



OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION

Preparatory Action on Defence Research Information Day

12 April 2018, 09:30-10.00

Brussels

EDA CE Jorge Domecq

- Good morning and welcome to this Information Day on the Preparatory Action on Defence Research (PADR). It is a real pleasure to see so many of you here, representing leading companies and research organisations from across the continent.
- The European Defence Agency is committed to enhance our engagement with European industry at all levels, with National Defence Industry Associations (NDIAs) as well as with the ASD, in support of innovative capability development and innovation. The traditional European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) is strong but we must reach out to innovation holders in all industrial sectors. I am therefore pleased to see such a diverse group of companies and research organisations here today.

- If you may recall, almost two years ago the Global Strategy for the Union's Foreign and Security Policy was presented by High Representative/VP/Head of Agency Federica Mogherini, providing a shared European vision of the challenges and opportunities ahead of us.
- Many steps have already been taken. The political impetus given by the Global Strategy and the following Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, the EU-NATO Joint Declaration, and the European Defence Action Plan in which the Preparatory Action for Defence Research plays an important role are mutually reinforcing parts of a coherent package aimed at strengthening European defence through more cooperation.
- With the Preparatory Action - the first substantial EU funded Action for Defence Research - the Commission, supported by EDA, is making an important contribution to European defence that:
 - serves agreed capability priorities at the European level, notably through the Capability Development Plan;
 - provides European added value by focusing on areas where Member States can no longer afford to act alone;
 - benefits all Member States;

- and provides incentives for more cooperation, both among governments and industry.
- The main purpose of the Preparatory Action on Defence Research, and the Pilot Project before that, is to pave the way for a fully-fledged European Defence Research Programme in the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework after 2020. I am pleased to say that the PP and the PADR are successful endeavours so far, and some lessons have already been learned.
- Based on the Delegation Agreement with the Commission, the EDA published the first PADR Calls for Proposals on 7 June 2017. A total of 24 proposals involving about 190 different entities from 25 countries (24 Member States plus Norway) participated in the Calls, providing a mix of larger and smaller industry, academia and other research organisations.
- The signature of the first grant took place on 20 December 2017; the second project OCEAN 2020 was signed on 28 March 2018. This big maritime technological demonstrator project was awarded to a large consortium composed by 42 diversified entities (Primes, SMEs, RTOs and Member States navies) from 15 EU Member States and had its kick-off meeting two

days ago in EDA's premises. The remaining four grant agreements on soldier systems are being finalised.

- As you see, we are progressing well. The Independent Observer, foreseen in the Delegation Agreement, confirmed in his report of 30 January 2018 that "the overall approach of EDA on the evaluation of PADR 2017 has been excellent". This conclusion is further underlined in a letter from the European Commission's DG GROW to the Agency on 20 March 2018, acknowledging that "due to the cooperative spirit of Member States, industry, and the efforts of EDA, the PADR is well on track". This situation is in stark contrast with certain doubts concerning the successful delivery of the Preparatory Action by EDA only two years ago.
- Most importantly, however, is that results generated by EU funded defence research lead to real products that enhance European Capabilities. It is therefore very encouraging that the Pilot Project have already seen further uptake, demonstrated by interest of CapTech (Navigation, Radar and Information) members in launching follow-on ad-hoc projects.

- Another lesson for both the Commission and EDA is that we have to keep the Defence Specificities in mind. The modalities and the defence research topics are widely affected by them. The PP and PA related work in the Committees and Meetings have showed that already.
- Clearly, governance of any future European Defence Research Programme has to be provided by the Commission. EDA, in turn, is well placed to provide expertise and best practice advice during the upstream process, as reflected in the articles of the Treaty of Lisbon and as Member States requested in the Long Term Review of EDA endorsed by Defence Ministers in May last year.
- In its upstream role for the PADR and in line with what has already been done for the PP, EDA has worked with Member States' experts on the refinement of the following types of actions for further consideration in the PADR As-If Programme Committee: Technology Demonstrators, Critical Defence Technology, Interoperability/Complementarity/Standardisation, Disruptive Technologies and finally the Coordination and Support Actions. The deliberations on the concluded work-programmes 2017 and 2018 were (and for 2019 are) conducted in the As-If Programme Committee and drew to a considerable extent on the input previously developed within EDA fora.

- As I have mentioned many times before, we should build on the good cooperation so far between the Commission and EDA and to make the best use possible of EDA's expertise, networks and processes, such the CDP and OSRA, also for the future EDRP in order to not duplicate existing structures. That is for me a major conclusion that can be drawn already.
- On 15 March 2018, EDA published three new calls for proposals. This year the focus is on critical defence technologies with two research calls related to that:
 - the first call with a volume of up to 12 million euro is requesting proposals for research on a high performance (re-)configurable “System on a Chip”, which would allow to configure in the field reliable electronic chips as spare parts or in terms of necessary hardware updates;
 - the second call with a volume of up to 5.4 million euros requests proposals for a “European High Power Laser Effector” in order to deliver high precision effects on conventional and unconventional threats in environmental-responsible ways.

- A third call, with a volume up to 1.9 million euros, is a coordination and support action for the “Strategic Technology Foresight, part II” and is a follow-on to a similar call last year, which concluded in an already running project.
- Today’s agenda focuses on the abovementioned topics and you will receive all the information you need to build excellent and innovative proposals leading to concrete European Defence capabilities.
- In view of facilitating the formation of strong and competitive consortia for the Preparatory Action, there will be a “Brokerage Event” after the information sessions this morning, where you can meet and get to know each other, and perhaps, begin to create one of the winning consortia for the 2018 Calls.
- Research and Technology is key for defence. Without necessary research and technologies, there are no defence capabilities. With the Preparatory Action, we are strengthening European cooperation in defence research and throughout the defence supply chain. This will help the European defence industrial base to remain competitive and better able to provide the necessary capabilities for our armed forces.

- But the Preparatory Action and a future EDRP cannot and should not substitute ongoing collaboration or national funding in research of the Member States. It has to focus on European priorities and address areas where the Member States will or should not act alone and where critical mass needs to be achieved.
- However, the PA is only one of several defence initiative currently under way, such as the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). While each initiative is separate they must be coherent to achieve the final objective of developing MS defence capabilities on a cooperative basis.
- Consequently, the only way to ensure coherence between all these initiatives is to have a common reference. The Capability Development Plan (CDP), as far as capability priorities are concerned, and the Overarching Strategic Research Agenda (OSRA), as far as technology priorities are concerned, will therefore be key reference documents. Both documents are endorsed by the Ministers of Defence and will ensure the necessary coherence between all the new developments.

- European defence is going through a crucial period. The expectations are high, and to meet them will not be an easy task. But by making cooperation the norm, based on sufficient funding, agreed priorities and innovation, we can achieve a real step change. Your ideas and contributions to making this possible are indispensable.
- Thank you for coming to Brussels and I wish you an informative and fruitful Information Day!