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## Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the annual NATO – Industry forum

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Remarks/speeches

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*Check against delivery!*

Friends, Jens (Stoltenberg), Elzbieta (Bienkowska),

First of all, let me say that I really appreciate this opportunity to be here together, to address all of you at this important forum at what is, I would say, a turning point for our common European defence, but also, especially today, for global politics.

Let me say that, at least myself but I guess all of us, had maybe to review a little bit the text of our speeches this morning, checking which parts were still up-to-date and valid, which parts had to be underlined even more and I am glad to say no part of my speech had to be deleted which is I think a good sign. But let me say very clearly that I think that being here together today is more important than ever and I really appreciate, Jens, the possibility of doing so not only for the work we do together but also for the symbol. And sometimes symbols and images and messages are important in today's world. And being here today, working together, EU and NATO on our common industrial basis but also on our common defence across the Atlantic is something that today is more important than ever.

And then it is very important for me to share this opportunity to address you together with Jens and Elzbieta because each of us can provide you with a different perspective on our common work to make the Europe of defence stronger with the assumption that making the Europe of defence stronger is also a way of making NATO stronger.

Elzbieta has just spoken about the European Defence Action Plan, so I will not go back to that in details, that will focus on our industrial base, on innovation, on new technologies. But there is much more on which we are working. The Action Plan goes together with the implementation of our Global Strategy, and also with the follow-up to the EU-NATO Joint Declaration we signed in Warsaw last summer. And these three processes go hand in hand and reinforce and complement each other. And this is why we have been working so much in the last three, four months together with Jens, together with all our teams to make sure that things really are coordinated and proceed in parallel.

Jens always says that a stronger European Union makes NATO stronger. And I obviously share this message very much. And of course, I would like also to share this, on the other side, saying that a stronger NATO makes Europe safer. Obviously, it goes without saying, at least on this side of the Atlantic for sure, that a stronger NATO makes also the US, Canada, all

of us, safer.

We both follow our own path, the European Union and NATO are two different organisations, different in nature, different in mandate, but we run side by side and it is very important that we keep this parallel track very carefully in mind, as we are doing. Last June, Jens was the first person to receive our Global Strategy: I will remember that very well forever, because I gave him a copy just a few minutes after I had presented it to the Heads of States and Governments of the European Union in the European Council. Since then, we have met and consulted constantly, and our teams did, to make both the European Union and the Alliance stronger, with no duplications and in the closest possible cooperation.

Now, the Global Strategy has spelled out a vision for a stronger European Union. And today, we are already turning this vision into action. I will present very ambitious and pragmatic Implementation Plan on Security and Defence to the European Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence – one is here with us today, and we are moving fast, for once, indeed it can happen, – not only on defence. The implementation of the Strategy is making fast progress also in other fields, connected with the work we are doing on security and defence, for instance on building resilience for societies and countries that are around us, or on connecting our internal and external policies, starting from those on counterterrorism or those on migration.

Security today requires much more than the traditional military tools. This is very clear to NATO, this is very clear to the European Union. But we also know very well that development policies – or other instruments that the European Union has in its toolbox – often require to be supported by security and defence tools, and that our civilian and military operations often go hand in hand. So that there is no contradiction between the soft power and the hard power we dispose of. And defence matters: also to a soft power or a traditionally perceived soft power as the European Union and I see a growing awareness about this among our citizens and among our governments.

It will be up to our Member States now to define together what will be our “level of ambition”: this means we will define together the concrete challenges we believe it is essential we face together, as European Union, and the instruments that are needed to do so. There is already, as I see, a great degree of unity on our goals and objectives.

And let me also be clear on what we already agreed on – and I had the opportunity to share this with Defence Ministers of NATO just a few weeks ago. We do not want to create another organisation for collective defence – let me be very clear on this. This is simply because we do not need it. NATO remains the cornerstone of European defence, just like it has been for almost seventy years. But there are many challenges that do not, and probably will not in the near future, fall under NATO’s mandate which is a very specific one, and need to be tackled as a matter of urgency.

First, we need to protect our Union through our external action, because tackling terrorism or organised crime outside our borders is absolutely vital to our domestic security in Europe. Second, we need to respond to crises in our neighbourhood, because they affect directly the security of our citizens. And third, we need to strengthen the capacities of our neighbours and partners, because security in our age can only be a collective effort and the security of my neighbour or those countries that are maybe not immediate neighbours in geographical terms but are connected with us through corridors, is also our own security. So through partnerships we can improve our security internally as well.

