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Press release | 19.03.2025

Greens/EFA: White Paper is not concrete enough

Today, the European Commission presented its White Paper on the future of European defence. For the Greens/EFA Group, many of the proposals outlined in the White Paper are not far-reaching and European enough. Further, the proposal lacks a clearer structure for pooling of Member States' defence budgets in order to procure more defence equipment jointly - a key priority for the Greens/EFA Group.

Reinier van Lanschot, Volt MEP in the Greens/EFA Group and shadow rapporteur on the European Parliament's resolution on the White Paper, comments:

"This White Paper shows that Europe has finally woken up, three years after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It is good that steps are being taken to make Europe safer and stronger. Unfortunately, these proposals are still insufficient for Europe to take responsibility for its own security.

What we truly need is a European capacity to operate autonomously - either as part of a Europeanised NATO or, if necessary, alone. The White Paper is also too vague about the concrete actions required to achieve its ambitions.

Still, I am cautiously optimistic. Five years ago, hardly anyone spoke about European defense; it was a non-topic. Now, we are on the same page—everyone feels the urgency to create a more secure Europe. Hopefully, the level of urgency in the Council matches that in society, and the Council will make implementing these plans a top priority."

Background:

Last week, the European Parliament adopted its opinion on the White Paper and the future of European defence. The Greens/EFA Group outlined their own vision on security and defence. For the Greens/EFA Group, a key priority is fostering closer and more effective cooperation between EU Member States. EU countries should pool parts of their defence budgets and procure jointly to deliver additional military support to Ukraine quickly and expand Europe's conventional capabilities.

Further, defence and security spending must go beyond just arms and ammunition and include cybersecurity, energy independence and investments in European infrastructure, which needs to be improved for military transports. Defending our citizens can go hand in hand with safeguarding our green and just future, if we dare to spend more, together, through joint financing and really develop a fully

autonomous European defense union.

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