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Abstract

Finland's foreign and security policy is founded on value-based realism. Its goal is to safeguard Finland's independence and territorial integrity, to avoid becoming involved in a military conflict and to improve the security and well-being of the people of Finland. Our activities are founded on democracy, the rule of law, human rights, equality and non-discrimination.

Finland maintains a strong national defence capability as part of NATO's collective deterrence and defence. Finland is a constructive, reliable and capable NATO ally. The European Union is Finland's most important community of values and security and channel of foreign policy influence. Finland deepens bilateral cooperation with allies and partners and seek equal dialogue and opportunities to cooperate with countries other than those in our reference group. Finland continues to strongly support Ukraine as it defends itself and as it progresses towards membership in the EU and NATO. Finland works to strengthen international law and the rules-based international system.

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Ulko- ja turvallisuuspoliittinen selonteko

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Tiivistelmä

Suomen ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka pohjautuu arvopohjaiseen realismiin. Sen päämääränä on turvata Suomen itsenäisyys ja alueellinen koskemattomuus, estää Suomen joutuminen sotilaalliseen konfliktiin ja taata suomalaisten turvallisuus ja hyvinvointi. Toiminnan perustana ovat demokratia, oikeusvaltioperiaate, ihmisoikeudet, tasa-arvo ja yhdenvertaisuus.

Suomi ylläpitää vahvaa kansallista puolustuskykyä osana Naton yhteistä pelotetta ja puolustusta. Suomi on rakentava, luotettava ja suorituskykyinen Nato-liittolainen. Euroopan unioni on Suomen tärkein arvo- ja turvallisuusyhteisö sekä keskeisin ulkopoliittinen vaikutuskanava. Suomi tiivistää kahdenvälisiä yhteistyötä liittolaisten ja kumppanien kanssa ja hakee tasaveroista vuoropuhelua ja yhteistyömahdollisuuksia myös muiden kuin viiteryhämme maiden kanssa. Suomi jatkaa vahvaa tukeaan Ukrainalle puolustustaistelussa ja sen edetessä kohti EU:n ja Naton jäsenyyttä. Suomi toimii kansainvälisen oikeuden ja sääntöpohjaisen kansainvälisen järjestelmän vahvistamiseksi.

Asiasanat ulkopoliittikka, ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka, turvallisuuspolitiikka, puolustuspolitiikka, selonteko

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Referat

Finlands utrikes- och säkerhetspolitik grundar sig på värdebaserad realism. Dess målsättning är att trygga Finlands självständighet och territoriella integritet, förhindra Finland från att hamna i en militär konflikt samt att garantera finländarnas säkerhet och välmående. Politiken grundar sig i demokrati, rättsstatsprincipen, mänskliga rättigheter, jämlikhet och jämställdhet.

Finland upprätthåller en stark nationell försvarskapacitet som en del av Natos gemensamma avskräkning och försvar. Finland är en konstruktiv, pålitlig och effektiv Nato allierad. Den Europeiska Unionen utgör Finlands viktigaste värde- och säkerhetsgemenskap samt viktigaste utrikepolitiska påverkningsskanal. Finland intensifierar (tai fördjupar) det bilaterala samarbetet med allierade och partners samt strävar efter en jämlik dialog och samarbetsmöjligheter även med andra länder än de som ingår i vår närmaste referensgrupp. Vi fortsätter vårt starka stöd till Ukraina i landets försvarsstrid och på dess väg mot medlemskap i EU och Nato. Finland arbetar för att stärka den internationella rätten och det regelbaserade internationella systemet.

Nyckelord

utrikespolitik, utrikes- och säkerhetspolitik, säkerhetspolitik, försvarspolitik, redogörelse

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FOREWORD

The Government submits its Foreign and Security Policy Report to Parliament. The report is based on the Programme of Prime Minister Petteri Orpo's Government.

The report analyses Finland's international operating environment and the drivers of change and defines the key priorities and goals of Finland's foreign and security policy. The report includes the basic policies of Finland's NATO membership in terms of foreign and security policy. In accordance with the Government Programme, the UN strategy will be updated as part of the report.

The Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy builds on earlier practice. The analysis of Finland's operating environment in this report also steers the preparation of the Government's Defence Report and the Government Report on International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation. It will also be taken into account in the Government's National Security Concept.

The report has been prepared in extensive cooperation with the Office of the President of the Republic of Finland, the Prime Minister's Office and the ministries. The President of the Republic of Finland and the Ministerial Committee on Foreign and Security Policy have provided the political guidance for the work.

The Government has set up a parliamentary monitoring group for the Foreign and Security Policy Report. Parliament will give its statement on the report.

1 Foreign and security policy for a new era

The main goals of Finland's foreign and security policy are to safeguard Finland's independence and territorial integrity, to avoid becoming involved in a military conflict and to improve the security and well-being of the people of Finland.

Finland's foreign and security policy is founded on value-based realism. We stand by values we consider important and central to us, such as democracy, the rule of law, international law and human rights, peace, equality, and non-discrimination. At the same time, we are also ready to engage in dialogue with countries that do not share our views and values. We defend the rules-based international system and support its development. Finland's security is safeguarded by three locks: a strong national defence capability as part of NATO deterrence and defence; our memberships in the European Union and NATO; and ever-stronger bilateral cooperation on foreign and security policy and defence with our key allies and partners.

Following its accession to NATO, Finland has become a militarily allied country. Membership strengthens Finland's security. NATO plays a key role in enhancing transatlantic security and, with Finland and Sweden having joined NATO, plays an increasingly strong role in providing stability in Northern Europe.

NATO membership marks a new era for Finland. Now, Finland assesses its security from the perspective of NATO's collective defence, contributes to the security of the whole alliance and, alongside its NATO Allies, works for shared values.

The European Union will maintain its position as Finland's most important political and economic framework and community of values. Finland will continue to work actively to deepen the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and EU cooperation on defence and to strengthen the global role of the EU. Cooperation will also be deepened with the Nordic countries and other close allies.

Safeguarding Finland's security requires navigating a rapidly changing global operating environment that is difficult to predict. It is characterised by problems that concern the whole of humanity, such as increasingly complex security threats,

increased strategic competition and polarisation, as well as climate change and biodiversity loss. Another feature characteristic of this era is the increasingly strong linkage of technology and economic relations to foreign and security policy.

Finland reacts to changes in its operating environment in a determined manner and, at the same time, continues its consistent long-term efforts to implement its foreign and security policy priorities. The aim is to promote international peace and security and sustainable development.

Finland operates through active bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. Defending the rules-based international system and respecting international law are the cornerstones of Finland's actions. Fostering and strengthening the status of the United Nations (UN) holds a key position for Finland.

Finland bears its responsibility and shows its commitment to the international system by seeking responsible positions, such as the membership of the UN Human Rights Council in 2022–2024, the chairmanship of the OSCE in 2025 and seeking non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for the term 2029–2030.

2 Operating environment for foreign and security policy

2.1 Situation in Finland's neighbouring areas

Finland conducts its foreign and security policy in a serious and difficult-to-predict operating environment. Finland's security environment has changed fundamentally and in the long term.

The illegal war of aggression Russia launched against Ukraine in February 2022 is a continuation of the aggressive actions Russia took in Georgia in 2008 and in Crimea and in Eastern Ukraine in 2014. The invasion of Ukraine and actions aimed at destabilising the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood are a manifestation of a long-term development in which Russia, seeking to strengthen its great power status and re-establish the division of Europe into spheres of interest, aims to increase its influence.

Russia has shown that it does not respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, and it has blatantly violated the UN Charter and breached the European rules-based security order.

Russia has extended its hostile hybrid and sabotage operations across Europe. Hybrid influence activities targeted against Finland, particularly carried out by Russia, have increased significantly. The instrumentalised migration seen on Finland's eastern border is one example of a hybrid attack. The threat is unlikely to diminish in the near future, though the intensity and instruments employed in hybrid influence activities against Finland will vary. At the moment, Finland is not facing an immediate military threat, but it must be prepared for the use or threat of military force against Finland.

There is no end in sight to the war of aggression Russia is waging in Ukraine, and the threat of Russian military operations expanding beyond Ukraine cannot be ruled out. No sudden turn for the better is to be expected even if active military operations in Ukraine were to end.

The strong will of the Ukrainians to defend their country and the resilience of Ukrainian society as well as the military, economic, political and humanitarian support provided to Ukraine by the Western community have played a key role in Ukraine's defence of its independence in accordance with the UN Charter. The matter at stake is not only Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity but also the defence of basic principles of international law and democratic values. Finland provides extensive support to Ukraine, which is the victim of a war of aggression, and to its neighbouring countries, which are also suffering from the war. The country's reconstruction will be a task of gigantic proportions that will require substantial global financing measures. At the same time, we should learn from Ukraine's experiences, for example, to bolster societal resilience.

The accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO is reshuffling the strategic landscape in Northern Europe. We can expect Russia to strengthen its military presence and operations on its western borders as soon as the progress of its war of aggression in Ukraine and the resources available to it allow. Russia's ambitions to increase its influence on the Baltic Sea and in the Arctic region underline the importance of strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence in Northern Europe.

The Arctic region has grown in importance in strategic competition due to the Northeast Passage opening and due to increased opportunities to exploit the natural resources in the area. Military activity and rivalry has intensified in the Arctic region.

Finland's and Sweden's NATO memberships and the increasingly close bilateral cooperation arrangements between the Nordic countries and the United States strengthen the stability and security in the Baltic Sea region and Northern Europe, reducing the risk of the use of military force in Finland's neighbouring areas. The accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO also helps deepen the cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic countries.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has fundamentally affected the bilateral relations between Finland and Russia. Finland has refrained from political relations with Russia because Russia's war of aggression is a blatant violation of international law and the UN Charter. Bilateral cooperation between Finnish and Russian public authorities has been frozen across the board since February 2022. Diplomatic relations between the countries remain functional. Communication channels between public authorities have been maintained in sectors essential for Finland,

for example, in relation to border security, cooperation in crime prevention, transport and security of supply. Russia's internal development will remain unpredictable for a long time to come.

