

European defence for a new order

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Vienna, Austria, on 3-4 of July 2026:

Notes that:

- Russia's war against Ukraine continues unabated and that the Kremlin increasingly treats Europe itself as an adversary through sabotage, cyberattacks, disinformation, interference in democratic elections and hostile hybrid operations;
- Europe faces repeated attacks and provocations in the Baltic Sea region, including damage to undersea infrastructure, GPS disruption and drone incidents near NATO's eastern flank;
- Iran, Russia and other authoritarian states increasingly rely on criminal networks and proxy actors inside Europe to threaten dissidents, undermine security and destabilise democratic societies;
- Ukraine has shown extraordinary resilience and has demonstrated the decisive importance of industrial capacity, ammunition production, air defence and societal endurance in modern warfare;
- NATO Allies have agreed to substantially higher defence spending targets, yet Europe still lacks sufficient military readiness, production capacity and coordinated procurement;
- the United States remains Europe's most important ally, but American strategic attention is increasingly shifting towards the Indo-Pacific, while recent tensions within the transatlantic alliance underline that Europeans must take greater responsibility for their own security;
- Europe's defence industry remains fragmented and constrained by regulatory barriers, slow procurement systems and insufficient investment.

Believes that:

- Europe must be capable of defending itself, supporting Ukraine by all possible means and deterring aggression especially during periods of reduced American engagement in European security;
- Europe must rearm in order to preserve peace;
- European NATO members should commit to defence spending of at least 3.5% of GDP together with strengthened civil preparedness and resilience with specific support for local and regional authorities in external border regions facing conventional, hybrid or cyber threats;
- Europe is already exposed to continuous hybrid aggression and must treat cyber defence, critical infrastructure protection and civil defence as core security priorities;
- a stronger European defence capability ought to complement and strengthen NATO;
- nuclear deterrence remains necessary as long as Russia maintains one of the world's largest nuclear arsenals;
- non-EU and non-NATO countries are an integral part of the European security architecture. They may serve as points of entry or targets for both hybrid and military threats due to the presence of infrastructure critical to Europe but located outside treaty-covered territory.

Calls for:

- a roadmap towards the creation of a European Armed Force, under democratic control of European institutions and fully interoperable with NATO, capable of defending European Union territory and contributing to collective security;
- concrete steps towards a genuine European Defence Union, focused on joint procurement, military mobility, large-scale expansion of European defence production, and the development of key strategic

enabling capabilities, including military intelligence, logistics, and command and control;

- the development of an institutional and financial framework to support the above actions that includes the EU, its Member States, as well as other willing states, and that is capable of responding quickly and effectively to threats to European security;
- enhancing military mobility in the EU by investing in infrastructure projects that are crucial for both civilian and military use, standardising cross-border military transport procedures, establishing clear guidelines for the movement of military personnel, and conducting regular joint military exercises that focus on improving European military mobility;
- the gradual establishment of a European single market for defence materiel by reducing intra-European regulatory barriers, streamlining transfer and procurement rules while strengthening regional defence and dual-use industrial clusters, investment in innovation and SMEs and supply chains across Europe;
- the establishment of industry-academia partnerships to provide scholarships, internships, and training programmes that encourage young professionals to enter the defence sector, as well as the abolition of civil clauses at European universities, thereby enabling research results to equally benefit the civilian and military sector;
- the establishment of a European Defence Industrial Strategy, reducing reliance on third-country suppliers and fostering intra-EU cooperation in military production, while strengthening cooperation with trusted strategic partners where it enhances collective European defence capabilities;
- a substantial increase in European production of ammunition, air defence systems, drones and long-range capabilities in order to strengthen both European defence and support to Ukraine;
- the creation of a European Defence Innovation Fund to finance startups, SMEs, and research institutions working on advanced military technologies;
- the strengthening of common European capabilities, including Europol, towards becoming more operational in combating cross-border organised crime, sabotage and hostile state-backed proxy operations;
- the strengthening of European cyber defence capabilities and coordination mechanisms in order to enable rapid joint responses to large-scale cyberattacks and hybrid threats, including structured cooperation with local and regional authorities responsible for critical infrastructure, civil protection and emergency preparedness;
- the strengthening of European intelligence cooperation, including through enhanced sharing of threat assessments, operational intelligence and early-warning capabilities among EU member states and with NATO partners, and the establishment of structured coordination mechanisms between national intelligence services on hybrid threats, foreign interference, sabotage networks and hostile state-backed proxy operations;
- continued and expanded military, economic and humanitarian support to Ukraine until the last Russian soldier has left Ukrainian territory;
- further European dialogue on nuclear deterrence and the long-term future of a broader European nuclear umbrella.