



EURODEFENSE

Towards a European Strategic Research and Armament Agency to enhance the creation of a Single European Defence Equipment Market

The present Eurodefense contribution is intended to insist on the importance of setting up a European Strategic Research and Armaments Agency as well as on the necessity to build a sound European Defence Equipment Market.

1. A European Strategic Research and Armament Agency

The European Security and Defence Policy stands today at a crossroads. Even if a number of positive initiatives have been initiated in the past years in the field of armament policy, these efforts should be drastically reinforced and it is urgent to develop a new political framework where Member States could contribute to the needed new technologies by pooling together their efforts in shared programmes. One way to achieve this is by setting up a **European Strategic Research and Armament Agency (ESRAA)**.

As of today, a number of converging voices are being expressed in favour of such an Agency in particular in the Convention. At this point of time, the construction of Europe is thus of crucial importance to build up on this broad consensus to set up an Agency whose main objectives should be to strengthen the European Defence Industrial and Technological Base (DTIB), to increase European military capabilities through research, development, improvement and acquisition, as it is considered as a prerequisite for a reliable European Security and Defence Policy.

Consensus on the need of such an Agency prevails to follow open and flexible principles to base this Agency on a framework able to involve relevant European Institutions and the Member States. The existing European Structure on this field should be used as background.

Eurodefense is urgently recommending to set up this Agency addressing the definition of a European strategic concept, the harmonisation of operational needs, defence and security research, development and acquisition. Such an Agency will enhance the creation of a European Defence Equipment Market.

2. A single European Defence Equipment Market (EDEM):

A single European Defence Equipment Market where defence procurement takes place at a European level rather than in fragmented national markets will have its benefits.

The advantage of “a single” European Defence Market is significantly important for access to:

- A larger home market
- Technologically advanced and cost effective systems in their entire life cycle
- Achieve cost effective and efficient Security of Supply

This will enable the national governments to purchase the best and most cost-effective equipment for their armed forces.

These means in-play a harmonised view among the Nations on the use of Article 296 to foster the consolidation of the European Defence Industry.

European integration provides us with a great opportunity to move forward on these issues. Let's not miss this opportunity.

That is why Eurodefense, an association grouping well known European personalities has followed very attentively the work of the Convention and would like to suggest some points to be integrated in the Future Constitutional Treaty.

The Praesidium of the Convention would propose at the plenary session of the 30 and 31 May 2003 its views on the Union's external action and on Common Security and Defence Policy, including the creation of a European Armaments and Strategic Research Agency.

On this later subject (Article 19, Part II, Title B of the Constitutional Treaty), **Eurodefense would like to address several points and to propose some amendments :**

- The Agency should be in charge to cover the questions linked to the defence capabilities and on the other hand the armament related matters, including strategic research activities.
- The Agency shall be open to all Member States, all the States funding the expenses related to the day to day activities and the programmes of common interest.
- The Agency should also welcome group of Member States wishing to launch on a voluntary basis new cooperative programmes.

In order to take into account these comments, **the wording of the Article 19 should become :**

“1. The European Armaments and Strategic Research Agency shall have as its task to :

- **contribute to define a European strategic concept;**
- contribute to identifying the Member States’ military capability objectives and evaluating observance of the capability commitments given by the Member States;
- promote harmonisation of operational needs and adoption of effective, compatible procurement methods;
- propose multilateral projects **(including programmes of common interest)** to fulfil the objectives in terms of military capabilities, ensure **an efficient** coordination of the programmes implemented by the Member States and management of specific cooperation programmes;
- support **security and** defence technology research, and coordinate and plan joint research activities and the study of technical solutions meeting future operational needs;
- contribute to identifying and, if necessary, implementing any useful measure for strengthening the industrial and technological base of the defense sector and for improving the effectiveness of military expenditure;
- **contribute to the implementation of a European Defence Equipment Market;**

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