges that need to be met and a wide range of measures that need to be undertaken in order to be able to move our forces and military equipment quickly. These are primarily in the following four domains:**
	+ **legislative measures and diplomatic clearances to enable rapid crossing of borders, on land, in the air, and at sea;**
	+ **effective command, control and communication;**
	+ **transportation capacity;**
	+ **and infrastructure.**
* **Our nations must ensure that the necessary legislation, processes and procedures to facilitate rapid movement of personnel and equipment, including diplomatic clearances, are in place and fully implemented. And in this respect, we have to bear in mind that border crossing arrangements need to support swift military mobility of the entire community of nations involved, including those who are a member of only one of our organisations and not the other.**
* **We must provide effective command and control of the military forces and ensure close coordination and cooperation with relevant civil government, security and emergency responders.**
* **We must ensure that we have access to the necessary transport capabilities to move the forces and equipment.**
* **And we need to ensure that the transport infrastructures to be used are fit for purpose.**
* **EU and NATO interests and activities converge. Military mobility is an important topic for both the EU and NATO. But it is also important for all European and North American countries alike. A crisis or conflict where Europe’s security is at stake concerns all of us. The EU’s efforts on military mobility and NATO’s work to enable SACEUR’s Area of Responsibility must therefore be mutually reinforcing.**
* **The Joint Communication and the Action Plan on Military Mobility has set the path for the EU’s endeavours. A PESCO project focussing on Military Mobility has been established and is being led by the Netherlands. And military mobility has been identified as a key priority area for the implementation of the Joint Declaration signed by President Juncker, President Tusk and Secretary General Stoltenberg.**
* **Building on this, NATO and EU staffs are working together to ensure that NATO and EU efforts are coherent and complementary, and that synergies are achieved wherever possible, to the benefit of all Allies and Member States, directly or indirectly.**
* **NATO staff are contributing to the EU’s ongoing work to develop military requirements, including with regard to infrastructure. In this context, in May 2018, Secretary General Stoltenberg transmitted NATO’s generic parameters for transport infrastructure to the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the EU High Representative.**
* **The EU Action Plan also identifies key actions in other areas such as legislation, customs, diplomatic clearances and the transport of dangerous goods. As mentioned earlier, these areas are also very relevant to our work to enable SACEUR’s Area of Responsibility. From a NATO perspective, it would be important for us to be involved in the implementation of the overall Action Plan to the fullest extent possible.**
* **Let me conclude by reiterating how grateful I am to be involved in this important debate at the EDA on behalf of NATO. My being here is another example of how much our relationship has evolved over recent years.**
* **We have important work to do together – particularly as we take these efforts on military mobility forward.**