



Paris, 17 December 2020

POLITICAL OPINION

relative to the European Union's Security Union Strategy for 2020-2025

- ① The Senate European Affairs Committee,
- ② Having regard to Article 4 (2) of the Treaty on the European Union,
- ③ Having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 24 July 2020 on the EU Security Union Strategy, COM (2020) 605 final,
- ④ Having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 24 July 2020 entitled "EU Agenda and Action Plan on Drugs 2021-2025", COM (2020) 606 final,
- ⑤ Having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 24 July 2020 entitled "EU strategy for a more effective fight against child sexual abuse", COM (2020) 607 final,
- ⑥ Having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 24 July

2020 entitled "2020-2025 EU action plan on firearms trafficking", COM (2020) 608 final,

- ⑦ Deems the acquis of the European security programme, presented on 28 April 2015 to be important and of benefit to the European Union, its Member States, and Europe's citizens;
- ⑧ Approves the overall approach adopted for the European Union's Security Union Strategy for 2020-2025, as well as its main strands; welcomes its ambitious content extended to areas of importance for the future, such as artificial intelligence, space capabilities and high-performance computing; regrets, however, a lack of prioritisation of the objectives pursued, which risks making Europe's security policy insufficiently intelligible for European citizens; considers that this strategy must be the subject of stronger political steering, particularly by the European Council; calls for a mid-term evaluation of the strategy and for the results of this evaluation to be sent to the national parliaments in particular;
- ⑨ Deems it indispensable to implement the measures provided by the strategy in a way that complies with fundamental rights and the rule of law, and to evaluate them against this standard in the European Commission's annual report on the rule of law in the European Union;
- ⑩ Shares the assessment of the threat that appears in the strategy, which emphasises its changing nature and notes the now-essential place occupied by cyber threats and cyber-attacks in organised crime, terrorism, and crises of different forms; considers that the consideration of, and response to, hybrid threats have taken on strategic importance given their potential for disruption;
- ⑪ Considers that the fight against terrorism must be the priority of the strategy; welcomes the agreement concluded recently on the regulation concerning online terrorist content, which will allow the implementation of a binding framework to issue removal orders for such content, regardless of the hosting service provider's main place of establishment, with a one-hour removal rule being valid in all Member States; calls for the commitments made by public authorities and online service providers in the Christchurch Call to be fulfilled in order to eliminate illegal content, terrorist propaganda, and hate speech from the Internet, while respecting

freedom of expression; considers that preventing terrorism requires a reinforcement of the fight against radicalisation and a reform of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in a more operational direction;

⑫ Welcomes the three action plans on the fight against drugs, child sexual abuse, and firearms trafficking that accompany the strategy; points out that these action plans will certainly make a decisive contribution to the fight against organised crime, but that their concrete application still requires significant work; asks that each of these three action plans should be implemented offline as well as online, and give rise to close cooperation between the European Union and its institutions and Member States; insists that the repression of these criminal phenomena should be the subject of ambitious and effective results-based regional and international cooperation; is of the opinion that the Commission should also lay out specific measures to prevent and fight corruption in the European Union, its Member States and neighbouring countries; asks that the action plans announced on the fight against human and migrant trafficking be consistent with the provisions of the new Pact on Migration and Asylum;

⑬ Highlights the growing role of European Union agencies in the architecture of European security; duly notes the recent proposal for a regulation that seeks to modify the mandate of Europol; asks that this reform should allow Europol to reinforce its capabilities to address emerging threats, to streamline its cooperation with third countries and ensure data protection there, to take the initiative of opening investigations into cross-border cases, to have a solid legal foundation for cooperating with the private sector, and to take full advantage of the framework for the interoperability of European Union information systems;

⑭ Considers that European security policy should include a strand on strengthening controls at the European Union's external borders; welcomes that the new Pact on Migration and Asylum includes measures in this direction;

⑮ Considers that obtaining and conserving data as digital evidence is essential to an effective European security policy; requests that the Commission present operational proposals to overcome the difficulties related to data encryption so that digital evidence can be collected legally and used by the competent authorities while preserving the reliability of services based on

encryption technologies; regrets the lack of a data storage regime at European Union level; calls, therefore, for the adoption of a European data storage regime that meets the operational needs of law enforcement and judicial services, taking into account the requirements of the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and of national courts, and in compliance with fundamental rights; insists on respecting the deadline of 2023 to finalise the framework for the interoperability of the European Union's information systems, which should make a decisive contribution to the fulfilment of many of the objectives of the strategy;

- ⑩ Observes that cyber threats and cyber-attacks are cross-border phenomena which therefore require a common European response, including the promotion of European standards among partner countries; considers that enhancing cybersecurity, which is an element of Europe's sovereignty, requires greater involvement from the private sector and better operational cooperation between ENISA and national law enforcement and judicial authorities; considers that cybersecurity should also be sought on 5G networks;
- ⑪ Asks for in-depth reflection on the ways and means to extend the mandate of the European Public Prosecutor's Office and give it competence, where applicable, for cross-border terrorist, organised crime, and cybercrime offences;
- ⑫ Is attentive to the budget and human resources that will be allocated by the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework to the implementation of the strategy, given not only the latter's ambitious nature, but also the costs of the technological choices it makes;
- ⑬ Highlights the importance of the external aspect of the strategy and the three accompanying action plans; considers that the European Union and its Member States must reach a shared common vision on this subject; considers that the European External Action Service has an important role to play in enhancing Europe's security; notes that the new Pact on Migration and Asylum also includes provisions for deepening the partnership with third countries;
- ⑭ Considers that Brexit should not result in a deterioration of the overall level of security in Europe; affirms, therefore, that the United Kingdom must remain a partner to Europe's security policy;

is of the opinion that the new partnership between the United Kingdom and the European Union should allow for the closest possible relationship, while respecting the autonomy of the European Union and the sovereignty of the United Kingdom, in matters of police and judicial cooperation, data exchanges, and access to information systems, and participation in the activities of Europol, Eurojust, and ENISA.