

This is a modified version of the section of the Diem25 platform entitled “A non-aligned Europe”. The full text of the manifesto itself is reproduced here.

Nicolas has added draft ‘talking points’ highlighted in light grey. This is the text we are working on. Feel free to modify or add to the text.

We also added some notes, highlighted in blue, during the meeting. These were put forward by participants in the meeting and summarised here. They should be worked into the text.

A Non-Aligned Europe

Europe is simply a follower of the United States on all matters that affect international affairs, global trade, and the economy. America bans Huawei, so do we. The United States Congress introduces unilateral sanctions, so do we. The White House deems China a strategic threat, so do we. A continent that was once at economic parity with the United States, is now languishing behind. All the while, in the digital domain, we keep being dominated by large US technology companies.

As we cast our eyes to the next decade, we see a strong possibility of the emergence of military blocs, headed by the United States on the one hand, and People's Republic of China on the other: generating a wave of destructive forces, from a New Cold War to an upsurge of regional conflicts. These destructive forces risk diverting global action away from cooperation on planetary challenges such as the climate catastrophe.

We believe that lasting peace and prosperity can be achieved only by replacing all military blocs with an inclusive international security framework that de-escalates tensions, expands freedoms, fights poverty, halts exploitation, pursues social and environmental justice, and ends the domination of one country by another. We are for peace and against war.

This means pursuing a policy of political and military Non-Alignment for Europe. It does not mean being neutral in the face of aggression, but instead, flexibility to pursue pathways to peace even if this means going against the interests of global powers.

NATO membership, however, stands in the way of advocating for an independent foreign policy for Europe. We would thus introduce an alternative Common Security and Defence Policy for the European Union that will seek to decouple Europe from NATO. Key elements of this programme would include:

1. Narrowing down the mission of the European External Action Service (EEAS) to strictly diplomatic means.

The EU effectively does not, currently, have its own security policy. Its policy decisions essentially support NATO policies or the consensus position among member states. The

resulting policy is not so much, therefore, a policy aimed at EU security. For instance, the EU, for instance, was entirely inactive in the run up to the recent international conflicts in the European periphery, such as the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Ukraine war and the war in Gaza. The EU could have played a role to prevent each of these conflicts, but it failed to do so.

Under such conditions, leaving the military option in the EU's policy toolkit increases the risk of armed conflict on the continent, rather than reduce it.

2. Ending formal cooperation of EEAS with NATO, including terminating dual EEAS/NATO command and communication structures

- ❓ The EU is currently subservient to NATO, should be independent
- ❓ NATO is pushing us to war

The EU maintains a very close cooperation with NATO. This does not appear in the form of joint institutions, because some of the EU's members are not NATO members. However, the two organisations are in fact embedded to the point that it is inconceivable to develop EU security or peace strategies that are not compatible with, or in support of NATO strategies.

Cooperation is close at the political level, with regular summits and joint declarations and initiatives.

Among other aspects of this cooperation, the two institutions have set up a framework for operational cooperation as well ("Berlin Plus" in the jargon). It allows NATO to put its facilities and infrastructure at the service of the EU to carry out military operations in the context of "crisis management". Though such arrangements are presented as a support to the EU, they also ensure that infrastructure is shared, so that the EU is effectively dependent on NATO.

Permanent military liaison arrangements have thus been established to facilitate cooperation at the operational level. A NATO Permanent Liaison Team has been operating at the EU Military Staff since 2005 and an EU Cell was set up at SHAPE (NATO's strategic command for operations in Mons, Belgium) in 2006.

For more information on EU-NATO cooperation: [EU-NATO cooperation - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/eu-ngo/eu-nato-cooperation-consilium)

However, NATO has clearly repeatedly failed to guarantee peace and security in Europe. Instead of addressing the security needs of individual states and of the continent as a whole, this organisation has accentuated the fracture within the continent and has promoted unity through fear and confrontation with an enemy and rearmament.

Furthermore, relying on NATO for Europe's security is ill-advised for another reason. The organisation is entirely reliant on the USA for its political cohesion and operational capabilities. A change of priorities in the USA, such as a pivot away from Europe, could jeopardize NATO's integrity and hence the continent's security.

Linking the European Union to NATO, and thus to the United States is incompatible with the principle of non-alignment.

The EU should instead develop its own, independent strategy to advance its security. In order to achieve this, the interweaving between NATO and the EU institutions must be undone. The EU's dependence on and subservience to NATO must be ended.

