

Support to Ukraine: European Commission presents White Paper for European Defence and ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030

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On 19 March, the European Commission unveiled the White Paper for European Defence – Readiness 2030 and the ReArm Europe Plan, an ambitious defence package providing financial levers to EU Member States to drive an investment surge in defence capabilities.

The proposed measures aim to respond to the short-term urgency of supporting Ukraine, but also to address the pressing long-term need to boost Europe’s security and defence. The plan enables spending of over €800 billion.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said: *“The era of the*

peace dividend is long gone. The security architecture that we relied on can no longer be taken for granted. Europe is ready to step up. We must invest in defence, strengthen our capabilities, and take a proactive approach to security.”

The key priorities of the package include unwavering support for Ukraine, closing defence capability gaps, strengthening the European defence industry, preparing for military contingencies, and enhancing security partnerships. It also suggests strengthening external borders, notably the land border with Russia and Belarus.

“Europe needs its own plan to guarantee a just and lasting peace for Ukraine. The war in Ukraine is a threat to Europe – peace in Ukraine means peace in Europe,” said Katarína Mathernová, EU Ambassador to Ukraine.

The package also envisages €150 billion in EU loans for defence projects via SAFE – a new dedicated instrument for Security Action for Europe. SAFE will allow Member States to immediately and massively scale up their defence investments through common procurement from the European defence industry, focusing on priority capabilities. Ukraine and EFTA/EEA countries will be able to join common procurements, and it will be possible to buy from their industries.

SAFE will also allow acceding countries, candidate countries, potential candidates and countries having signed a Security and Defence Partnerships with the EU to join common procurements and contribute to aggregated demand.