EN
E-000756/2025
Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.4.2025)

The EU remains a project for peace. At a time when the EU is facing war in Ukraine, to prepare for current and future threats and challenges, the EU needs to assume greater responsibility for its own defence, enhance its defence readiness and safeguard its sovereignty.

To do so, the EU and its Member States agree that defence spending will be regularly increased in real terms to match the collective ambition in defence. Today, the twenty-three Member States that are also North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Allies, all together are spending 2% of gross domestic product on defence.

On 4 March 2025, the President of the Commission announced the ReArm Europe plan[1], which can generate up to EUR 800 billion in additional defence expenditure. The EU can support Member States in fulfilling their national and international commitments (including NATO's). There is no competition: a stronger EU defence will make NATO stronger. Spending more, together and European on defence will allow a more effective, resilient and balanced approach to European security policy. It will enable those Member States in the Alliance, to act more effectively within NATO or autonomously, including within the EU.

The ReArm Europe plan aims primarily at giving Member States more fiscal space for defence spending, through the activation of the National Escape Clause under the Stability and Growth Pact, providing EUR 150 billion in loans to Member States for defence investments (through a new instrument Security Action for Europe – SAFE), and mobilising private capital.

By investing in the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base, Member States can boost job creation, research, and technological innovation within Europe, thereby fostering competitiveness and economic growth. Efficient use of resources by enhancing cooperation and channelling the resources into commonly identified capability gaps can also help free up funds for other strategic priorities.

1 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/api/files/document/print/sv/statement_25_673/STATEMENT_25_673_EN.pdf