2.2 The European Union and NATO as Finland's security communities

The European Union has reacted to Russia's war of aggression swiftly, consistently and determinedly, imposing extensive economic and individual sanctions and providing support to Ukraine amounting to tens of billions of euros. The war has strengthened the role of the EU as a foreign, security and defence policy actor. When it comes to supporting European security, NATO and the EU have roles that complement and strengthen each other.

In the face of the challenges posed by the war of aggression and the COVID-19 pandemic, the EU has shown its strength as a community of values. The will of European countries to join the European Union is a sign of the EU's appeal, and enlargement is back on the EU agenda. The current situation has emphasised the geopolitical aspects of enlargement. EU enlargement also requires internal preparation within the Union.

The EU is making efforts to enhance its strategic competitiveness to be able to respond to global geoeconomic competition in a more sustainable manner and to safeguard the interests of its Member States. For the EU to increase its global weight, it is critical that the Union maintains its unity and ability to function. The European Union consists of democratic states, and election results determine the political orientation of each member state.

NATO's key task is to ensure the security of its member countries through political and military means. In response to Russia's war of aggression, NATO has continued to strengthen its deterrence and defence, increased its military presence in the eastern member states of the Alliance and supported Ukraine. The NATO Allies have provided materiel to Ukraine. Russian power politics, the instability of Europe's Southern Neighbourhood and intensifying strategic competition underscore the importance of NATO's credible deterrence and defence. NATO deterrence promotes the security of the Alliance and international stability. NATO is preparing for the possibility that Russia will be willing to use military force in Europe in the future as well.

NATO membership places Finland even more firmly in the European and transatlantic security community. Finland is part of NATO's collective defence and is, therefore, covered by the security guarantees enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. NATO membership has raised the threshold for the use of military force against Finland. NATO's deterrence and defence are of fundamental importance to Finland's security. At the same time, Finland's strong defence capability and resilience strengthen the whole Alliance.

Finland's NATO membership does not affect the status of the Åland Islands, which is based on international conventions. Åland has a recognised status under international law, which Finland respects. The Åland Islands are part of Finland's state territory, and defending the neutrality of Åland is Finland's responsibility under the relevant conventions. Finland is prepared to defend Åland by any means necessary.

The United States' commitment to NATO and its military presence in Europe are of central importance to the security of Finland, too. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has intensified transatlantic cooperation. The United States expects its allies to bear more of the burden and to cooperate with it in strategic competition. Political divisions in the United States have deepened the polarisation of the country. The level of commitment of each administration to multilateral cooperation is also reflected in transatlantic cooperation.

2.3 Changing power relations

The global operating environment continues to be characterised by increasing strategic competition and changing power relations in global politics. The United States and China are competing for the dominant political, military, economic and technological position in the world. Increasing competition particularly in economic and technological fields have strengthened trade and industrial policies based on strategic, national and regional interests both in the United States and Europe. China has been behaving in this way for a long time.

The economic and technological policies implemented by great powers are coloured by geopolitical goals and geoeconomic means. Control of critical technologies and related resources and raw materials is determining geopolitics to an increasing extent, and economic dependencies are more and more often seen as vulnerabilities. Economic measures are being used to gain strategic benefits. This has led to a situation in which businesses also need to examine their activities from the perspective of the strategic interests of states. At the same time, the importance

of sanctions policy has increased, and it has become an established instrument of foreign and security policy. Therefore, it is important to seek close cooperation, between the EU and the United States in particular, when applying sanctions policy.

Increasingly often, technological competition forces smaller countries and businesses in those countries to choose between Western and Chinese markets, even though such differentiation is not in their best interests. However, this differentiation is being slowed by interdependence between the great powers. Both the United States and the EU see that interdependencies and global challenges, such as responding to climate change, require cooperation with China. China's aims of controlling critical production and supply chains also pose a challenge to Finland and Europe. China will remain an important trading partner for Finland in the future, but we must be aware of the growing risks, prepare for them and prevent them.

Increasing strategic competition and global rivalry between democracies and authoritarian states are leading to the fragmentation and regionalisation of multilateral cooperation. This change manifests itself in the growth of the importance of regional great powers, unofficial coalitions and partnerships. The EU must also seek its own place in this respect. Coalitions of developing economies are seeking to build their own solutions to combat the leading position of the West and the United States in politics, economy and trade, and technology. As the political, economic and technological focus shifts towards Asia, India and the Pacific region, the US, for its part, is intensifying its own partnerships in the area. One controversial issue is the status of Taiwan. The escalation of this issue into a regional conflict cannot be ruled out.

The ongoing transition of global power relations has given weight to efforts to challenge the prevailing rules-based international system. These efforts resonate with many developing countries, which is reflected in, for example, a growing interest in joining the BRICS group. As it expands, the BRICS group will increase in geopolitical significance. This particularly supports Chinese and Russian efforts to build around them an opposing force to the United States and the G7 group, which consists of the leading Western industrial countries. However, the BRICS group is not a monolith; its member countries have differing goals within the group.

At the same time, the growing geopolitical and economic importance of Africa has increased competition over influence and economic opportunities on the continent by external actors. Africa is seeking to take a stronger role in international forums. The membership of the African Union in the G20 group and the expansion of the BRICS group are recent examples of this.

The continent's natural resources, agricultural lands, development opportunities and young population have vast potential. However, if this potential cannot be harnessed for the benefit of Africans themselves, it could exacerbate the disparities in the level of development within Africa and increase political instability, conflicts and radicalisation. Natural disasters made worse by climate change and changing living conditions are deteriorating the situation, and many African countries have massive humanitarian needs. Migratory pressures are high within the continent, but it is also possible that they will increasingly turn towards Europe. The activities and expansion of international terrorist organisations to new areas in Africa constitute a threat to regional and international security.

As early as 1947, the UN took responsibility for finding a just solution to the issue of Palestine, and in 1948 the UN General Assembly declared the aim of creating both an Arab and a Jewish state in Palestine. Despite these efforts, no solution has been found to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The parties have very different starting points, which sets an asymmetrical framework for any attempts to solve the crisis. The Hamas attack in autumn 2023 seriously escalated the crisis, leading to an extreme humanitarian emergency in Gaza and significantly increasing the risk of a large-scale regional war. Globally, the crisis has led to public protests and deepening international divisions, which reflects the strategic and symbolic meaning of the area.

The security situation in the Middle East has been characterised by several prolonged conflicts, which also have a strong regional and cross-border dimension and affect the lives of millions of people. The region lacks any established regional mechanisms that would enable the peaceful resolution of disputes. The parties involved often react to any changes in the area by means of power politics. There are both geopolitical and socio-economic tensions in the area. Some of the states in the region are particularly fragile and their level of democracy varies. Terrorist organisations take advantage of the instability and weak security situation of these states. On the other hand, some states and actors close to them support terrorist activities, because doing so serves their own ambitions for power. The crises in the area also impact the global economy.

There are also several wealthy states in the region that want to diversify their economic and societal structures. These states are also interested in partnering actively with European countries on these matters. Reforms enhance the stability of the area, which is also in the best interests of Europe.

Russia has chosen to pursue an adversarial approach to Western countries, seeking deeper cooperation with countries like China, North Korea and Iran. China has not condemned Russia's war of aggression despite the fact that Russia has breached principles that China deems important, namely sovereignty and territorial integrity. The way in which the relationship between Russia and China develops – in particular Russia's increasing dependence on China in the development of its capabilities – will affect European security.

Russia is striving to maintain its influence in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and Central Asia. Because of its location and the political support shown by its leadership, Belarus plays an important role for Russia in its war of aggression and in exerting pressure on NATO. In recent years, the internal development in Belarus, too, has taken major steps backwards. The EU has imposed sanctions on Belarus due to fraudulent presidential elections and the violence following them and in reaction to the instrumentalisation of migrants for political purposes, hybrid operations on the borders of the EU, and Belarus' complicity in Russia's war of aggression.

Ukraine and many other countries are seeking to hold Russia and its representatives accountable for the consequences and effects of its illegal war of aggression. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued an arrest warrant for the President of Russia, accusing him of war crimes. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has issued an order calling on Russia to immediately suspend its military operation in the territory of Ukraine.

The effects of Russia's war of aggression are reflected not only in security but also widely in global developments, in achieving sustainable development goals, and in regional crises. For example, rising food and energy prices will further increase the need for humanitarian assistance in Ukraine and its neighbouring countries and more broadly, as well. Other humanitarian crises and conflicts, for example, in Syria, Sudan, Yemen and Afghanistan, are not receiving sufficient attention.

2.4 Global developments

Global phenomena, such as climate change, technological development and migration caused by poverty and diminished trust in the future, affect the operating environment for Finland's foreign and security policy both as individual phenomena and through being interlinked in many ways.

Humanity is currently facing the shared challenge of a triple planetary crisis. Climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution have both direct and indirect effects on Finland's security.

Climate change is altering living conditions all over the planet. The consequences and risks of climate change are emphasised in the Arctic. Improved access to the region increases its strategic and security policy significance. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), global warming beyond the target set at 1.5°C is a significant risk to humanity and ecosystems. In relative terms, fragile states and the most vulnerable people are the ones being affected the most. Climate change makes the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals more difficult and weakens the sustainability of societies. It is a significant contributing factor to conflicts and migration and exacerbates other threats.

Climate change and accelerating biodiversity loss are closely interlinked. Among other things, they affect food production and food security, access to water, energy transitions, security of supply, the incidence of diseases and, consequently, the security environment. Phasing out fossil energy will shape global power and economic relations and create internal pressures in countries dependent on income from fossil energy exports. The increasing occurrence of extreme weather events and the effects of climate change that advance at a slower rate, such as rising sea levels, cause challenges to the critical functions of society and increase the risk of natural disasters and accidents. Pollution is the largest environmental risk factor for disease and premature deaths.

Competition over natural resources, including critical minerals and water, is a major cause of local conflicts in particular, and may lead to changes in the global power relations. Illegal trade in natural resources is a source of funding for armed factions and organised crime.

