

Ana Isabel Xavier

Secretária de Estado da Defesa Nacional

Intervenção da Secretária de Estado da Defesa Nacional, Ana Isabel Xavier, por ocasião do Conselho de Negócios Estrangeiros

(Convite dirigido aos Ministros da Defesa para participação na sessão de trabalho sobre a agressão da Rússia à Ucrânia)

Luxemburgo, 22 de abril de 2024

Dear Josep,

Dear Minister Kuleba,

Dear Minister Umerov,

Dear Ministers and colleagues,

In the current critical context, we must respond quickly and decisively to Ukraine's most urgent needs, with a particular focus on the delivery of military support and equipment.

Portugal commends Germany's global Initiative for Immediate Action on Air Defence to provide urgent air-defence systems to Ukraine. We are currently assessing our means for supporting this and other proposals. The goal is to ensure that these capabilities can be produced or transferred to Ukraine as fast as possible, in order to fill the gaps and strengthen Ukraine's defence capabilities.

In this regard, Portugal has recently made substantial contributions focused on delivering urgent large calibre artillery ammunition to Ukraine. These include one hundred (100) million euros in the context of the Czech initiative and one (1) million

euros for the joint acquisition programme led by the European Defence Agency.

Our bilateral military cooperation with Ukraine dates back to 2008. It has meanwhile been significantly reinforced since the beginning of the war, through the delivery of lethal and non-lethal equipment as well as through our active participation in EUMAM. This includes training in several areas such as Infantry Companies, medical area, inactivation of explosive devices and CBRN protection.

In addition, we will contribute to strengthen Ukraine's Air Force and air defence through the Air Force Capability Coalition, by providing training in Portugal. We will also co-lead a line-of-effort in the Maritime Capability Coalition, while remaining open to participating in other ventures.

Regarding the new EU Defence Industrial Strategy and our defence industrial readiness, we must be swift in implementing it, always taking into consideration that readiness and interoperability are key elements for our response to threats and the actions of our strategic competitors.

At the same time, we must also take full advantage of existing policies that can bolster the EU defence industry.

Also, through the upcoming EDIP regulation, we will be able to boost the EU's defence industrial readiness and guarantee an appropriate level of support to SMEs, thus ensuring a level playing field.

Thank you.