R3 Updated Young Green vision on European defense policy

Proposer: Protests (Latvia), and Joves Ecosocialistes (Catalonia)
Agenda item: 7. Resolutions

Motion text

The past three years have redefined how we think about security and defense in Europe. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has brought the topic to the forefront of our politics. In these times we are faced with simplistic answers to these challenges from the right. This is why a green perspective on just, human-centered security framework is needed more than ever.

Facing security threats

Faced with security challenges from Russia, as well as international instability and increasing hostility from the United States since Donald Trump's election for a second term, Europe is for the first time in decades forced to take responsibility for its defense.

However, European security should not be a matter of mindless increase in military spending. It must be focused on ensuring the interoperability of European armies. In total European countries already invest a lot in their military. A new security architecture for Europe needs to be created to ensure strategic autonomy. This should give us the capability to defend ourselves. However, that is not the case, since almost all of this money is spent inefficiently, as our capabilities are spread across 27 different armies. Instead, new mechanisms are needed for the joint procurement of military vehicles and equipment that would allow for saving billions of euros. Other forms of closer cooperation are also required such as joint military research and development, joint acquisition, procurement, maintenance and training.

Investment must be smart, addressing modern warfare methods such as cyber-attacks on hospitals, water systems, energy grids, or communication infrastructure which can paralyze societies, cause civilian deaths, and destabilize entire regions – without a single shot being fired and electoral interference that divide our societies. These attacks blur the lines between peace and war. We need to focus on new technologies, not outdated ones like landmines. Investing in European security now will reduce long-term costs by building a unified defense to protect the EU, our citizens, values, and democracy.

Solidarity with movements for disarmament, decolonization, demilitarization, and climate justice

Legacy of military governance, patriarchal institutions and authoritarian structures continue to shape the way security and peace are defined and for whom. In Eastern Europe Roma communities are over-policed and systemically excluded from policy processes. LGBTQIA+ people face harassment in both military structures and police services. Migrants and refugees are treated as threats to be managed, rather than people whose safety should be defended. Demilitarisation starts with dismantling patriarchal, colonial power structures in security systems. We need policies that center the voices and needs of Indigenous peoples, people of color, LGBTQIA+ communities, and all those fighting on the frontlines.

Justice in defense means confronting everyday inequalities within it. Women in the military still face ill-fitting gear and a lack of menstrual hygiene planning – reinforcing that they're outsiders in systems built for men. These are not side issues; they're frontline concerns. Armed forces must be built on equity and dignity–and remain under strict democratic oversight.

The climate perspective should not be forgotten when discussing security. Recent natural disasters, such as the floods in Valencia and Porto Alegre, prove that no European or Global Community can be safe if we don't mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects. We strongly condemn the new European Commission reduced climate ambition and encourage our governments to ramp up measures to accomplish emission reduction targets on time. Moreover, efforts to increase our security capabilities must go hand in hand with securing critical natural resources, such as water, for everyone, being prepared to respond to any emergency, and protecting civil society. The carbon footprint of the armies and defense industry is also an issue that must be tackled.

A comprehensive end to austerity politics

The same political logic that leads to underfunded armies leads to crumbling infrastructure, and inadequate climate adaptation. It is a systemic issue – rooted in decades of neoliberal policies that prioritize austerity, privatisation and profit over well-being. We reject the false dichotomy that says governments must choose between investing in defense or in public services such as social welfare. Real security requires both, it cannot be built on the backs of weakened social systems. We must expand the framework of what we call national security. It should be redefined not just as defense against external threat, but as the capacity of a society to care for itself. This includes accessible healthcare systems, education that equip people not just with job skills but with civic agency, climate-resilient infrastructure, as well as fair

and safe labor conditions across all sectors. A society cannot be secure if it is not cared for.