Global demographic trends are strongly differentiated. At a global level, population growth is slowing down, but rapid growth continues in many poor African and South Asian states. Half of the future population growth will take place in Africa, where the population is projected to double by 2050. If population growth could be successfully combined with the stabilisation of democratic social structures, diversification of economic structures and creation of jobs, it would further emphasise the opportunities for economic cooperation in Africa. However, if population growth were to take place alongside unstable societal development, this would exacerbate the negative impacts of poverty, climate change, communicable diseases and the operations of extremist movements. This, on the other hand, could lead to increasing migratory pressure on Europe.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a large part of migration in the world happens in a controlled manner. This can have a favourable impact on both the country of origin and the country of destination.

Uncontrolled migration may cause tensions and instability within and between states. Most refugees flee inside countries in crisis or into neighbouring countries, which are often fragile as well.

Poverty, diminished trust in the future and growing disparities in living standards are among the most central root causes of uncontrolled migration, conflicts and radicalisation. They also increase antagonism and widen the gaps both between countries and within countries. In many places, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and various conflicts have slowed the progress of desirable global development. Especially in developing countries, external shocks are driving people to poverty who work outside the official economy and lack social insurance cover for illness or unemployment.

Polarisation of society and the growth of extremist thinking are worldwide threats to social peace. Divisions emerging in society offer hostile actors fertile ground for information influence activities and destabilising actions, for example, on social media platforms.

Increased antagonism between population groups also sows seeds for the activities of violent extremist movements. Violent radical Islamist movements constitute a significant global threat of terrorism that may be associated with the areas of origin of migration into Europe and with foreign fighters. Radicalisation is a matter that touches increasingly younger age groups. In Europe, the main threat of terrorist attacks is posed by lone supporters of radical Islamist or extremist ideologies and, on the other hand, by small covert cells.

The use of disruptive technologies and solutions offers substantial opportunities to achieve major developments in various sectors, promote the clean transition, generate sustainable economic growth, and increase efficiency and productivity. Disruptive technologies have the potential to enhance global security, education, well-being and health. At the same time, it is important to establish a wide understanding of the security threats, potential for misuse, human rights issues and interdependencies related to such development. Disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence and quantum technologies, may potentially have major security policy implications. As they develop, they will pose new challenges for the defence and security sectors in particular. The development of AI makes cyberattacks, information influence activities and, as one of its instruments,

disinformation, more targeted and effective. For example, the use of deepfakes is expanding, and they are becoming more difficult to identify. Furthermore, AI is already being used as a way to influence elections. In such an environment, an increased focus must also be put on keeping confidential information secure.

Warfare will be revolutionised as technological developments enable more advanced weapon systems and applications on land, at sea, in the air, in space and in the cyber environment. At the same time, systems are increasingly dependent on the surrounding society. Technological development has provided hostile actors with new opportunities to engage in hybrid influence activities exercised below the threshold of open conflict. Hostile cyber operations have become an established part of power politics and of the range of instruments available in influence activities conducted by state actors. Cyber, hybrid and information operations are also conducted under normal conditions, which may, for its part, obscure the boundaries between war and peace. Despite the increasingly technological nature of warfare, conventional warfare capabilities remain important, particularly in large-scale and long-term conflicts.

2.5 The rules-based international system

The United Nations Charter and its universal values, treaties and institutions form the foundation of the rules-based international system. The UN Charter and the multilateral treaties drawn up in the UN regulate such matters as the use of force and the control of its instruments, the realisation of human rights and the rule of law, and the promotion of economic and social development, and provide means for managing environmental risks.

The existing rules-based, multilateral system is facing major pressures. The system, mostly built after the Second World War, no longer matches the changing power relations between states in all respects. It also fails to take into account the expansion and diversification of the international agenda or the increased significance of non-state actors in international cooperation. The differing goals of the great powers and the competition between them make cooperation difficult.

The inability of the UN Security Council to intervene in many developments that threaten peace and stability has eroded the credibility of the UN system as a provider of security. At the same time, frustration with the system has produced alternative cooperation initiatives and negotiation processes among various

groups of countries, such as the G7 and G20 countries and the BRICS group. These initiatives and processes operate outside the open, rules-based international system.

Many individual states and non-state actors are challenging and undermining the international system, some openly invoking their status, and others using various hybrid instruments and new technologies. Non-state actors are exerting influence on both international and national affairs and norms more and more extensively and independently. The role played by individual people, communities and companies in formulating political agendas is growing. Large technology companies in particular are becoming increasingly important actors.

The international treaty system in the field of arms control is weak. Irresponsible references by the Russian leadership to the potential use of nuclear weapons, the destabilising actions of North Korea and Iran, the increased threat of nuclear proliferation in general, including the potential expansion of nuclear arms race to space, and the use of chemical weapons witnessed in recent years have undermined the operating environment for international arms control.

With the rise of economic power politics, trade policy has become a part of the security policy toolkit. Growing tensions have led to increased restrictions on international trade and investments and to the favouring of domestic production. The multilateral rules of international trade are being tested, and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its dispute settlement system are facing difficulties. Bilateral and plurilateral agreements enable progress in commercial and economic cooperation between willing parties. For their part, EU trade agreements have promoted rules-based international trade.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by UN member states is not a legally binding document. However, it is politically binding on all countries in the world and provides guidelines for international cooperation and for Finland's actions over the next few years. The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals has been jeopardised not only due to difficulties in multilateral cooperation but also due to the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression. UN organisations play an important role in achieving the goals.

Growing tensions and the increase in the number of armed conflicts have made work to strengthen the rules-based international system even more important than before. In conflicts, the significance of international law is emphasised when assessing the use of force and compliance with humanitarian law. The International

Criminal Court is has become more prominent, as its jurisdiction extends to an increasingly wide range of investigations of individuals charged with the gravest international crimes, up to and including the highest state leadership.

Technological development raises new issues to be addressed by international law. These issues relate to, for example, the cyber environment, the use of artificial intelligence, new weapons technologies and the exploitation of critical raw materials. Hybrid influence activities may resort to practises aimed at hindering the realisation of accountability under international law. The impacts of climate change also require solutions under international law related to, for example, the impact of rising sea levels on national borders and the survival of island states. On a positive note, states have also succeeded in negotiating new multilateral agreements, such as the High Seas Biodiversity Treaty.

3 Priorities and goals

3.1 Finland takes determined action to respond to the deterioration of its security environment

Finland's security environment has deteriorated fundamentally and in the long term especially due to Russia's aggressive actions. Finland is responding to the changed situation with determination. Finland maintains and develops strong national defence capability, based on general conscription and comprehensive defence, as part of NATO's collective deterrence and defence, strengthens the resilience of society and further intensifies cooperation with its allies and partners. Finland is an active member of the group of countries that defends the rules-based international system and democracy. Finland engages countries to take an active approach to security, encouraging them to raise their defence readiness and improve their resilience. Finland takes a broad view of security. Economic competitiveness, technological capability, sustainable public finances and social and ecological resilience will continue to be among the key prerequisites for safeguarding security in the future.

Finland's objective is for Russia to end its war and illegal occupation of areas in Ukraine and to repel Russia's destabilising aspirations. Together with its EU partners and NATO Allies, Finland is preparing itself for the expansion of Russia's aggression in Europe. Depending on Russia's actions, Finland will reassess its relationship with Russia and reassess the possibilities for cooperating with Russia. Similar assessments are also made under the auspices of the EU and NATO. Finland will refrain from building political relations with Russia for as long as it continues its war of aggression and its violations of international law. As far as possible, we will support efforts to expand the room for manoeuvre for civil society in Russia. Finland will maintain and develop its knowledge of Russia and Finland's ability to analyse developments in Russia.

Finland requires that Russia be held accountable for its violations of international law and that it be held liable for damage caused by these violations. Finland will promote international efforts to ensure accountability for Russia's crime of aggression and for crimes against international law committed during Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Finland considers it important that the EU and G7

find a solution to using frozen Russian assets to support Ukraine in accordance with international law. Finland will actively promote continuing work on the matter in the EU and with other international partners.

3.1.1 Finland intensifies bilateral cooperation with key allies and partners

Support for Ukraine and the country's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity is a key priority of Finland's foreign and security policy. Continuous international support is necessary for Ukraine's defence capability and, when the time for peace negotiations comes, for strengthening the country's negotiating position to ensure a just and lasting peace to the war of aggression perpetrated against Ukraine.

Finland continues to support Ukraine by means of development cooperation, defence sector support, civilian crisis management and humanitarian assistance. In a short time, Ukraine has become Finland's biggest development cooperation partner. Assistance for Ukraine is also allocated through the European Union, the Council of Europe, NATO funds, Nordic financial institutions, and non-governmental organisations. In the future, Ukraine will be a partner for Finland in security and defence cooperation.

For Finland, it is important that the allies continue to provide long-term material and financial support and support the development of Ukraine's armed forces and their interoperability both bilaterally and through NATO. Finland's goal is for the EU to continue to provide strong political, economic and military support and material assistance and humanitarian aid for Ukraine for as long as it is needed. Finland supports the use of the European Peace Facility (EPF) and is open to a variety of financing solutions to support Ukraine. Long-term support for Ukraine also requires supporting the EU's Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods and increasing the production capacity of the European defence industry.

Having expressed its will to join the European Union and NATO, Ukraine has chosen a European and transatlantic future for the country. Together with its EU partners and NATO Allies, Finland supports Ukraine's endeavours towards these goals. Finland will participate in Ukraine's reconstruction across a broad front based on a national reconstruction plan. Finland will take part in concrete reconstruction projects in the coming years, support the reforms required by Ukraine's EU integration and lay a foundation for the Finnish private sector to do business in Ukraine. Support for civil society is a central part of the country's reconstruction.

The security commitments given to Ukraine by Finland and many other countries anchor Ukraine as part of the Euro-Atlantic security system and serve as a bridge to forthcoming EU and NATO memberships.

