



Senato della Repubblica



Camera dei Deputati

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing in relation to the follow-up of Paragraph 17 of the Conclusions of the Interparliamentary Conference on CFSP - CSDP held on 3-4 April 2014 in Athens, and also in preparation of the Rome IPC, scheduled on 6-7 November 2104.

Let us first recall the content of Paragraph 17 with specific regard to the engagement "to ensure that in all our Member States the requirement of the deployment of EU Battlegroups within 5 to 10 days can be met" and the commitment "to a further exchange of views on this matter in order to explore the possible solutions to increase the effectiveness and readiness of EU Battlegroups".

Finally, the Athens IPC welcomed "the initiative to discuss the topic of EU Battlegroups at the next IPC CFSP/CSDP in Rome", taking into account also the need - emphasised on that occasion by the High Representative Catherine Ashton - to explore the possibility to rename EU Battlegroups, in order to express in more positive terms the comprehensive concept behind this instrument.

In view of those aims and of our ambition to implement our common will enshrined in the Athens Conclusions, and also as broadly agreed in Athens during Working Group 3 on "Deploying military forces under CSDP, parliamentary decision-making procedures and practices", we propose to launch - from now on and until the Rome IPC - an open and informal exchange of views among interested EU parliamentary counterparts in order to define shared opinions on and proposals for a reform of EU Battlegroups.

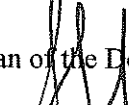
As a starting point for this informal dialogue we propose to adopt the very important contribution formulated in Athens by the Head of the Dutch Delegation, Ms. Angélien Eijnsink, Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the States-General of the Netherlands.

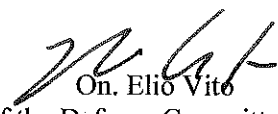
The first step of this informal process could therefore be the collection of general material and documents on EU Battlegroups, coming from your Parliament and based on relevant parliamentary activities, such as fact-finding inquiries, motions, parliamentary questions, best practices, case studies, White Papers etc., to be sent to the Italian EU Secretariat by the end of July 2014 (email address UE2014@parlamento.it).

Depending on the results of this first phase, we could then explore the possibility to draw up a first version of an "EU Battlegroup Concept", to be discussed and finalized in time for the Rome IPC with the specific objective to establish a sound basis for a Working Group on the review of EU Battlegroups as a cornerstone of European Defense.

We hope that this work programme can meet with a broad consensus and mark the beginning of a positive dialogue and co-operation.

Looking forward to hearing from you very soon


Sen. Nicola Latorre
Chairman of the Defense Committee of the Italian
Senate


On. Elio Vito
Chairman of the Defense Committee of the Italian
Chamber of Deputies

25 GIU. 2014

Ref. n. 1527/AAU/UE/17