



FRANCO-GREEK JOINT STATEMENT ON THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY DOPTED FOLLOWING THE MEETING BETWEEN M. JACQUES CHIRAC, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, AND MR COSTAS KARAMANLIS, PRIME MINISTER OF GREECE

Paris, 23 September 2005

For nearly two centuries, Greece and France have together faced crises, challenges and threats endangering European and global security. Today, both countries reaffirm their will to continue to work, with all partners who wish to do so, on building a Political Europe capable of speaking with one voice in the international arena, a Europe equipped with the military capabilities necessary for its political credibility. They want thereby to respond to the expectations of their citizens who wish to see the EU resolutely commit itself to serving peace in Europe and the world, thereby contributing to their security. A strong Europe will help give a new vitality to the Atlantic Alliance, which remains the bedrock of collective defence, and thus strengthen the transatlantic link.

In this spirit, our countries support the European Union's resolute commitment to the service of peace in the Balkans, Africa and more recently in the Indonesian province of Aceh, and attach the utmost importance to strengthening the EU's collective capabilities. They call for the establishment as soon as possible of the European Union Operations Centre, which will plan and conduct autonomous Artemis-type operations.

France and Greece underline the political and operational importance of the European multinational forces for taking Defence Europe forward. France wholeheartedly supports Greek membership of the Euroforces and wishes this to be effective as soon as possible. Our countries also note the importance of the European battle groups for providing the European Union with a rapid reaction military capability.

The European Union must also improve its ability to take urgent action in the event of civil disasters. France is supporting the Greek proposals for strengthening European civil and military rapid reaction capabilities in this sphere, and our countries are keen for these to be discussed in detail in the European Union.

To give the EU its own situation assessment capability, our countries will go on increasing their cooperation on earth observation satellites, particularly



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the Helios programme. Our participation, alongside other EU partners, in the UCAV (Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle) demonstrator programme also reflects Greece and France's determination to maintain and strengthen Europe's future autonomy in defence aerospace.

Our two countries emphasize their determination to continue their traditional cooperation in all sectors of the defence industry, where all the conditions exist for promoting and strengthening still further the already excellent bilateral relations. In this context, Greece and France wish to develop strong cooperation in the naval sector.

In line with the Helsinki Headline Goal, and to address their armed forces' military equipment requirements, our countries intend giving preference to European cooperation in technology acquisition and transfer policies which help strengthen the European defence industry. They support the initiatives and work of the European Defence Agency to promote cooperative programmes. In this respect, they would also like the European Defence Agency to be given a genuine R&D budget and for it to take responsibility for concrete projects, for example the UAV and tanker aircraft fleet projects.

To strengthen the European Union's projection capabilities, both our countries are supporting the Global Deployability Approach designed to optimize the specialized multilateral strategic air, maritime and land transport structures. In this respect, they stress the potential offered by the Athens maritime transport coordination centre. They also support the creation of a European rapid reaction maritime capability, based inter alia on the EUMARC (European Union Maritime Reaction Capability) concept.

In order to work together more effectively on establishing the necessary tools for the EU's defence policy and to step up their dialogue on security and defence issues, Greece and France have decided to hold meetings of political affairs directors every year and of directors of strategic affairs of the Foreign and Defence ministries at least every six months. They have also decided on the establishment of personnel exchanges between their foreign and defence ministries. The personnel will be fully integrated in the respective ministries.

Greece and France have also agreed to strengthen their cooperation on officer training. As regards fighter pilots, our countries are participating in the discussions on the AEJPT (Advanced European Jet Pilot Training) programme and have agreed to strengthen their cooperation.

As regards naval officer training at sea, Greece and France have decided to consider together the project of a European naval training ship or group of European naval training ships.

The defence ministers were tasked with implementing the guidelines of this declaration.