The Nordic countries are Finland's closest partners. Due to the weakened security policy situation, collaboration with the Nordic countries, which share the same values and interests, is becoming even more important than before. Finland works actively to deepen Nordic integration and dismantle barriers between the Nordic countries. The Nordic countries aim to become the world's best integrated region. Finland fosters its close relations with Sweden, which is our closest partner. Cooperation between Finland and Norway will become closer now that both countries are NATO members and share a land border with Russia. Cooperation has also become closer with Denmark, which abandoned its opt-out clause to the European Union's Common Security and Defence Policy, and with Iceland, which has central location with a view to the security of the Arctic region. Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEF) will also be deepened further. Cooperation in readiness and security of supply between the Nordic countries will be intensified. Finland hosts the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB), the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), and the Nordic Development Fund (NDF). Through these organisations, Finland supports societally beneficial investments in its neighbouring regions, in Ukraine and in developing countries. Nordic cooperation will be promoted not only via Nordic cooperation structures but also in the EU, the UN and other international forums and in relation to various groups of countries. Cooperation will advance sustainable development and seek solutions to key global challenges, such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and issues related to technological development.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are important partners for Finland in the EU, in NATO and bilaterally. Finland's and Sweden's NATO memberships also make it possible to deepen security policy cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic countries in Finland's neighbouring areas. A key foreign policy framework for Finland is the Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8) cooperation format and its deepening dialogue with Germany and Poland. The changed situation of the Baltic Sea highlights the importance of cooperation between like-minded countries. The NB8 countries also cooperate closely within UN organisations. As large European countries and globally significant actors, Germany and France are important allies and partners for Finland in foreign and security policy and in defence cooperation.

The United Kingdom is a major military actor in Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea region and a close ally of Finland. Finland and the UK will continue their close security and defence cooperation and collaboration related to defence materiel

procurement. Finland participates in the work of the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and promotes even stronger UK commitment to the security of the Baltic Sea region.

Finland develops its relationship with the United States across the board. The United States is a key strategic partner and ally for Finland. Finland considers it important that the United States remains committed to the cooperation conducted within the rules-based international system. Close and comprehensive bilateral relations will be strengthened at various levels and through an extensive network of cooperation and regular high-level dialogue.

The US commitment to Europe, through both bilateral arrangements and NATO, is of central importance to security in Europe and Finland. Transatlantic cooperation is also an important part of Nordic security and defence cooperation. The bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) between Finland and the United States is significant for Finnish security as it constitutes the foundation for cooperation carried out with the United States in Finland in all security situations. It is also beneficial for Finland's defence and the defence of the whole Nordic and Baltic Sea region that similar agreements have been concluded between the other Nordic countries and the United States.

It is in the interests of Finland and the United States to continue cooperation in the development and use of disruptive technologies and the drafting of standards and regulations for the sector. Finland will actively intensify its technology cooperation with the United States. Technology cooperation will be brought into the core of the bilateral relationship between the countries alongside defence and trade. In technology cooperation, it is important to observe both commercial and economic interests and foreign and security policy interests.

Finland's goal is a close and strategic cooperation relationship between the EU and the United States, which requires active participation from both parties. Finland promotes the dismantling of barriers to trade in the Euro-Atlantic area.

The management of security risks deriving from commercial and economic dependencies and competition in disruptive technologies require that Finland strengthen its political and economic relations with key like-minded partner countries outside Europe. Finland will invest in deepening its relations with Canada, which is an ally, and with Australia, South Korea and Japan. This will be done by enhancing political dialogue and developing cooperation in the fields of security policy, defence, trade, technology and research. This will benefit Finland as it will

strengthen the rules-based system, develop security of supply and other resilience and strengthen the position of Finnish companies in the predictable business environments of the countries in question.

3.1.2 Finland invests in crisis resilience

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic and tensions in world politics highlight the importance of society's resilience. In accordance with the comprehensive security approach, the crisis resilience of Finnish society is based on the ability to maintain the vital functions of society under all circumstances. This requires seamless cooperation between public authorities. The Security Strategy for Society will be updated to respond to the demands of the new security environment. Finland is also willing to make its expertise and lessons learned on comprehensive security and comprehensive defence available to other countries.

Finland must always and under all situations be prepared for the use or threat of military force against Finland as well as for political pressure. Russia's military actions against Ukraine show the importance of deterrence, resilience, rapid operative readiness, strong defence capability and a strong will to defend one's country. Finland ensures that it has the ability to counter military pressure and to respond to sustained large-scale offensive operations with national resources and as part of NATO.

A strong national defence capability as part of NATO's collective deterrence and defence is the foundation for Finland's security. NATO's military force is based on the national forces and capabilities of its member countries, which they develop and prepare to use collectively to defend the Allied territory. Finland maintains and develops its own strong defence capability under any circumstances, taking account of NATO's common goals and the obligation under Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty to maintain and develop its individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack. The key functions of Finnish defence have been integrated into NATO's joint structures and operating models. Finland will safeguard the maintenance, development and resourcing of its own defence capability, taking account of the fundamental and long-lasting deterioration of the security environment. Even as a NATO member, Finland's national defence capability is based on general conscription, large, trained reserves and a strong will to defend the country (79%, 11/2023), which has extensive national unity and the feeling that Finland is worth defending at its core. The strong will to defend the country

provides the foundations for comprehensive national defence and comprehensive security and strengthens the resilience of Finnish society. We must continue to foster and strengthen this will.

As part of its national defence capability, Finland has consistently maintained its civil preparedness and civil defence in such a manner that the civilian population and key functions can be protected even in the event of an armed attack.

Finland will ensure that national intelligence activities are developed to respond to increased demands and changes in the security environment. Finland has the readiness to identify, prevent and combat espionage, hybrid influence activities, terrorism and military threats in both the physical world and cyberspace. In addition to established international intelligence cooperation, Finland participates actively in NATO's Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance.

Finland prepares proactively for the possibility of becoming a target of multifaceted hybrid influence activities and for countering them. Causing intentional damage to critical infrastructure is one possible form of hybrid influence activities that Finland is further improving its preparedness for. It is essential to maintain a precise and shared situation awareness of threats against critical infrastructure and critical functions and to have the ability to recover from damage to critical infrastructure. Finland works actively to strengthen the European Union's and NATO's ability to prevent and respond to hybrid operations. The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats, open to both EU and NATO members, was established in Helsinki at Finland's initiative. The operations of the centre have grown, and it can now more effectively help the participating countries prevent hybrid threats and respond to them.

Finland will use the necessary political, operative, legal, diplomatic and economic means to respond to the instrumentalisation of migration as a form of hybrid influence activity. With these measures, Finland supports internal and national security, the legal order of society, territorial integrity, and public order and security. When assessing measures needed to respond to instrumentalisation, Finland will take account of the legal aspects of EU law and international law, the practices of other EU and NATO member states and experiences of Finland as a country located on the external border. Finland will participate in and influence the legal dialogue on developing legal practice concerning instrumentalised migration to ensure that the nature, extent and seriousness of instrumentalisation will be taken into account as comprehensively as possible. It is important to differentiate between instrumentalised migration, asylum seeking and immigration so that each phenomenon can be addressed in an appropriate manner. Third-party intervention

in the appeals pending at the European Court of Human Rights is one means available to Finland to participate in developing legal practice. Together with its EU partners and NATO Allies, Finland is seeking effective ways to respond to the phenomenon of instrumentalised migration.

Finland considers it particularly important to ensure that EU level regulation, including the Schengen rules, provide sufficient national freedom of action in these situations. Under the Treaties, the Union shall respect essential State functions, including those designed to maintain public order and safeguard national security and human rights.

Cyber security and cyber defence and the prevention of serious and organised cyber crime safeguard state sovereignty in the cyber operating environment. They also prevent and counter serious cyber attacks targeting national decision-making, the activities of public authorities, critical infrastructure and the defence system perpetrated by governmental actors or operators acting on the behalf of government actors. Finland's cyber security, cyber diplomacy, cyber defence and cyber crime prevention are developed as part of Finland's comprehensive security concept and in accordance with foreign, security and defence policy objectives. Finland uses national cyber policy and cyber diplomacy based on it to enhance its own ability to prepare for and respond to hostile cyber activities and to promote the rules-based, multilateral international system. Alongside public authorities, businesses and other organisations play an important role in national cyber preparedness and cyber resilience.

Investigating and identifying governments or other actors that have perpetrated hostile cyber and hybrid activities, i.e. attribution, is part of Finland's range of political instruments for responding to hostile influence activities. Attribution promotes foreign and security policy objectives, strengthens a rules-based approach to the cyber operating environment, encourages responsible behaviour by states and provides a credible restraint against hostile activities. Finland will develop national guidelines for goal-oriented and consistent cyber attribution, taking into account its key allies and partners.

Security of supply is a necessary part of resilience and must be safeguarded under any circumstances. Security of supply is maintained and developed taking the identified development needs into consideration. The protection and reliability of critical infrastructure and the security and decentralisation of supply chains are key concerns in security of supply. With a view to the comprehensive preparedness of society, it is essential to safeguard the food supply, ensure deliveries of material resources for healthcare and secure energy supply by promoting the clean

transition. In military security of supply, safeguarding the operational capacity of key capabilities is a priority. Finland will continue to develop its preparedness for international rescue operations as part of the EU and NATO and in cooperation with UN organisations.

In the future, it will be increasingly important to identify the foreign, security and defence policy impacts of disruptive technologies, especially those of artificial intelligence and quantum technologies, and to develop means to respond to them. Finland will participate actively in the debate on the global control and regulation of technology. Finland advocates taking fundamental and human rights and the risks related to them strongly into account when developing and applying AI and drawing up relevant regulation. We should identify not only the risks of disruptive technologies, but also the opportunities they provide in relation to security, the development of defence capability, economic growth, productivity, sustainable development, technological competence and investments in the sector. Finland takes advantage of the technological competence it has and the strengths of the private sector as competitive advantages.

Finland practices responsible export control of defence materiel and dual-use goods, complying with the international obligations and regulation of export control and national legislation. Finland supports keeping export control under national jurisdiction, but promotes increasing internal exchange of information within the EU and enhancing coordination to harmonise national decisions on export licences. The aim is to promote equal conditions for the European defence industry and make industrial cooperation easier in Europe. Export control also takes into account that the importance of comprehensive security and security of supply has increased. Finland will not set stricter criteria for defence materiel exports than key European reference countries. Finland's policy regarding export licence decisions will be consistent. As a rule, maintenance and upgrades of previously approved materiel will be approved. The need to reform the Act on the export of defence materiel will be assessed.

