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Strengthen Europe as a civil power

NATO summit

Reinhard Bütikofer MEP, security spokesman for the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments on the NATO summit today and tomorrow (Wednesday and Thursday, 11 and 12 July):

"NATO cannot be about satisfying Donald Trump. We can only rely on the American President to a very limited extent. The European Union must make its own contribution to security and stability.

"Security policy responsibility cannot become a self-service shop for the arms industry. Europe's security policy strategy must bundle arms projects and abandon duplication and tripling. With their reluctant orientation towards the two percent target governments are betting on the wrong horse. Instead of a purely quantitative spending target, it must be about efficiency in spending through cooperation.

"Europe's security will only increase if quality, full interoperability and deep and long-term security policy cooperation are ensured. It would be brave to bundle large parts of national defence budgets within the EU for cooperation. This would be an expression of a strong political will.

"However, security is much more than investing in the military and must be pursued in a comprehensive manner. We must strengthen Europe's civil power. Unfortunately, the European Commission is moving in a different direction, proposing to cut expenditure for civil conflict prevention by more than half in the EU budget from 2021. Instead of promoting rising arms exports, investments should be made in development cooperation and in combating the causes of migration, and in the fight against the security risks of climate change."

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