3. Strengthening arms control protocols in Europe, starting with the adoption of the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons across the continent.

a) Conventional forces. The Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) was signed at the end of the cold war to limit the quantity of conventional weapons in Europe. Although it has since been adapted, it is now badly out of date. The treaty was designed primarily in the context of an East-West confrontation; it does little to prevent the development of regional imbalances or grave discrepancies between neighbours. Furthermore, Russia withdrew from the treaty in 2023, rendering it moot. The treaty did not prevent the Ukraine and the Karabakh wars. These wars have in turn triggered a new conventional arms race which only a new approach to arms reduction and control can hope to stop.

A new treaty is therefore needed, based on a new approach to security in Europe.

b) Nuclear weapons. The treaty on the prohibition of Nuclear Weapons entered into force in 2021. As its name suggests, its goal is to ban the possession and use of nuclear weapons, as unacceptable and barbaric.

Nuclear weapons do not protect Europe or its member states. The effect of nuclear weapons is to "sanctuarize" a nuclear power, i.e. to make any direct military attack on its territory prohibitively risky and costly. Nuclear states cannot reliably protect allied or friendly states however, such as other EU countries: it is unlikely that a country, say the USA or France, would risk nuclear war to protect another country's territory. In case of an attack, nuclear weapons are thus part of an "all or nothing" strategy. Countries allied to the victim of an attack would therefore have a choice between not using nuclear weapons - and accepting a strategic defeat - or using them - and causing the end of human life on Earth. Nuclear weapons are therefore to European security what explosive belts are to the security of suicidal terrorist.

More specifically, the decision to use nuclear weapons in the defence of any European state would be up to one of three nuclear countries: France, the UK and the USA. Whether they would compromise their integrity and future (and that of the rest of humanity) for the sake of the independence of a European ally remains an open question.

From the point of view of non-nuclear states, nuclear weapons therefore present very little benefit.

Only two EU countries in Europe have signed this treaty so far: Ireland and Austria. Worldwide, however, more than 90 countries have signed the treaty, or half of the UN membership. Europe is clearly lagging behind the rest of the world.

- All EU member states that do not possess or host nuclear weapons should sign the treaty without delay. This both constitutes a signal to the rest of the world and indicates that these countries do not intend to acquire such weapons or allow them on their territory.
- EU member states that host nuclear weapons on their territory that are not their own should make plans to have them removed and they should sign the treaty as well. These states are currently Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece and Italy. Outside the EU, Turkey also hosts nuclear weapons. These sites where nuclear weapons are located date from the cold war, are now out of date and serve no clear purpose.
- Finally, the EU's only nuclear state is France; the UK also has nuclear weapons. Once an alternative European security system is in place these weapons, as well as Russia's should also be removed.

4. Managing conflicts through a reformed United Nations (UN) and transfer planning and control of existing European military and civilian missions to the UN

There are currently 9 EU military missions: in Niger, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia, Ukraine, Libya (naval), Red Sea and Persian Gulf (naval), Mozambique and in the Gulf of Guinea (partly naval). There are a further 14 civilian missions focussed on security (e.g. non-military monitoring missions). Some of the military missions are carried out at the request, or with the agreement of the countries where they are hosted, while others are not.

In 2018, 13 EU countries decided to establish the European Intervention Initiative (EI2). This should allow participating member states to launch joint military operations abroad. EI2 does not aim create a permanent military force: it is rather a coordination and pooling mechanism.

PESCOE is an initiative established by the treaty of Lisbon and activated in 2017. It aims to set in place projects to enhance the EU's military capabilities. These can be weapons development projects, training facilities or joint infrastructure (e.g. detection systems, medical support, etc.). There are numerous PESCOE projects underway.

As the saying goes: "if all you have is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail". The EU is fast developing military capabilities, yet it has not developed a viable, independent approach to preserving peace and security on the continent.

The growing European military-industrial complex is therefore likely to be put in the service of a purely Atlantic (i.e. US-centred) strategy which is not primarily aimed at peace in Europe. This risks involving Europe in armed conflicts which it is not or should not be a party to. Involvement in missions far from Europe is likely to accentuate tensions in areas, such as Africa and the Middle-East, rather than decrease tensions.

In order to avoid the inevitable knock-on effects of distant military missions, any European military activity outside of the EU should therefore be carried out under the authority of the United Nations or possibly a regional organisation. Non-military tools should be privileged, furthermore, in the promotion of security.

The reform of the UN is a prerequisite here. A dysfunctional Security Council, in particular, currently prevents the UN from carrying out its mission (note that formulating proposals for a reformed NU go beyond the scope of these notes however).

If a regional organisation, such as the OSCE, takes on the mantle of the UN at European level, the EU could also operate under its authority. However the OSCE and the Council of Europe are as ineffective and in need of reform as the UN as things currently stand.