

Franco-German Defence and Security Council

Toulouse, 16 October 2019 — Agreed Conclusions

Symbolised by the signing of the Aachen Treaty, the strengthening of the Franco-German partnership is set to be an ambitious process that will materialise through concrete and significant achievements. Furthermore, it will contribute to the enhancement of European defence, thereby contributing to the strengthening of NATO which remains the cornerstone of European collective defence and security. The agreements below are testimony to the strong will in both France and Germany to find a common approach to their most pressing security and defence challenges.

France and Germany welcome the progress in operational and industrial cooperation since the Franco-German Security and Defence Council of 13 July 2017, which was confirmed by the Ministers Meeting of 19 June 2018 in Meseberg.

France and Germany reaffirm the strategic role played by the Franco-German Defence and Security Council in the steering of their reciprocal commitments. They underline their ambition to establish the Council as the strategic steering body on the highest political level to counter shared challenges in the international security and defence sector as laid out in the Treaty of Aachen. To this end, the Council will meet on a regular basis.

I. Strengthening the security and defence of Europe

- **Ukraine/Russia**

France and Germany remain fully committed to the resolution of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine in order to restore full sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine, within the Minsk process and through negotiations conducted within the Normandy format (France, Germany, Ukraine, Russian Federation). They greet the achievements obtained during the session of the Trilateral contact group in Minsk on October 1st concerning the ‘Steinmeier formula’ and the disengagement in Zolote and Petrivske, in addition to Stanytsia Luhanska. This progress paves the way for a summit of the heads of State and Government in Paris within the coming weeks where further steps to implement the Minsk agreements shall be defined.

France and Germany discussed the issue of their respective relationship with Russia as well as their willingness to intensify their efforts, both in the EU (on the basis of the five guiding principles for EU-Russia relations agreed in 2016, the so-called “Mogherini principles”) and in NATO (in line with the NATO Warsaw and Brussels Summits), to strengthen dialogue with Russia. Their dialogue with Russia will be clear-sighted, stringent, and long-term, conducted in close coordination with the EU and NATO partners, upholding the common principles and interests of France and Germany as well as those of their partners and allies.

- **European defence and security progress**

During their respective EU Council Presidencies (2020, then 2022), France and Germany are determined to promote an ambitious agenda fostering Europe's ability to act in the field of defence and thus also strengthening NATO's European pillar.

With a view to a sovereign and strong European Union, France and Germany provide full support to the European institutions in their efforts to develop Europe's ability to act autonomously and invite them to pursue the ongoing work aimed at strengthening, on the basis of the existing texts, the coherence of the EU action in the field of security and defence, in full complementarity to NATO. France and Germany call for the approval of an ambitious envelope for defence within the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027, in particular for the European Defence Fund and military mobility.

On capability issues, France and Germany commit to fully harness the opportunities presented by the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund (EDF) in order to make the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) more integrated, self-sufficient, innovative and competitive, and to fill the critical capability gaps of EU Member States. In this regard, they commit to present together structuring capability developing projects within these frameworks. France and Germany underline their mutual support within PESCO, in particular the projects both countries are involved in.

Operationally, France and Germany will strive to further increase the efficiency of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in joint missions and the development of dedicated military and civilian expertise. In addition, France and Germany will harness the European Intervention Initiative (EI2) as a complementary tool so as to develop a common strategic culture together with other partners.

- **Space**

France and Germany commit to strengthen their cooperation in the space domain, especially in the field of threat assessment. They will also discuss the next steps to be taken concretely to promote standards of responsible behaviour in space.

France and Germany agree on the importance of the GALILEO programme to strengthen Europe's autonomy in the area of global navigational satellite systems, including its military applications, and agree that improving reliability, ensuring a high level of security while offering the required interoperability and maximum usability are key tasks.

France and Germany intend to coordinate capability development in the area of space security, in the intent to form a core for a coordinated capability towards European space security.

II. Intensifying operational cooperation

- **Cooperation in Africa – Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel**

France and Germany are fully committed to securing, stabilising and developing the Sahel region. In this regard, they support the European Union's efforts in favour of the G5 Sahel

and the operationalisation of its Joint Force. France and Germany will search close coordination with the European Union in the launch and implementation of the Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel (P3S), which was announced by the President of the Republic and the Federal Chancellor at the G7 summit of the heads of state and government in Biarritz.

- **Cooperation in the Arabo-Persian Gulf**

France and Germany voice their deep concern about the numerous incidents observed in recent months in the Arabo-Persian Gulf, and condemn in the strongest terms the attacks on oil facilities on Saudi territory on 14 September 2019 as expressed in the E3 Leaders statement published on 23 September 2019. Firmly committed to the respect for international law and freedom of navigation, they pursue diplomatic and operational efforts to achieve de-escalation of tensions. They politically support and continue their exchange on potential parameters of a European-led maritime surveillance mission in the Arabo-Persian Gulf.

- **NATO**

Commemorating NATO's 70th anniversary this year, France and Germany reaffirm the enduring transatlantic bond between Europe and North America and the bedrock commitment enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. France and Germany underline the importance of Alliance unity and are jointly working towards a successful NATO Leaders' Meeting in December.

France and Germany highlight their firm commitment to the NATO enhanced Forward Presence. In 2020, Germany will continue serving as framework nation, with France committing troops to the German-led NATO battle group in Lithuania under the Alliance's enhanced Forward Presence. Demonstrating our solidarity with our Allies, this common deployment will also enhance the interoperability between our Armed Forces.

III. Deepening defence industrial cooperation

France and Germany reaffirm their willingness to cooperate in the defence industrial domain to jointly develop leading-edge technologies and defence systems to meet future national as well as European defence needs.

- **Future Combat Air System /Next Generation Weapon System**

In the air domain, France and Germany will develop a Next Generation Weapon System within a Future Combat Air System (NGWS/FCAS). Research and technology activities will be contracted by the end of January 2020 with the aim of developing a new generation fighter demonstrator flying by 2026. France and Germany welcome the initial participation of Spain.

A new phase of the Joint Concept Study is going to be launched following Germany's commitment as expressed at the Paris Air Show in June 2019. The project will be open to other European Nations.

- **New Generation Land Systems/Main Ground Combat System**

France and Germany reaffirm their commitment to commonly develop a Main Ground Combat System (MGCS) to be available by 2035. Germany and France therefore welcome the signature of a Letter of Intent by the main German and French industrial partners regarding their cooperation for the first study phase of the project.

The technology demonstrator phase will be launched with a system architecture study for MGCS in early 2020. In addition, France and Germany will examine steps for a further consolidation and evolution of their land systems industries.

The project will be open to other European Nations.

- **Maritime Patrol System**

France and Germany also reaffirm the objective to award, in early 2020, a contract for a feasibility study for the Maritime Patrol Aircraft project (MAWS).

- **Arms exports**

Pursuant to Article 4 of the Aachen Treaty of 22 January 2019, France and Germany have committed to develop a common position on exports of common arms projects.

France and Germany have concluded their negotiations on a legally binding agreement for which the final steps will be implemented as soon as possible.