

## **PARIS DEFENCE AND STRATEGY FORUM, 11-13 MARCH 2025**

### **Outline for International Symposium on 12 March 2025**

## **Strong Together in Europe – How to Grow Enough, Fast Enough, For Long Enough**

### *Fortifying Europe: Assessing our Defence Readiness*

We face the reality of war in Ukraine, conflict in the Middle East, tensions in the Indo-Pacific. This international symposium plans to address Europe's defence readiness in the face of increased security threats. The aim will be to test the strength of our political, economic and social institutions to mobilise and act together by exploring:

- How our main political alliances, NATO and the EU, work together on defence to make Europe stronger, potentially with reduced US involvement in European security following the US administration change.
- How the economic and strategic mobility of states and defence industries could deliver military means fast enough and for a sustained period.
- How society could grow together and mobilise in order to provide defence and protect citizens.

Focusing on these key areas in inter-linked panel discussions can build a clearer picture of whether Europe is ready, or ready enough, to deal with the rapidly changing security landscape.

The symposium will be composed of three panels of one hour each moderated by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). It will be held in English on the afternoon of 12 March 2025 at the Ecole Militaire in Paris.

### **Symposium opening remarks**

#### **Panel 1**

#### **How to Grow Enough to Forge Unity: Strengthening Europe's Military Partnerships**

NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept – setting the Alliance's direction for the coming years – called for an enhanced strategic partnership with the European Union. European security cooperation with the US may change under the new American administration.

- Two years on from the Strategic Concept and over two years into the Ukraine war, how do NATO and the EU work together? What specificities can each organisation provide?

- How are metrics defined to gauge European defence readiness? What timeframe is needed to move from low to medium to high levels of readiness?
- How has a European approach on defence been taken forward? How has the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) strengthened defence cooperation?
- What are the roles of NATO, the EU and European Defence Fund in civil infrastructure? How can homeland resilience and strategic mobility be strengthened?

## **Panel 2**

### **How to Grow Fast Enough to Arm the Future: Building European Defence Capabilities at Scale**

In the face of increased budgetary pressure, governments are looking outside Europe for cheaper and quicker rearmament solutions. At the same time, the intersection of economic interests and defence spending forces the defence industry to contribute to national security while ensuring economic viability. This could give rise to tension between the perspectives of the stakeholder value for governments and the shareholder value for companies

- How does European cooperation work between governments and the defence industry? What lessons can be shared on strengthening dialogue?
- How can European industrial consortia remain competitive against US and China in response to the need for rapid rearmament?
- How can a balance be found between off-the-shelf purchases (to be fast enough + strategic alliances) and the preservation of the European defence industrial base (to be long enough)?
- What does expansion of the defence industry mean if there is limited capacity on defence production and new industries cannot be built? What is required to raise production of hardware and software?

## **Panel 3**

### **How to Grow Long Enough to Mobilise: Build, Buy, Borrow, Bridge**

Governments have to consider how to prepare and mobilise citizens. This implies strengthening defence values to create stronger links between the individual and nation for effective civil engagement. The 4B method for strategic workforce planning could offer a framework. Mobilisation could also include requisitioning companies, such as air and rail, or nationalising other sectors.

- How can governments and society build resilience together? What frameworks exist?
- Who needs to be protected or exempt from mobilisation and why? Who can be mobilised?
- What can we put at risk and until when? How quickly can societies switch from non-mobilised to fully mobilised?
- How can governments secure mobility? How would industries respond to requisition requests or nationalisation?

## **Symposium concluding remarks**