

**JOINT STATEMENT
EUROPEAN INTERVENTION INITIATIVE
MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF DEFENCE**

After launching officially the European Intervention Initiative (EI2) by signing the Letter of Intent (LoI) on 25 June 2018, and after the first EI2 Defence Ministerial meeting on 7 November 2018 in Paris, the Ministers of Defence of Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, or their representatives, met today in Hilversum as part of the second EI2 Defence Ministerial meeting.

On this occasion, they welcomed two new members within EI2. The Ministers of Defence of Norway and Sweden attended the meeting and signed the Note of Joining, formalizing their commitment to EI2. Additionally, the Ministers of Defence, or their representatives, discussed the candidacy of Italy and approved its new membership.

Subsequently, the Ministers of Defence, or their representatives, signed the Terms of Reference. This document will set the terms and understanding between the Participants regarding the scope and functioning of EI2 and will formalize and clarify EI2 processes and organization.

Additionally, the Ministers of Defence, or their representatives:

- confirmed the working cycle in order to support the achievement of objectives identified in the LoI. High-level representatives of the military staffs from all EI2 Participants will meet twice a year at the Military European Strategic Talks (MEST), Policy Directors will at least meet before the Ministerial meeting which will take place once a year.
- acknowledged the need to focus on consolidation of current achievements.

The Ministers of Defence, or their representatives, showed their commitment to EI2 and were pleased with the steps made this year. Further cooperation will support the development of a shared strategic culture, which will enhance the ability of the EI2 Participants to respond together to future threats and crises so that, whenever necessary, European security interests can be better and faster protected within the chosen frameworks.

It was reaffirmed that the EI2 Participants will continue sharing security and situational awareness analyses and identify convergences, for example in the Sahel, Caribbean or Baltic Sea region. This will enable better links and closer cooperation at political and military level in each of the four agreed areas of work: 1) strategic foresight, 2) scenario development and planning, 3) support to operations and 4) lessons learned and doctrine.

EI2 will not duplicate activities within the EU, NATO, UN, the OSCE or ad hoc coalitions, but will be complementary to them. It was agreed that EI2's external communication should be clear and transparent in explaining what EI2 does and strives for.

EI2 is a flexible, resource-neutral and non-binding forum, where all the Participants are equal. As set out in the LoI, it will not create a new rapid reaction force or earmark national forces for its own response purposes, but will focus on enhanced interaction in the four fields mentioned above.