The development of information security, including potential new risks related to AI, requires both national efforts and international cooperation. The national knowledge base must be better protected against information influence activities. Information security is dealt with in connection with the Government's Defence Report and other relevant strategies and to the necessary extent, the strategic communications model.

Hostile governmental information influence activities is responded to, for example, by using a range of instruments available for information defence and information security as well as strategic communication and diplomacy. Timely and targeted strategic communication will be strengthened. Consistent long-term country branding, focusing on Finland's strengths, maintains and strengthens awareness of Finland and contributes to Finland's good country image. A strong country image provides influence, creates financial opportunities and protects from external influence activities in a changing operating environment.

The high media literacy and individual emergency planning of Finnish people are some of the key elements of the crisis resilience of Finnish society. It is important for primary and lower secondary education to pay attention to supporting the media literacy, media competence and psychological resilience of citizens and to pay attention to identifying and countering information influence activities. The provision by the media of reliable and up-to-date information also deserves attention.

Open, multilingual and active communication by public authorities plays a key role in combating information influencing. It also strengthens trust in society and the sense of security and inclusion among the public. This helps combat different forms of hybrid influence activities and strengthens social cohesion. For the stability of society, it is important to ensure that all Finnish people have access to information in the event of serious incidents and in emergency conditions.

Finland is proactively taking action to prevent the polarisation of society and to protect Finnish society from intentional attempts by hostile actors to increase or exploit polarisation in society.

Finland controls the longest land border between NATO and the EU and Russia. Finland participates in the operations of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Frontex, and advocates strengthening its ability to operate. Developing the Schengen Border Code and other EU statutes will increase opportunities to deploy standing corps of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. In addition, Finland will develop opportunities to receive and use bilateral border security aid at all borders.

With a view to identifying, preventing and combating the various forms of international organised crime, it is necessary for Finland to share information and best practices with partner countries and to participate in international crime prevention. International organised crime, such as human trafficking, also poses a serious threat to internal security and human security and calls for better exchange

of information both to combat crime and to help victims. International terrorism requires action from Finland, because of international security, stability and the spillover effects of conflicts and because international terrorism constitutes a threat to national security. Finland will continue to engage in international cooperation to combat terrorism, violent extremism and violent radicalisation as part of national prevention efforts.

The changed security environment requires the Government to constantly assess threats, practice efficient overall coordination, and identify and counter hybrid threats. The Government's preparation and leadership capacity in the context of internal and external security will be strengthened. Finland will draw up a National Security Concept with a focus on identifying and assessing the most serious threats against Finland's interests in more efficient and extensive ways at the government level and through cooperation across administrative boundaries. On the one hand, Finland's internal security is affected from outside the country, and, on the other hand, our internal security situation is reflected on Finland's external security. The connection between internal and external threats requires close cooperation between the President of the Republic and the Government.

The effectiveness of Finland's foreign and security policy is ensured by targeting the allocated operational resources in a strategic manner, by safeguarding the capacity of Finland's network of diplomatic missions to function and by safeguarding the provision of key consular services in crisis situations.

3.2 Finland strengthens security and prosperity as part of the European Union and through transatlantic cooperation

3.2.1 Finland promotes the role of the European Union as a provider of comprehensive security

The European Union is Finland's most important political and economic frame of reference and community of values. Finland is a reliable and solution-oriented Member State that works constructively and proactively and takes the initiative to advance its objectives.

The EU should play a major role in providing the framework for European security and defence cooperation and as a provider of comprehensive security. The more unified and stronger the EU is, the more secure is Finland's position. The work done

under the auspices of the EU for the development of Europe's own security and defence contributes to strengthening transatlantic security and is in NATO's interest as well.

Finland supports the strengthening of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and promotes the development of the EU's security and defence cooperation in a comprehensive and concrete direction in accordance with the Strategic Compass adopted in March 2022. The capacity of the European defence industry must be increased and the single market for military equipment must be strengthened. This is necessary both to support Ukraine in the long term and to strengthen Europe's defence capability. It is important for Finland that the EU focus increasingly on supporting the defence and military capabilities of the Member States and on shoring up the European Defence Industrial Technology Base. Europe must also continue measures aimed at developing its future capabilities in the medium and long term. Finland advocates for a stronger role for the European Investment Bank (EIB) in funding the defence industry. It is also important to develop hybrid and cyber capabilities, military mobility, space capabilities, and EU-NATO cooperation. Finland will make full use of EU funding for EU military mobility projects.

The EU must develop its own ability to prevent conflicts, build peace and strengthen international security in a comprehensive manner. Finland advocates the use of military and civilian crisis management and the European Peace Facility (EPF) to support Ukraine and other partner countries.

Finland underscores the need to strengthen the Union's comprehensive preparedness for potential future crises and hybrid threats. Comprehensive security thinking and the relevant security of supply measures must be promoted in EU Member States, too. At the EU level, Finland advocates a coordinated approach that takes all policy sectors into account in strengthening preparedness. To enhance comprehensive security, Finland's objective is to define concrete EU level goals for both the Union and the Member States. Finland advocates for the creation of a preparedness union based on comprehensive security within the EU to strengthen the Union's preparedness and crisis operations. Enhancing the EU's crisis resilience is an important part of strategic competitiveness and the Union's ability to operate independently.

Even as a NATO member, Finland emphasises the importance of the EU's mutual assistance clause (Article 42(7), TEU) and solidarity clause (Article 222, TFEU) and works actively to ensure that the obligation of mutual assistance, which is intended to apply if a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, remains

credible and effective. Finland creates and maintains readiness to act in accordance with the solidarity clause in a situation in which a Member State is the object of a terrorist attack or encounters a natural or man-made disaster. Finland is prepared to provide and receive assistance in accordance with the mutual assistance clause and the solidarity clause.

Finland wants to see a globally strong and well-functioning European Union that promotes the security, prosperity and economic interests of its Member States and citizens. The EU's global capacity to act should be examined in a comprehensive manner and developed consistently. The equality of the Member States, institutional balance and the key position of the Community Method are essential principles when developing the EU.

Alongside decision-making, Finland draws attention to the need to strengthen the EU's ability to act externally, coordinate external action and use external relations instruments in a strategic manner. The EU should develop the coherence of its external and internal policies to enhance the weight of the Union's foreign policy. The EU's worldwide network of representations must be developed in a manner that promotes the EU's goals in a more effective, systematic and efficient manner and strengthens strategic communication. The diplomatic cooperation between the Union and Member States must be further deepened to enhance the effectiveness of the EU. Finland promotes the strategic use of EU external financing, for example, by supporting the EU's endeavours to encourage third countries to readmit their own nationals. The EU's Global Gateway strategy addresses the root causes of migration by improving the agency of third countries in important sectors, such as healthcare and education. Partnerships strengthen the Union as an external actor and help respond to increasing international geopolitical and geoeconomic competition.

Finland considers it important to strengthen the EU's strategic competitiveness in a market-oriented manner based on the EU's own strengths, such as the use of research and innovation and the application of high technologies. To improve competitiveness, efforts should be made to foster a favourable investment environment and develop predictable regulation. At the core lie the promotion of free trade, an effective competition policy and a well-functioning single market based on free movement. Together these promote sustainable economic growth and technological development based on our common values. To ensure competition neutrality, the EU should return in its State aid rules to the normal pre-crisis position. The importance of reliable technology partners is highlighted.

The comprehensive security of Europe requires that strategic dependencies are identified and managed. Measures to protect critical technologies, diversify production and supply chains of raw materials and reduce critical dependencies are absolutely necessary. The EU's long-term relations with third countries and trade partnerships improve the EU's risk management and its range of options.

Finland promotes solutions based on trade liberalisation as a key means of supporting the EU's strategic competitiveness and implementing economic security. Finland supports the EU's efforts to negotiate new free trade agreements and other partnerships and supports the rapid finalisation of the ongoing agreement negotiations and the entry into force of the agreements.

Finland advocates stronger EU partnerships and cooperation with third countries on an equal footing to seek common solutions to regional and global problems. EU partnerships can be used to strengthen the EU's global role and promote the Union's interests and values. Finland promotes solutions that make the EU an interesting and constructive negotiating partner for third countries and enable it to function in a solution-oriented manner in protecting and developing the rules-based, multilateral system. One key is to advance economic partnerships and trade with African countries and investments in them. The significance of Africa as a neighbouring area of Europe is strongly emphasised from the perspectives of critical raw materials, migration and social development.

EU enlargement is a significant geopolitical issue for Finland and the EU. Finland advocates applying a credible enlargement policy based on EU membership criteria, with special emphasis on the importance of democratic institutions and rule of law reforms. The Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policies promote peace, prosperity, stability and security in Europe and its neighbouring areas. Finland welcomes the development of the gradual integration, which could provide candidate countries with some concrete benefits of EU membership already during negotiations. Supporting enlargement can protect the EU's neighbouring areas, especially from Russia's destabilising actions. At the same time, the enlargement process requires readiness from the EU to reform itself. Finland's objective is for the enlarged Union to be a stronger actor than it is today, both externally and internally.

Finland works towards a unified and determined EU policy on Russia. We use our influence to have the EU intensify its sanctions as Russia's war of aggression continues. At the same time, we promote the adoption of a more consistent interpretation practice to prevent circumvention of sanctions and to make

implementation more effective. Finnish authorities collaborate closely to ensure the enforcement of sanctions at a national level. The services needed by Finnish businesses to enforce sanctions will be ensured.

Finland maintains relations with European countries and European cooperation structures in a comprehensive manner. Finland invests in deepening its relations with its European allies and partner countries by means of preparation and using influence in advance both bilaterally and through work done in international organisations.

3.2.2 Finland strengthens the role of NATO as a cornerstone of transatlantic security

Finland is a security provider and a constructive, reliable and capable ally that contributes to the fulfilment of all three of NATO's core tasks – deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security – together with its allies. Finland contributes to NATO's capability both in our neighbouring areas and across NATO's whole area of responsibility.

