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## **Briefing Note on CSDP PESCO 26/05/20 [GP]**

### **Introduction - Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP):**

The 2016 EU Global Strategy (EUGS) establishes a clear vision for EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and CSDP missions. It identifies five priorities for EU foreign policy: the security of the Union; state and societal resilience to the East and South of the EU; the development of an integrated approach to conflicts; cooperative regional orders; and global governance for the 21st century.

CSDP's primary function is to provide the Union with an operational capacity to undertake peacekeeping and crisis management missions outside the territory of the Member States. In addition to military tasks, there is a significant civilian and humanitarian dimension.

Within the EU, it is accepted that the area of defence and security is a national competence. Ireland continues to have an equal voice on defence issues within the EU institutions. The treaties require that the EU respects the specific and different policies of member states in the area of security and defence and that has not changed. Ireland always seeks to be constructive and realistic in EU discussions in this area and we continue to strongly support the CSDP and any initiatives that strengthen the EU's capacity to act as an international peace provider, particularly in support of the United Nations.

Important elements of the current CSDP work programme include:-

- Progressing work on the implementation of the EU Global Strategy on Foreign & Security Policy
- Progressing actions & embedding processes in relation to Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) & the Coordinated Annual Review of Defence (CARD), with a focus on coherence among the various defence and security initiatives
- The European Defence Fund (EDF) and the EU Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP)
- The effective execution of CSDP Missions and Operations
- Cooperation with Strategic Partners, in particular the UN and NATO
- Progressing work on the Action Plan on Military Mobility
- Consideration by Member States of the HRVP's European Peace Facility proposal

Ireland cooperates with other EU member states in regard to the development of defence capabilities within the treaties as part of the European Defence Agency (EDA) and

### **Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)**

PESCO is a process under which groups of Member States can come together to develop capabilities in support of CSDP Operations, to develop and make available additional capabilities and enablers for peacekeeping and crisis management operations. PESCO participants commit to meeting a range of financial, investment, operational and capability commitments. These commitments include:

- Regularly increasing defence budgets in real terms
- Collective benchmarks such as increasing defence investment expenditure to 20% of total defence spending and 2% of total defence spending allocated to research and technology. (These are for the EU as a whole rather than individual member State Benchmarks)
- Joint use of existing capabilities (pooling and sharing resources)
- Increased cooperation on cyber defence
- Develop a database of available and deployable capabilities (like what we do for the UN)
- Participate in at least one project under PESCO
- Use the EDA as the forum for joint capability development

Ireland's participation in PESCO was agreed by Government and approved by Dáil Éireann prior to the Council Decision establishing PESCO on 11 December 2017. The establishment of PESCO in December 2017 represents a further development in EU Cooperation in support of international peace and security under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

All Member States other than the UK (Brexit), Denmark (opt out of CSDP) and Malta (chose not to) joined PESCO in December 2017. Three other non-aligned EU member States - Finland, Sweden and Austria - have also joined PESCO.

As a participant in PESCO, Ireland is required to participate in one PESCO project. There are currently 47 PESCO Projects that are being developed covering areas such as training, land, maritime, air, cyber, and joint enabling.

Ireland is Participant in one PESCO project (Greek led Upgrade of Maritime Surveillance) and also has Observer status on a further nine PESCO projects. (See separate project list).

A Strategic Review of PESCO has begun which will be completed in 2020.

**Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD):**

The Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) is a process within the EU under which member States exchange data on future plans in relation to defence policy, capability development, budgets and investment. The process aims to create greater transparency through sharing information on defence plans and thus facilitating greater collaboration among member States on defence capability development, investment and procurement. The purpose of CARD is to provide the ‘pathway’ for PESCO projects i.e. identify where the capability gaps are and where MS could work together to develop a PESCO project that would meet this gap.

A trial run of the CARD process looking at data covering the period 2015 to 2020 was completed recently and lesson learned are currently being evaluated. The first full CARD commenced in 2019 and involve bilateral meetings, a review period and a final report in autumn 2020.

The EDA, together with the EUMS, act as the ‘CARD secretariat’. Ireland is fully engaged with the CARD Process, has participated in bilateral meetings and fed into workshops aimed at sharing the experiences gained and lessons identified with a view to improving the full CARD. Ireland hosted their CARD bilateral meeting in October, 2019.

**European Defence Fund (EDF):**

The EDF is a funding programme to be established within the Multi Annual Financial Framework to fund defence research and capability development. On 13 June 2018, the European Commission proposed a new regulation establishing the European Defence Fund (EDF) under the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework. The EDF aims to trigger cooperative programmes that would not happen without EU contribution and, by supporting research and development activities, to provide the necessary incentives to boost cooperation

at each stage of the industrial cycle, contributing to the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB).

The EDF regulation brings together the Research (Preparatory Action in Defence Research [PADR]) and Capability Development (European Defence Industrial Development Programme [EDIDP]) “Windows” of the Fund into a single Regulation to provide financial support during the 2021-2027 Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF). Similar to the EDIDP, the EDF aims to provide financial incentives for Member States to foster defence cooperation, from research, to the development phase of capabilities including prototypes through co-financing from the EU budget.

PESCO projects will receive additional EDIDP and EDF funding.

While the Commission had proposed a budget of €13 billion over seven years (split €4.1 billion on research and €8.9 billion on capability), the last Presidency proposal was for a budget in and around €6.5 billion but expectations are that the fund will reduce further as the MFF discussions reach a conclusion.

### **Military Mobility:**

The Action Plan on Military Mobility adopted on 28 March 2018 sets out a timeline for actions to be taken with a view to mitigating obstacles hampering military mobility in the EU.