I believe in this new phase of our global politics, Europe will be more and more an “indispensable power”. We see it today, I think, very clearly. There will be a growing request for a principled global security provider. For a super-power that believes in multilateralism

and cooperation and partnership. For a reliable partner for peace, for growth and for democracy. There will be a rising call for a stronger European Union in the world. We are seeing this even in those hours.

None of our Member States, as Elzbieta was very well saying, can answer this call alone. Nor the big Member States neither the small Member States. And let me share with you something I repeat very often: I believe EU Member States are of two kinds: the small ones and those which are not yet realised that they are small. We are living in a world that has a different size today.

On the military side, in particular, we cannot rely totally on our American friends to fill the gaps. This would not be realistic, it would not be fair, and it would not be beneficial to our relationship with the United States. This is true today as it was yesterday; this is a part of my speech I have not changed. I have always been convinced that a healthy relationship with the United States needs a strong Europe of defence. And maybe we are living for the first time in a historic time when this is clear on both side of the Atlantic. And this opens up opportunities for us.

Because it should be clear to everyone – and it is starting to be clear to everyone – that we can only succeed if we work together as a true Union. This is not something we should believe as an act of faith: our recent experience is what shows concretely that we are stronger together.

I will give you an example: Operation Sophia - on which cooperation with NATO has started, is starting, in, I think, a very useful manner. No Member State of the European Union alone could have set up such a naval mission – saving lives, arresting criminals, enforcing an arms embargo under UN mandate and training the Libyan coastguard and navy, all at the same time in a difficult security environment. And we have set up Operation Sophia in no more than two months, being endorsed by two unanimously adopted UN Security Council Resolutions.

We need to make this kind of effective, practical, useful cooperation the norm and not the exception in the European Union and also, obviously, in cooperation with NATO. To reach this goal, our proposals in the Security and Defence Implementation Plan include also a better use of our rapid response forces, for instance with the flexible deployment of the Battlegroups. I mention sometime the fact that this could be an instrument to breach UN peacekeeping operations that, as we know, take a bit more time to be built up.

But we are also discussing how to better integrate our civilian and military operations – from the planning stage to the actual deployment – and to improve coordination among our personnel here in Brussels and on the ground. Here again, let me be very clear, we are not thinking of establishing a big shape style headquarter but I can give you a news, the European Union has already five headquarters to run our seventeen missions and operations around the world. So, it is a matter of streamlining, making more effective use of the resources we already have.

But this is not simply about a more coordinated use of our assets. We also need to invest more and better on our industry and on research. Elzbieta mentioned this but this is a world of continent-sized powers, with continent-sized budgets and research programmes. And we simply cannot afford a lack of coordination among our Member States – I think the industry understands this much better than anyone else – so we need your help. We have an immense potential in terms of economies of scale, joint research programmes, and a more predictable time-frame for investments.

So we are exploring a large set of instruments, to make resources available. For instance, a “Coordinated Annual Review on Defence” – what someone could refer to as the “Defence

Semester", could facilitate joint programmes among Member States, and a more cooperative way of developing our capabilities. What strikes me always is not so much the spending gap across the Atlantic but the output gap across the Atlantic. We have to work on that, and we have the instruments to do so, especially working together with Elzbieta on the instruments that the Commission can use to incentivise our output.

We could also envisage some kind of financial solidarity for common defence projects, as well as a broader range of collective funding options.

We know that it might take a long time to develop a new technology, or to upgrade a military infrastructure. But that is only another reason for starting immediately without wasting more time. There are many concrete steps we can take right now under the current provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, without opening a huge, theoretical, philosophical, treaty debate. There are instruments that were foreseen in the Lisbon Treaty we never used. My personal impression is that the economic and financial crisis distracted us a bit from what we could have used or done in the field of security and defence after Lisbon but I think that now we have a window of opportunity politically to use the instruments we have.

So concrete steps, pragmatic but concrete does not mean not ambitious, on the contrary. The steps I am taking about can represent a real turning point in the field of defence and security in Europe. They can be the real building blocks of a Europe of defence, finally, after six decades of setbacks and postponements. I do not need to go back to the history of the European Union's work on Defence and Security; you know that better than me. Maybe today we have the potential to use our potential again. Because our citizens need security. If you look at the polls across Europe, issue number one is security, issue number two is economy today, all across Europe. And we know well that security comes for our citizens only if we work together, within the European Union, as a true Union, investing in our Union also as a security Union, and together with NATO in full partnership and in strong friendship. It is what our citizens need, it is what our industry needs – but this is more up to you to tell us, my sense is that it is the case – and it is also, we believe, what NATO to be a force for good, together, strongly together, for our region and for the world.

I thank you very much.

Link to the video:

<https://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=1128739>

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