



Position Paper **European Security for The Modern Era**

Europe has long been a global center of culture, and government. The continent has been ravaged by war, challenged by famine, and decimated by disease yet we have been successful at adapting to these changes. Through strong European institutions we have forged the consensus necessary to protect our people and priorities. The European Community is being challenged by global events from Brexit to the Covid-19 pandemic to the war in Ukraine. Our global security posture and the legal structure of the European Council has been increasingly challenged with increasing doubt about the effectiveness of current security arrangements.

Theme I

The current legal structure of the European Council preserved the sovereignty of individual member states by requiring unanimity for the passage of key measures, and The Republic of Ireland strongly favors maintaining this approach. The Irish Republic's commitment to military neutrality is enshrined into our legal mechanisms for the deployment of troops. The Triple Lock System Ireland has instituted requires the approval of the UN Security Council, The Irish government and the Irish Parliament, the Oireachtas, before Irish troops can be deployed. These conditions are non-negotiable as it allows the various stakeholders of the Irish government to contribute to any decision to utilize military force abroad. Even with our policy, Ireland has not been deterred from responsibly exercising military force as Foreign Minister Simon Coveney said, "I have yet to see an example of where Ireland has been prevented from sending troops to a part of the world where it wants to make a peace-keeping intervention in the Mediterranean, Mali or elsewhere." It is imperative to remember that the European Council was originally envisioned by Charles DeGualle to be a counterweight to the "supranational" European bodies like the European Community and Ireland wants to continue to build a European foreign policy that preserves international sovereignty while responding to the challenges Europe faces.

Theme II

The Republic of Ireland strongly supports the EU Strategic Compass. The plan of action represents a comprehensive pathway for securing our common future without trampling on the individual nature and interests of our fellow EU nations. We see it as the model for European Council policy making. Yet the Republic of Ireland believes that this Council must be more active in safeguarding European security. The creation of a National Security Council modeled off the Irish Government NSC would build forward looking and effective long-term security policies. This NSC would meet on a regular basis and be made up of the leaders or designated representatives of the criminal justice and national security agencies of the European Council member states, who would be able to pool resources, and drive the formulation of comprehensive plans to address security concerns. The European Council should also attempt regular summits of heads of state and their National Security representatives to discuss shared security goals and achievable policy steps forward. Currently the Foreign Ministers and EU

Ambassadors of member states hold monthly meetings and so do the personal advisors to the member states heads of government/state. We propose combining these two meetings into one monthly meeting with a delegation from each member state, potentially including the heads of state/government and empowering the delegation to represent their country in formal discussions on European security and to wield voting power in order to address the myriad of security issues that affect our continent. This committee would resemble the United Nations Security Council in structure and organization but due to its recurring monthly nature, be able to quickly address issues and carve proactive policies while preserving the sovereignty of each member state.

Theme III

The existing institutions of the European Union include redundancies and a lack of direction that paralyzes the function of critical bodies. Creating a more streamlined policy focus of the European Union starts by integrating the European External Action Service into a function of the European Commission and under the direction of the President of the European Commission. Secondly, The Republic of Ireland supports making the Foreign Affairs Council an agency of the European Council where the foreign ministers/ambassadors conduct meetings and votes in the absence of their heads of government/state. The Republic of Ireland intends to work to create a clear delineation of direction between the different organizations of the European Union in order to streamline our important work.

Ireland will be a committed partner in the work of *Unifying The European Voice* and charting a defense path that secures our people and their interest. As our Taoiseach Micheal Martin said before, “This parliament has called for a real security and defense policy of the European Union, understanding that different member states have different realities, different histories and different processes and procedures they would need to go through, but at the end of the day, politically, to quote an old saying — you can't be neutral between the fire and the fire brigade.”

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