

EU defence cooperation: Council establishes a Military Planning

On 8 June, the Council adopted the decision **establishing of the military planning and conduct capability** (MPCC) within the EU military staff (EUMS). The terms of reference of the EUMS, which is part of the EEAS, have also been amended and approved.

“The establishment of the MPCC is a very important operational decision to strengthen European defence. It will contribute to make the non-executive European missions more effective and to improve the training of soldiers of partner countries, to guarantee peace and security. This is important not just for our partners, but also for the European Union’s security”, said the High Representative Federica Mogherini.

The MPCC will assume command of EU non-executive military missions, currently: EU Training Mission (EUTM) Somalia, EUTM République Centrale Africaine (RCA) and EUTM Mali. The MPCC will be the **static, out-of-area command and control structure at the military strategic level**, responsible for the operational planning and conduct of non-executive missions, including the building up, launching, sustaining and recovery of European Union forces. This will allow the mission staff in the field to concentrate on the specific activities of their mission, with **better support provided from Brussels**.

The MPCC improves the **crisis management structures of the EU**. It will work under the political control and strategic guidance of the Political and Security Committee (PSC), which is composed of EU member states’ ambassadors and is based in Brussels.

The MPCC will be composed initially of up to 25 staff but will also benefit from the support of other departments of the EUMS. The Director General of the EU Military Staff will also be the director of the MPCC. He will exercise command and control over the current three training missions and other possible future non-executive military missions. He will also exercise the responsibilities related to deployment and recovery of the missions as well as overall budgeting, auditing and reporting.

The MPCC will work closely with its existing civilian counterpart, the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) through a joint support coordination cell. This cell will be able to share expertise, knowledge and best practices on issues relevant to both military and civilian missions, as well as capabilities when civilian and military missions are simultaneously deployed in the same area, including medical support or protective measures.

The decision will be published in the Official Journal of 9 June.

Process

On 6 March 2017, the Council adopted conclusions on progress in implementing the EU Global Strategy in the area of security and defence, endorsing a concept note for the operational planning and conduct of CSDP missions and operation. In its conclusions of 18 May 2017, the Council decided to establish the MPCC, pending a formal legal decision. Today this formal legal decision has been adopted by the Council.

On 14 November 2016, the Council adopted conclusions on **implementing the EU global strategy in the area of security and defence**. These conclusions set out the level of ambition in the form of the main goals the EU and its member states will aim to achieve in the area of security and defence, with three strategic priorities: responding to external conflicts and crises, building the capacities of partners, and protecting the European Union and its citizens. On 15 December 2016, the European Council reaffirmed the need to **improve EU's capacity to react** in a faster, more effective and more seamless manner, as part of an **EU comprehensive approach**.

About the three EU Training Missions

EUTM Somalia was launched in 2010 and ever since it has contributed to strengthening the Transitional Federal Government and the institutions of Somalia.

EUTM Mali was launched in 2013 to support the rebuilding of the Malian armed forces and to meet their operational needs.

EUTM RCA was launched in 2016 and it supports the Central African Republic government in the implementation of security sector reform in the country.