The Action Plan recognises that full respect will be given to the sovereignty of EU Member States over their national territory and national decision making processes regarding military movements. The Action Plan covers a number of areas including; military requirements, infrastructure, dangerous goods, customs and VAT, as well as cross border movement permission. These actions are not restricted to the Defence area alone but affect many more ministries such as Departments of Transport, Foreign Affairs and Trade and Customs. Therefore, any national discussions in relation to military mobility will require a whole of Government approach. There is also a Dutch-led PESCO project on military mobility where Ireland has Observer Status and is not a participant.

### **Proposal for a European Peace Facility:**

The European Peace Facility (EPF) proposal was published, with Commission support, by High Representative Mogherini on the 13th June 2018. The proposal is for an off-budget funding mechanism drawing together and expanding the existing off-budget mechanisms devoted to security and defence. This proposed mechanism will act as an instrument of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy.

The EPF would draw together and expand existing off-budget mechanisms devoted to security and defence in three key areas. The proposal is broad-ranging, covering governance and financial ceilings, among other things. Ireland continue to participate in discussions about the proposal at working group level. The work is currently being taken forward on the EPF in as part of the agreement of the overall MFF discussions.

### **Spreadsheet PESCO Project Status 26/05/20 [GP]**

Attached

### **Briefing Note on Operation Irimi 21/05/20 [GP]**

Note for Information

#### **Proposed Defence Forces participation in new EU Operation in the Mediterranean - EUNAVFOR MED Operation Irimi**

Government approval is being sought for the deployment of up to three Permanent Defence Force personnel to a new EU operation in the Mediterranean- **EUNAVFOR MED Operation Irimi** and for the possible future deployment of up to two Permanent Defence Force personnel to the Force Headquarters at sea.

#### **Operation Sophia (2015 - March 2020)**

In May, 2015 the EU launched a CSDP military operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean – EUNAVFOR MED *Operation Sophia*. Operation Sophia was a security operation with three elements: (1) to disrupt the people smuggling and trafficking operations in the Mediterranean; (2) to contribute to information exchange and the implementation of the UN arms embargo; and (3) to support capacity building of the Libyan Coastguard and Navy.

In July 2017, Government and Dáil approval was secured for the deployment of a contingent of the Permanent Defence Force, (including a Naval Vessel) to serve as part of Operation Sophia. Further Government approval was obtained in February 2018 extending the mandate for the deployment of a Naval Vessel for a further period as well as the continued deployment of the support element to the Operational HQ. Irish naval vessels were deployed to the mission area from October to December 2017 and from April to October in 2018.

Since March 2019, naval assets have been suspended from Operation Sophia given difficulties that arose amongst EU member States in relation to the disembarkation and redistribution of migrants rescued at sea. The Italian Government insisted in July 2018 that the mission must stop transferring rescued migrants to Italian ports and called for more burden sharing amongst other EU countries.

### **Operation IRINI**

The new operation in the Mediterranean - Operation Irini - is separate and distinct from Operation Sophia and was launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, immediately following the closure of Operation Sophia.

In February, 2020, political agreement was reached at EU level to launch a new operation in the Mediterranean which will have as its main task the implementation of the UN arms embargo and will comprise of aerial; satellite and maritime assets. Its supporting tasks will be to contribute to the implementation of UN measures to prevent the illicit export of petroleum from Libya; the training of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy and to the disruption of the business model of human smuggling and trafficking networks – essentially a reordering of the tasks of the earlier Operation Sophia mission. The operation's naval assets will be deployed in a new Area Of Operation in the eastern Mediterranean.

### **United Nations Security Council Resolutions**

Operation Irini is established with the core task of contributing to preventing arms trafficking within its agreed Area of Operation and Area of Interest in accordance with UNSCR 1970 (2011) and subsequent Resolutions on the arms embargo on Libya, including UNSCR 2292 (2016) and UNSCR 2473(2019).

### **Disembarkation Issue**

Agreement on an 'ad-hoc' voluntary disembarkation arrangement was reached on 26<sup>th</sup> March at COREPER. The solution to issues surrounding disembarkation covers both disembarkation and the subsequent redistribution of rescued migrants.

1. On disembarkation one or more of those Member States contributing assets to the mission and who are close to the Area of Operation (this excludes Ireland) can volunteer/offer a port for disembarkation.
2. Subsequent re-distribution will be agreed by Member States, both those contributing to the mission and any other Member State that may wish to participate in the agreement on a voluntary basis.

(As it stands, Greece have offered to be the port of disembarkation for any Saving of Lives at Sea (SOLAS) events under Operation Irini under these voluntary arrangements.)

### **Proposed Irish Defence Forces Contribution - Personnel**

The Defence Forces currently have two personnel, (three positions allocated to Ireland), deployed to the Operational Headquarters (OHQ) of Operation Sophia in Rome. The deployed personnel are currently engaged in administrative activities to close out Operation Sophia.

We would propose to maintain our existing contributions of up to 3 personnel to the OHQ in Rome under the new operation.

The Defence Forces had previously provided two personnel to the Force Headquarters located at sea on an Italian Naval Vessel. Subject to the availability of the requisite personnel, it is proposed that Ireland may also fill up to 2 appointments in the Force Headquarters of the new mission.

Deployment of Naval Service vessels

Given the current significant demands on the Naval Service, it is not proposed to deploy a Naval Vessel to the operation at this time. The deployment of additional supports to the mission in the future, including Defence Forces assets, will be considered in the context of available Defence Forces resources and the evolution of the mission. The deployment of naval or air assets to the operation would require the approval of Dáil Éireann in accordance with the “Triple Lock” provisions of the Defence Acts.