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Opening address at Session II Interparliamentary Conference for CFSP/CSDP

European Common Defence and Security Policy and NATO – Better Cooperation in View of New Security Challenges

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Dear participants of the conference,
Ladies and gentlemen,

In the opening of Session II, I would like to emphasise that 22 of EU member states are also members of NATO. It means that these states share one pool of defence resources in order to achieve the military goals of both organisations. Therefore, closer cooperation and coordination between the EU and NATO in areas such as planning of defence capabilities and military training are particularly important.

It is equally important to coordinate the planning of the EU and NATO capabilities in a manner that avoids needless duplication of efforts. The training offered by both organisations should be continually synchronised. For example, approximation and synchronisation of certification training of EU's Battlegroups and NATO's Rapid Response Force would generate added value.

Latvia also sees possibilities for cooperation in the area of strategic communication between the EU and NATO. Clearly, the EU has to work on broadening its communication regarding its vision, and the NATO Strategic Communication Centre in Riga can facilitate cooperation in this regard. It should be noted that on 20–21 January 2015, during the Informal Meeting of the EU Defence Policy Directors, Jānis Kārklīņš, Director of NATO STRATCOM, gave a presentation on the possibilities of EU-NATO cooperation in this area. Participants reacted positively to the presentation: they



agreed that communication is essential in ensuring security and that the EU should do more in this area. In February, during the informal meeting of EU defence ministers in Riga, it is planned to address challenges of strategic communication on the ministerial level.

At the upcoming European Council on defence scheduled for June 2015, Latvia intends to emphasise the need for closer cooperation with NATO both in developing capabilities and organising military training.

It should also be noted that Russia's aggression in Ukraine has clearly revealed an unofficial separation of duties between both organisations – the EU is actively using political and economic instruments, while NATO is strengthening security in its member states. This separation of duties also demonstrates the strengths of each organisation and thus indicates the direction for their future activities.

