

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002890/26
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Nikolas Farantouris (S&D)
(13 July 2026)

Subject: Preparation of a blueprint for the implementation of the mutual assistance clause

One of the topics discussed at the informal meeting of the European Council which took place in Cyprus on 23-24 April 2026 was the functioning of the mutual assistance clause provided for in Article 42(7) TEU and specifically how the clause could be applied in practice. During the meeting, the EU High Representative updated Member State leaders on the ongoing work being done on this matter ⁽¹⁾. The EU leaders asked the Commission to prepare a blueprint on how the hitherto unclear mutual assistance clause would be applied in practice ⁽²⁾.

Bearing in mind that the mutual assistance clause must be implemented in a timely and credible manner, particularly in crisis situations which may not yet constitute armed aggression but present a direct and serious risk of escalation, can the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy answer the following:

1. What are the main operational features of the plan that is being prepared and when will the plan be ready?
2. Will the plan provide for predefined mechanisms for rapid military, operational and administrative assistance to Member States facing immediate security threats?
3. Does the Commission intend to ensure that the plan currently being prepared will contain special operational provisions for Member States, such as Greece and Cyprus, which face persistent revisionist threats or the risk of regional destabilisation?

Submitted: 13.7.2026

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(22 October 2026)

Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union (the so-called mutual assistance clause) remains highly pertinent given the deteriorating security situation in and around Europe.

The EU's mutual assistance clause has been subject of several discussions in the Council in the past few years, including on the basis of specific scenarios. The Commission has developed an inventory of all EU mechanisms, tools and instruments that can support Member States during any crisis, regardless of the triggering of Article 42(7).

Work is ongoing to further explore how the article could be implemented in a crisis situation and how EU-level instruments and tools can be brought to bear in a coordinated manner, should Member States so choose.

Invocation of the mutual assistance clause is the sovereign prerogative of a Member State that is the victim of armed aggression. It is that Member State that communicates the type of assistance it requires in a given situation to the other Member States.

Given the evolving international security environment, the Council will continue discussions and exercises about the EU's mutual assistance clause in view of its effective implementation.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2026/04/23-24/releases/2026/04/24/remarks-by-president-antonio-costa-at-the-press-conference-following-the-informal-meeting-of-heads-of-state-or-government-of-23-24-april-2026/>, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_26_882

² <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/eu-prepare-blueprint-mutual-assistance-pact-amid-nato-doubts-2026-04-24/>, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/apr/24/europe-defence-nato-us-donald-trump>