NATO's deterrence consists of conventional forces and capabilities, missile defence and nuclear weapons. These are complemented by the Alliance's space and cyber capabilities. Finland has not set any national restrictions on its NATO membership and participates in the Alliance's activities across the board. Finland strengthens the credibility of NATO's deterrence and defence and contributes to strengthening the Alliance's deterrence and defence in a comprehensive manner and in the long term. Finland is committed to NATO's deterrence and collective defence across the Alliance in accordance with the 360-degree approach throughout the whole Allied territory and taking account of all threats. As a member of NATO, Finland maintains credible defence capability as part of the Alliance in all circumstances and is prepared to support its NATO Allies according to the obligations of membership.

The development of the deterrence and defence is based on NATO's collective political will, which is built upon the policies determined by heads of state and government and foreign and defence ministers. Comprehensive national preparation constitutes the foundation for determined efforts to exert influence to promote Finland's foreign, security and defence policy objectives and military interests and goals at all levels both in NATO and with allies.

Deterrence is an essential part of security policy and a political instrument to promote the security of NATO and international stability. The cornerstones of a functioning deterrence include the weight of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and strong collective defence; resilience; military and other capabilities; political commitment to readiness to act; and strategic communications. A key element of the credibility of deterrence is the unity of the Alliance, which shows NATO's strong political will and readiness to act. Finland's robust national defence contributes to strengthening NATO's collective deterrence. Finland will participate fully in the development and maintenance of deterrence and defence. In NATO, Finland contributes actively to promoting the Alliance's unity and ability to make decisions.

The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear deterrence is to preserve peace, to prevent coercion against the Alliance and to deter aggression. Nuclear deterrence is the strongest form of deterrence, and the capabilities and functions related to it are part of NATO's collective deterrence and defence. Finland participates actively in formulating the policies on NATO's nuclear deterrence and in decisions concerning how to develop it. Finland will strengthen its competence on matters related to nuclear deterrence.

NATO is an essential part of the European security order. NATO shares common values and principles, which have been defined in the North Atlantic Treaty. Together with its allies, Finland promotes the implementation of these values and principles. Finland supports NATO's Open Door policy, which is one of the pillars of the European security order. All countries have a sovereign right to decide on their own security arrangements.

NATO's Strategic Concept, which steers NATO, states that Russia is the most significant and direct threat to Euro-Atlantic security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Finland considers it important that NATO perceives that Russia will remain a primary threat to the Alliance and that NATO continues to strengthen its deterrence and defence in the long term.

In accordance with the Strategic Concept, terrorism is the most direct asymmetric threat to the security of the citizens of NATO countries, and to international peace and security. In NATO's counterterrorism activities, Finland emphasises the need to respect international law and to prevent terrorism by addressing its root causes. Efficient exchange of information and cooperation and coordination with other international actors, such as the EU, is important in counterterrorism activities.

In accordance with NATO's guideline, Finland aims to keep defence expenditure at the level of at least two per cent of GDP across government terms. Finland participates in the burden-sharing for Euro-Atlantic security not only by means of defence expenditure but also by contributing capabilities and troops, participating in operations and supporting Ukraine. Finland uses its influence to ensure that NATO and our allies will continue to invest in NATO's security with sufficient resources in the same manner as Finland. Finland supports stronger participation of European Allies in the implementation of NATO's collective deterrence and defence. This will enhance European security and supports the burden-sharing between Europe and the United States, thus further reinforcing transatlantic ties.

With Finland and Sweden having joined NATO, the Baltic Sea and the Arctic region form a unified geostrategic area. Finland considers it important that NATO approaches the Arctic region as an inseparable part of the security of the Euro-Atlantic area and NATO's collective deterrence and defence. Arctic perspectives should be consistently considered in all NATO activities. Finland aims at a stable Arctic region based on constructive cooperation. Finland contributes to NATO's work concerning the security of the Arctic and Baltic Sea regions by, for example, maintaining and increasing the situational awareness of Arctic security and making Finland's Arctic competence available to NATO.

NATO's collective defence is founded on, on one hand, strong political commitment and solidarity between the Allied countries and, on the other hand, concrete mechanisms for executing collective defence. Finland participates in NATO's operative planning, the NATO Defence Planning Process, and collective peacetime missions; allocates the necessary forces for the NATO Force Model and other military functions; and deploys staff to NATO structures. The defence policy and military dimensions of Finland's NATO membership will be outlined in the Government Defence Report.

Finland promotes NATO's partnership policy to strengthen both NATO's own and international security, taking account of NATO's 360-degree approach to security. NATO's partnership cooperation should be developed not only through political dialogue but also through concrete cooperation projects. Participation in security and defence sector support tasks in partner countries and other cooperative security tasks is an important part of Finland's NATO policy. Finland will also continue to participate in NATO's military crisis management.

NATO and the EU share a common value base and common interest in safeguarding the Euro-Atlantic security and stability. Finland promotes the complementary and mutually reinforcing cooperation between NATO and the EU.

The importance of resilience for the efficient implementation of all three of NATO's core tasks is significant. Finland underscores the need to strengthen the resilience of NATO countries and NATO for the implementation of deterrence and defence in particular. In NATO, Finland promotes the development of cooperation between military and civilian authorities in the preparation of resilience, civil preparedness and comprehensive defence matters and in the work to enable military activities. NATO-EU cooperation in building resilience of the Alliance is of essential importance to Finland.

Finland participates actively in NATO's work to counter hybrid threats, aiming to increase awareness of hybrid threats in NATO. Finland participates actively in developing NATO's cyber defence.

Disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence and quantum technology, have a significant impact on NATO's activities and play a key role, for example, in the development of future capabilities and enabling military activities. Finland is profiled as one of the top players in the field of high technology within NATO. As a NATO member, Finland will use and develop its technological competence by, for example, participating in NATO's DIANA innovation initiative and NATO's innovation fund, and by striving to utilise the financial opportunities they provide at a national level.

Finland promotes NATO's work on the security impacts of climate change, particularly to identify and manage the security impacts of climate change and to adapt military operations to climate change and to mitigate climate change without compromising capabilities.

The purpose of arms control is to ensure strategic stability. Finland promotes NATO's arms control work to strengthen the security of both our country and NATO as a whole.

Finland advocates an ambitious approach to NATO's Women, Peace and Security agenda and NATO's Human Security concept. Finland supports the development of NATO's Women, Peace and Security work in a manner that enhances the implementation of the agenda across all NATO core tasks, including deterrence and defence.

3.3 Finland seeks cooperation opportunities in a changing world

Finland seeks good cooperation relationships with countries on different continents to promote our political and economic interests from the perspective of reciprocal benefit. We seek partnerships to solve international cross-border issues.

Finland cooperates with China in a manner consistent with its own values and priorities. Bilaterally, China is an important trading partner for Finland. Finland upholds well-functioning relations with China. The way Finland formulates its China policy is also affected by our memberships in the European Union and NATO. China's stance on Russia's war of aggression and the deepening China-Russia relationship affect Finland's bilateral relations with China and EU-China relations. Efforts to strengthen China's commitment to international law and the rules-based international system, including human rights, will be continued. Finland encourages China to exert its influence to achieve a peace between Russia and Ukraine that would respect Ukraine's territorial integrity and the UN Charter. Finland recognises the risks associated with strategic dependencies and acts consistently to manage them. Finland aims to reduce its economic, technological and industrial dependence on China in order to strengthen societal resilience and prevent inappropriate attempts to exert influence. This aim will be promoted both on the national and EU level. Finland engages in dialogue with China on bilateral and international issues, such as climate change mitigation, in which China holds a significant position.

The political and economic importance of the Asia-Pacific region continues to grow as strategic rivalry is becoming more intense and the focus of production and consumption is shifting towards Asia, where urbanisation and gentrification are continuing. India, which has become the most populous nation of the world, has increased its significance and become an important partner bilaterally and in addressing global challenges. Finland will consistently develop cooperation with India. Finland promotes cooperation and dialogue on issues both countries consider important, including economic cooperation, research and technology, environmental and climate issues, and the support for the rules-based international system. Finland will strengthen its economic relations with South-East Asian and Central Asian countries, which may become significant trading partners in a region that has security policy importance.

Africa is important for Finland and the EU since, as a neighbouring area, its development also has a direct impact on security in Europe. The number of conflicts and coups has been on the rise in Africa. For Finland, the continent's diversity means differing opportunities and challenges.

The achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals is a key means of promoting stability and prosperity on the continent. It is essential to support the ability of African countries to adapt to climate change, preserve biodiversity and respond to the challenges of population growth by such means as providing young people education and training opportunities, jobs and channels to influence politics. Commercially, the developing markets of Africa offer opportunities for Finnish businesses, which have a lot to offer in fields such as the clean and digital transition and education. It may also be possible for the EU to find African partners in alternative energy sources and substitute raw materials.

Finland will continue its political and economic cooperation with African countries and regional organisations with the aim to build sustainable partnerships based on mutual benefit and respect. Finland will diversify and deepen its relations with African countries, the African Union and regional organisations. Finland will take advantage of its reputation as a good and reliable partner and as a pioneer in the fields of technological development, education and the rights of women and girls. Finland will strengthen an equal, comprehensive partnership between the EU and Africa, which also includes dismantling barriers to trade.

As part of the international community, Finland will continue its efforts to increase stability in the Middle East. This is also necessary with a view to reducing wider international tensions. The key to reaching this goal is to find a sustainable solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. This will require consistent efforts from the entire international community. The solution must be based on a two-state solution negotiated between the parties and implemented in accordance with internationally approved parameters. It must meet the security needs of both the Israelis and the Palestinians as well as the aspirations of the Palestinians for their own state and self-determination. In the acute war in Gaza, the most urgent measures are to achieve a ceasefire, to alleviate the humanitarian emergency and to secure the release of the hostages. So far, the entire international community has failed to reach any of these goals. After these goals are achieved, the need for humanitarian assistance will continue to be great for a long time, and reconstruction and immediate stabilisation measures will require major efforts.

Finland will leverage the value base it shares with Latin American countries in multilateral questions. Cooperation with countries in the area will be promoted in commercial and economic issues, regional questions and in responding to global challenges.