International humanitarian law for the protection of all people

International humanitarian treaties and conventions should not be considered in isolation but as a framework for peace and security. Eliminating one sets a dangerous precedent that could undermine all. We strongly condemn any attempts to withdraw from these agreements, such as the Ottawa Convention. There must be a renewed joint. European security approach that strengthens international humanitarian treaties, especially the Ottawa Convention banning anti-personnel mines, and expands these legal – including. These treaties are not technicalities. They are cornerstones of human dignity and must be treated as such. We call on the EU to lead a global recommitment to humanitarian disarmament, and to resist every attempt to normalize inhumane and indiscriminate weapons - these include anti-personnel landmines, cluster munitions, chemical and biological weapons, autonomous lethal systems and nuclear weapons.

Solidarity means dialogue

Solidarity cannot be selective. It must begin with listening but also with honesty. If the EU claims to build a peace-oriented and ethical security policy, it must confront its own complicity in global violence. Criticizing U.S. militarism while remaining silent about the role of EU member states. Some of them are the world’s largest arms exporters, including to authoritarian regimes and governments actively violating human rights. That is not solidarity. It is hypocrisy. It means acknowledging that security concerns vary across Europe, and that Central and Eastern European states, especially Ukraine, whose perspectives must help in shaping collective defense policy.

To prevent the entrenchment of profit-driven military-industrial complexes in Europe,governments must actively challenge the neoliberal mindset that prioritizes the never ending drive for increased privatization over public interest. This entails asserting stronger democratic control over the defence sector, including public oversight and policies that prioritize genuine security needs over private profit. This industry is not a long-term solution to the de-industrialisation of the EU. Furthermore, protecting workers’ rights is critical.

Conclusion

To build true security in Europe and beyond, we must move away from militarised responses and instead take concrete steps toward justice, care, and cooperation.

This means strengthening international humanitarian law. We should invest in social infrastructure like healthcare, education, and housing, and include marginalized voices in every level of security decision-making. It means ending arms trade to regimes that violate human rights, like Israel, closing legal loopholes that allow inhumane weapons to proliferate, and reallocating public funds away from military expansion toward climate adaptation and public safety. Europe has a responsibility to defend life in all its forms. The path to true security lies not in fortifying borders or stockpiling arms, but in protecting people, sustaining ecosystems, and ensuring justice across all communities. It is time to reimagine security as collective care because no one is safe until we all are.

FYEG Calls to:

- Create a cost-efficient united military framework, which is built on European unity in military and security.
- Ensure European military independence from the increasingly hostile partnership with the USA.
- Commit with climate pledges and implement Degrowth as a must to keep all European communities safe from natural disasters and resource scarcity.
- Reaffirm our support for Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression. And give support to the deployment of just peace in Ukraine.
- Reaffirm support to all oppressed peoples on Earth such as Palestine but also other forgotten conflicts such as Sahara and Kurdistan by ending our complicity with oppressive regimes and being firm advocates for peace and human rights not just within our borders but also abroad.
- We propose that beyond the increase in European military capabilities, it is necessary to focus on our strategic autonomy. The main points to address are achieving energy self-sufficiency by eliminating dependence on Russian and American fossil fuels through the deployment of renewables; having the capacity to supply critical rare earth elements essential for European technological development and the energy transition; and establishing a strong European tech industry to prevent our data from being stored outside European territory and our communication networks from being vulnerable to attacks.
- Keep loyal to our values which are peaceful conflict resolution, the promotion of peace and human-centered policies, diplomatic conflict-solving and respect to International Law as overcoming colonialism and establishing equal relationships between all (people) on Earth.

Reason

In the face of escalating global conflict, rising authoritarianism, and intensifying climate disasters, Europe is at a crossroads. We are not only witnessing war return to our continent with Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine, but also a growing normalization of militarized approaches to security that too often ignore justice, equality, and sustainability. This resolution was written to reassert a Green, human-centered perspective on security and defense, we call for a vision of security rooted in solidarity, justice, care, and ecological responsibility.