

Five years on from adoption of the European Security Strategy, the European Union carries greater responsibilities than at any time in its history. The EU remains an anchor of stability. Enlargement has spread democracy and prosperity across our continent. The Balkans are changing for the better. Our neighbourhood policy has created a strong framework for relations with partners to the south and east, now with a new dimension in the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership. Since 2003, the EU has increasingly made a difference in addressing crisis and conflict, in places such as Afghanistan or Georgia.

Yet, twenty years after the Cold War, Europe faces increasingly complex threats and challenges. Conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world remain unsolved; others have flared up even in our neighbourhood. State failure affects our security through crime, illegal immigration and, most recently, piracy. Terrorism and organised crime have evolved with new menace, including within our own societies. The Iranian nuclear programme has significantly advanced, representing a danger for stability in the region and for the whole non-proliferation system.

Globalisation has brought new opportunities. High growth in the developing world, led by China, has lifted millions out of poverty. But globalisation has also made threats more complex and interconnected. The arteries of our society - such as information systems and energy supplies – are more vulnerable. Global warming and environmental degradation is altering the face of our planet. Moreover, globalisation is accelerating shifts in power and is exposing differences in values. Recent financial turmoil has shaken developed and developing economies alike.

Europe will rise to these new challenges, as we have done in the past. Drawing on a unique range of instruments, the EU already contributes to a more secure world. We have worked to build human security, by reducing poverty and inequality, promoting good governance and human rights, assisting development, and addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity. The EU remains the biggest donor to countries in need. Long-term engagement is required for lasting stabilisation. Over the last decade, the European Security and Defence Policy, as an integral part of our Common Foreign and Security Policy, has grown in experience and capability, with over 20 missions deployed in response to crises, ranging from post-tsunami peace building in Aceh to protecting refugees in Chad.

These achievements are the results of a distinctive European approach to foreign and security policy. But there is no room for complacency. To ensure our security and meet the expectations of our citizens, we must be ready to shape events. That means becoming more strategic in our thinking, and more effective and visible around the world. We are most successful when we operate in a timely and coherent manner, backed by the right capabilities and sustained public support.

Lasting solutions to conflict must bind together all regional players with a common stake in

peace. Sovereign governments must take responsibility for the consequences of their actions and hold a shared responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It is important that countries abide by the fundamental principles of the UN Charter and OSCE principles and commitments. We must be clear that respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of states and the peaceful settlement of disputes are not negotiable. Threat or use of military force cannot be allowed to solve territorial issues – anywhere.

At a global level, Europe must lead a renewal of the multilateral order. The UN stands at the apex of the international system. Everything the EU has done in the field of security has been linked to UN objectives. We have a unique moment to renew multilateralism, working with the United States and with our partners around the world. For Europe, the transatlantic partnership remains an irreplaceable foundation, based on shared history and responsibilities. The EU and NATO must deepen their strategic partnership for better co-operation in crisis management.

The EU has made substantial progress over the last five years. We are recognised as an important contributor to a better world. But, despite all that has been achieved, implementation of the ESS remains work in progress. For our full potential to be realised we need to be still more capable, more coherent and more active.

The full report can be found [here](#)