3.4 Finland promotes international peace and security and sustainable development

Finland will continue to participate in international military and civilian crisis management under the auspices of the EU, the UN, NATO and the OSCE. Finland's approach will emphasise comprehensive crisis management and the necessity and impact of activities. By participating in international crisis management operations, Finland promotes social stability, peace, human rights, the rule of law and equality in conflict areas. Crisis management builds the capacities of fragile states and enhances their ability to repel security threats, including terrorism, cross-border organised crime and uncontrolled migration, and fosters conditions for the sustainable return of migrants. At the same time, it is possible to develop the interoperability of Finnish military and civilian authorities and the readiness of their staff to cooperate with the authorities of other countries.

In prolonged crisis situations, Finland promotes the coordination of mediation, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance as well as the coherence of trade and development policy.

Finland bears responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security by supporting conflict prevention and promoting effective mediation. Finland strengthens government-level mediation as part of its foreign and security policy and develops cooperation with other states and mediation actors.

Finland's good international reputation and experience of both water issues and mediation provide opportunities for combining mediation, diplomacy and transboundary water cooperation to solve international water conflicts.

Finland strengthens Finnish mediation activities and mediation expertise through active involvement in initiatives that support peace processes. Finland hosts negotiations and discussions at various levels, and Finnish persons and institutions can take mediator roles if requested by the parties concerned. Finland trains mediators and negotiators and seconds Finns to international institutions. This work is based on identifying the strengths of various actors. The cooperation of Finnish

mediation actors will be expanded and deepened by increasing joint initiatives and strengthening coordination. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will update its mediation action plan.

Finland will continue to provide humanitarian aid, with the emphasis on helping the most vulnerable people and on aid provided through the international humanitarian system, in accordance with the principles of humanitarian aid.

Finland is committed to accelerating the global implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda. Supporting peace, stability, democracy and development is important with a view to the prosperity and living conditions of people living in developing countries. These measures also enhance security in Europe and Finland. Finland is an open and reliable long-term partner that engages in genuine dialogue on issues considered important by developing countries. Finland tries to alleviate tensions between Western countries and developing countries. Finland promotes multi-actor cooperation between states, businesses, NGOs and private sector donors, as well as dialogue between generations and opportunities to participate for young people.

In its development policy, Finland will focus on its strengths where it has good opportunities to support sustainable development. Finland's development policy priorities include improving the rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls, which are also key to curbing population growth, as well as education and climate measures. Finland supports the right of girls, children and young people with disabilities and vulnerable groups to high-quality and inclusive education. Finland will focus on those partner countries it considers essential and will build a more strategic relationship with them based on clear priorities. A well-functioning democracy, the rule of law, human rights and a vibrant civil society are prerequisites for sustainable social development. The objectives of development cooperation will continue to be based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Finland engages in comprehensive development policy with an aim to build sustainable partnerships with developing countries based on mutual benefit and respect. Key means of building equal partnerships include intensifying economic relations and increasing trade. Finland's development cooperation focuses increasingly on aid-for-trade development funding. Finland underscores the need to strengthen developing countries' own domestic resource mobilisation and ability to leverage private capital. Cash flow generated by the private sector has an important role to play in reducing the financing gap of sustainable development and achieving lasting development impacts. Official development assistance is

used as an incentive for private investments. International development finance institutions, such as the World Bank and regional development banks, are used to achieve sustainable development goals. Global development funding architecture and development banks must be reformed so they can respond to overlapping crises and growing needs. A significant portion of Finland's development cooperation remains grant based. The level of development cooperation funding provided by Finland will be adapted in accordance with Finland's economic situation. Historically, Finland has been committed to allocating 0.7 per cent of its GNI to development funding in accordance with the UN recommendation, even though this target has not been achieved. The opportunities of Finnish companies to access the markets of developing countries will be promoted. Development policy also plays a role in supporting Finland's strategic economic relations.

As global competition is increasing, integrating into the international market is of vital importance to the Finnish economy. With the ongoing transition in international trade, securing Finland's interests must be supported by a more comprehensive approach, more diverse partnerships, decentralised supply chains and risk management measures. Finland promotes the openness of international supply chains and markets as part of the regulation and negotiations related to economic security and technological cooperation. The Government will prepare a separate report to lay down Finland's comprehensive policies on international economic relations and development cooperation.

In its climate policy, Finland is committed to implementing EU decisions and international agreements, such as the Paris Agreement on climate change. By means of climate and environmental diplomacy, Finland seeks to promote the global transition to climate resilient, low-carbon societies that protect biodiversity. Finland is committed to the objectives of the national Climate Change Act. The technological solutions offered by Finnish companies provide a solid basis for Finland's efforts to encourage especially countries causing large emissions to engage in more ambitious mitigation measures. By exporting sustainable energy solutions to global markets, the Finnish business sector enables the growth of Finland's carbon handprint.

Finland is approaching the triple planetary crisis – climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution – as a whole in which all the parts affect each other. Finland underscores the need to strengthen the consistency of international climate and environmental objectives and actions. A worldwide shift to carbon-neutral societies should be implemented in a manner that does not erode biodiversity or weaken comprehensive security.

Finland emphasises the necessity of multilateral cooperation in climate and environmental issues. Finland takes constructive part in international negotiation processes and underscores the need for international rules concerning the use of new technologies in relation to geoengineering, for example.

Finland emphasises the links between climate and environmental matters, including water issues, food security, and peace and security, and advances their stronger integration into the European and international security policy.

Finland supports developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small developing island states, in climate change mitigation and adaptation and in combating biodiversity loss. Finland promotes the planning and implementation of international climate and environmental action in a manner that enhances gender equality and takes account of groups that climate change affects proportionally more than others.

Finland emphasises the need to anticipate risks caused by climate and environmental change and to prepare for them. Finland participates actively in international meteorological cooperation and efforts aimed at reducing the risks of disasters, including the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All initiative.

Health security strengthens the readiness to prevent, prepare for and respond to cross-border naturally occurring or deliberately spread health threats in the world and, therefore, also in Finland. Access to critical medicines and vaccines must be secured by increasing the production capacity of the EU and developing countries. International cooperation, particularly in the WHO, supports the ability of countries to strengthen their health systems and their resilience in order to respond to epidemics, pandemics and biological threats.

3.5 Finland defends international law and the rules-based international system

For Finland, as a small country dependent on cooperation, it is essential that the international order is based on rules and not on the use of force. Finland strengthens the rules-based, multilateral system and cooperation and acts globally to strengthen international law, democracy and human rights. In conflict situations,

special attention will be paid to promoting international humanitarian law and combating impunity. The use of military force must comply with the requirements of necessity and proportionality under international law.

Finland takes account of the pressures for change facing the international system and aims to respond to attempts to challenge the system. Finland will monitor how the roles of unofficial coalitions, such as the BRICS, G7 and G20 groups, will develop in multilateral cooperation. Finland will use its memberships in the EU and the OECD as its channels of influence in the G7 and G20 groups.

Defending international law requires accountability for international crimes. Finland supports the investigation of any serious violations of international law regardless of where they happen. Finland provides strong support for the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the independence of the court.

International human rights conventions are an inseparable part of the rules-based international system and multilateral cooperation and decision-making. Finland is a party to the key human rights treaties of the UN and the Council of Europe, including their appeal procedures, and supports the independent monitoring mechanisms of the treaties. The European Court of Human Rights and the treaty bodies of UN and the Council of Europe must have the capacity to effectively monitor the implementation of human rights obligations. The Government will conduct an annual review of the decisions, conclusions and recommendations issued to Finland by international human rights monitoring bodies and decide on measures to be taken.

Finland defends the universal nature of human rights and their binding nature under international law. Finland underscores the complementarity between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights. Finland will continue its long-term human rights policy of promoting and defending the rights of women, girls, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, gender and sexual minorities, and other people in particularly vulnerable positions. Finland promotes the objectives of its international human rights policy as part of the EU, bilaterally and in multilateral forums. Finland is assessing the need to develop the international regulatory and contractual framework to prevent illegal and instrumentalised migration and to protect national security. Finland supports the ability of civil society and defenders of human rights to act. Finland also cooperates with NGOs as a means of promoting its foreign and security policy objectives.

It is in Finland's interest to contribute constructively to the debate about the future of the European security order.

The OSCE is an essential part of the European security order. The principles and commitments that have been adopted within the framework of the OSCE since 1975 are still in force, even though Russia has blatantly violated them. Finland underscores the importance of the OSCE principles and commitments and strives to enhance the organisation's capability to act. As the holder of OSCE Chairmanship in 2025, Finland will seek to promote the security and resilience of the participating States and their citizens on the basis of the OSCE's comprehensive security concept.

Through the OSCE, Finland supports not only Ukraine but also other countries in its neighbourhood, strengthening their security and supporting their democratisation processes and the respect for the rule of law and human rights. The OSCE engages in important cooperation on these themes with Central Asian, South Caucasian and Western Balkan countries and with Moldova. In particular, the growing interest of Central Asian countries in increasing their cooperation with the OSCE must be responded to. Finland's cross-cutting priority in work done by the OSCE is equality and inclusion, including strengthening the engagement of civil society and young people in particular.

Finland participates in the political and mandatory normative work of the Council of Europe to safeguard the rule of law, democracy and human rights in the whole of Europe. Finland aims to strengthen the role of the Council of Europe in human rights and to safeguard the operation of the European Court of Human Rights.

As a small open economy, Finland is particularly dependent on the openness and rules-based nature of trade. Finland will strengthen free trade through regional and bilateral agreements and support the ability of the WTO to operate. Finland continues to promote open, multilateral and rules-based trade and to support the EU's efforts to reform the WTO. Themes that Finland considers important include digitalisation, the clean transition and the promotion of an equal competitive environment, as well as the stabilisation of the WTO's core functions, such as dispute settlement.

Intergovernmental regional cooperation concerning the neighbouring areas of Finland supports our goals when it comes to, for example, environmental protection and the fight against climate change. Regional cooperation with Russia was suspended due to its war of aggression, and, for instance, the Council of the Baltic Sea States continues to cooperate without Russia. In multilateral Arctic cooperation, Finland's objective is to achieve the sustainable development goals for the region and curb the progress of climate change and its harmful effects. We will assess the structures for regional cooperation with our allies.

Finland will continue its active and constructive policy on arms control and disarmament to enhance national and international security. Finland emphasises compliance with arms control agreements and confidence-building measures. Finland makes efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and repel threats deriving from them. Finland supports the implementation, compliance with and verification of compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the primary agreement for the promotion of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. NATO seeks to create a world without nuclear weapons, but for as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. In nuclear disarmament, Finland advocates a progressive approach that enhances the security of all countries. Finland will not join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as it is incompatible with NATO's nuclear deterrence, which is an important part of Finland's security solution.

Finland provides active support for the operations of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) especially in strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and promoting safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy and technologies. Finland also shows strong support for the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to promote the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Finland considers it important to establish international regulations, agreements or principles for the development and use of new technologies, particularly AI and lethal autonomous weapons systems. At the same time, it must be possible to use new technologies to develop defence capabilities. It is also necessary to create procedures and the ability to respond to the threats posed by new technologies. When developing and using AI for military purposes, the key is to ensure compliance with international law, especially international humanitarian law. The decision on the use of lethal force must always remain in human hands. Furthermore, no weapon systems should ever be developed that are completely beyond human control.

Finland works to prevent the illegal spread of small arms and other conventional arms.

By actively promoting the recruitment of Finnish experts to international organisations, Finland contributes to multilateral cooperation and to strengthening the rules-based international system.

3.6 Finland promotes its foreign policy goals in the UN and strengthens the UN's capacity to act [Finland's UN strategy]

Maintaining the rules-based international system is in Finland's immediate national interest. The key goal of Finland's UN policy is to defend and strengthen the capacity of this system to act. The UN's main tasks are to promote peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. Finland advances its foreign and security policy goals across all these fields.

Finland is seeking a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the term 2029–2030 to promote its foreign policy goals in line with its values and interests and to bear responsibility for the rules-based international system. The UN Security Council remains the most important decision-making body addressing matters related to international peace and security. The Security Council has the exclusive competence to mandate use of military force by the international community, and its decisions are binding on all UN member states. By seeking membership of the Security Council, Finland signals its support for the multilateral system.

Finland bases its Security Council campaign and term on its own strengths and competences. As a member of the Security Council, Finland would act for the promotion of international peace and security, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and accountability. Finland's candidacy is based on Nordic rotation, and it is part of Nordic foreign and security policy cooperation. It is important that the Nordic countries make their voice heard in the Security Council.

Finland's membership in the Security Council can only happen if Finland's candidacy gains broad support from UN member states. Membership cannot be achieved by focusing on cooperation with like-minded countries or allies alone. Promoting the rules-based order, democracy, climate and environmental action, and human rights requires that Finland engage in extensive dialogue with UN member states, including developing countries. Finland will map out what kind of common interests can be found, listen to the views of different countries and support other countries' well founded initiatives.

Finland's profile in the UN is that of a consistent defender and developer of international law. One of Finland's key goals in the UN is to generate as unified and strong a response by the international community to violations of international law as possible. Finland will support the realisation of accountability and the work of the International Criminal Court in particular.

Finland maintains its financial support for UN agencies at a level that shows Finland's political commitment to the multilateral system. Predictable general funding will help UN organisations to carry out their mandates effectively and to enhance Finland's role.

In work to reform the UN, Finland gives the highest priority to promoting the efficiency, responsibility, representativity and transparency of the system. The UN must develop its risk management capacity. Finland's goal is to enhance the UN's capacity to act and to support the UN Secretary-General's reforms to this end. The need to reform global development funding is increasingly urgent. It is especially important to leverage private investments and to strengthen the funding for developing countries. This is necessary, because only part of the funding needed to implement the SDGs can be covered through official development assistance.

The present composition of the Security Council does not represent the geopolitical reality. Finland considers it important to bring more determination to the negotiations on reforming the Security Council. However, expansion of the Security Council should not expand the right to veto. In addition, Finland supports initiatives aimed at strengthening the role of the UN General Assembly. The statements of the General Assembly have major political weight and visibility. Lately, this has been proven, for example, by the UN votes on Ukraine and the Middle East.

Finland will strengthen the UN's ability to prevent, manage and resolve violent conflicts. The UN still plays a central role in international crisis management. Finland will participate in UN peacekeeping operations and in developing the UN's peacekeeping activities. Finland supports the development of the UN's political operations and peacebuilding activities to make the UN capable of preventing and reacting to conflicts more effectively than it is today. Finland continues its support for the UN Peacebuilding Fund and is seeking membership in the Peacebuilding Commission for 2027–2028.

Finland aims to enhance the role of mediation in the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts. Finland's national mediation activities will be developed in cooperation with the UN. Finland will promote the national and international implementation of the resolutions of the UN Security Council on Women, Peace and

Security and on Youth, Peace and Security. Finland has successfully highlighted the role of young people in conflict prevention and resolution. Finland will draw up a new Youth, Peace and Security action plan at the end of 2024 when the current plan comes to an end.

Finland's foreign policy systematically and purposefully promotes the rights of women and girls and gender equality in a cross-cutting manner. This should be very visibly reflected in Finland's UN activities, where work for equality is also met with strong opposition. Finland must be an active counterforce against actors seeking to undermine gender equality. Finland focuses especially on defending sexual and reproductive health and rights. Finland will maintain its influential role as a major donor in UN Women, the UN organisation dedicated to gender equality, and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Finland is a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) for the three-year term of 2022 to 2024. In 2024, Finland acts as a vice-president of the Human Rights Council. As a member, Finland actively promotes the rights of women, girls, gender and sexual minorities, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples. Finland supports the strengthening of the ability of human rights defenders and civil society to act. These long-term priorities will also be consistently promoted after Finland's term as a member of the Human Rights Council ends.

In its human right policy, development policy and humanitarian activities, Finland promotes the rights of persons with disabilities. On these themes, it is possible to cooperate with very different partner countries. The rights and participation of persons with disabilities will also be highlighted in issues concerning peacebuilding and climate.

Finland supports a strong and coordinated UN system that delivers humanitarian assistance to those in the most vulnerable position. Finland supports the work of humanitarian organisations especially in war zone areas, natural disasters, extensive refugee situations and serious food security situations. Finland highlights obligations under humanitarian law.

Finland's foreign policy consistently promotes climate resilient and low-emission development and environmental protection. Special emphasis is placed on safeguarding biodiversity. Finland works for promoting these goals also in the UN. Finland underscores the key role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in setting a global environmental agenda.

The achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in accordance with 2030 Agenda has been jeopardised due to problems in multilateral cooperation and the repercussions of Russia's war of aggression. Finland promotes the implementation of the jointly agreed SDGs. With UN support, developing countries can bear increasing responsibility for the subsistence of their citizens and the stability of their societies, which will reduce the number of refugees and global migration.

The importance of technology issues is also increasing at the UN. Finland uses its influence to ensure that values emphasising individual freedom, human rights, privacy and open democratic societies are taken into account. We must combat the state-centred views of authoritarian countries that emphasise monitoring and controlling their citizens.

Finland strives to strengthen the EU's role and status in the UN. The EU must be able to contribute effectively to promoting the rules-based system, peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. Cooperation and shared responsibility between the EU countries enhance the Union's effectiveness. The cooperation carried out with the Nordic countries is also especially valuable.

Multilateral work concerns the whole Government. In many specialised agencies and institutions of the UN, which fall under the sphere of authority of various ministries in Finland, such work is done that is important to Finland's profile. Some questions also arise in UN's specialised agencies that require not only expertise within the specific domain but also foreign policy consideration. Cooperation between ministries on UN issues will be intensified and foreign and security policy goals will be promoted consistently and collaboratively in all sectors.

Finland is committed to developing the ability of UN actors located in Finland (UNU-WIDER, UN Global Pulse, UNICEF's innovation centres) to act. Finland is engaged, in close cooperation, with these actors to utilise Finnish competence and to promote goals important to Finland on a global scale. Collaboration with civil society on UN issues will also be continued and further developed.

4 Conclusions

Finland's foreign and security policy is founded on value-based realism. Its goal is to safeguard Finland's independence and territorial integrity, to avoid becoming involved in a military conflict and to improve the security and well-being of the people of Finland. Our activities are founded on democracy, the rule of law, human rights, equality and non-discrimination.

In this time and age, the following matters are emphasised in Finland's foreign and security policy:

1. Finland maintains a strong national defence capability based on general conscription and comprehensive defence as part of NATO's collective deterrence and defence.
2. Finland develops and maintains society's comprehensive security and also promotes the strengthening of crisis resilience and comprehensive security at the EU level.
3. Finland examines security from a broad perspective, in which economic competitiveness, social and ecological resilience, technological competence, and the identification and management of strategic dependencies play a central role.
4. Finland is a constructive, reliable and capable NATO Ally. It is a security provider and also engages its allies in a strong, active approach to security.
5. The European Union is Finland's most important community of values and security and channel of foreign policy influence. Finland works to deepen EU cooperation on foreign, security and defence policy to enhance strategic competitiveness, to promote EU enlargement and to strengthen the global role of the EU.
6. Finland strengthens its security by deepening its bilateral cooperation and strong economic relations, particularly with the Nordic countries, the United States and other allies and partners.
7. Finland also seeks equal dialogue and expands its opportunities to cooperate and trade with countries other than those in our reference group.

8. Finland supports Ukraine as it defends its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and as it advances on its chosen path towards membership in the EU and NATO. Finland's political and financial support, defence materiel assistance and humanitarian aid to Ukraine will continue for as long as needed.
9. Finland works to strengthen international law and the rules-based international system, consistently drawing attention to ensuring the accountability and international responsibility of states for illegal acts.
10. Finland promotes peace, security and sustainable development, making its peace mediation expertise and Finnish solutions in such areas as education and clean transition available to others.
11. Finland makes efforts to strengthen the UN's capacity to take action and will seek a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for the term 2029–2030.
12. Finland will use its role as the holder of the OSCE chairmanship (2025) to defend the organisation's principles and commitments as the foundation of European security.



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