

**LETTER OF INTENT
BETWEEN**

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM
AND**

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC
AND**

**THE STATE SECRETARY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY,
ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE OF THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**

AND

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND
AND**

**THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC
AND**

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN
AND**

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE
AND**

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY
AND**

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE GRAND-DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
AND**

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS
AND**

**THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE POLICY, ON BEHALF OF
THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
AND**

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF PORTUGAL
AND**

**THE STATE SECRETARY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC, ON BEHALF OF
THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
AND**

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN

**REGARDING
THE EUROPEAN AIR TRANSPORT FLEET**

(EATF LOI)

The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Belgium,

The Deputy Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic,

The State Secretary of the Federal Republic of Germany, on behalf of the Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany,

The Minister of Defence of the Republic of Finland,

The Minister of National Defence of the Hellenic Republic,

The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Spain,

The Minister of Defence of the Republic of France,

The Deputy Minister of Defence of the Republic of Italy,

The Minister of Defence of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg,

The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of the Netherlands,

The Under-Secretary of State for Defence Policy, on behalf of the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Poland,

The Minister of Defence of the Republic of Portugal,

The State Secretary of the Slovak Republic, on behalf of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic,

The Minister of the Defence of the Kingdom of Sweden,

Meeting within the Steering Board of the European Defence Agency (EDA),

convinced that optimisation and rationalisation of the current and future European air transport assets and agencies are the best way forward to reduce the military airlift capabilities shortfalls,

in reference to the declaration on the reinforcement of capabilities adopted by the Heads of States and Governments and endorsed by the European Council on 11 December 2008,

considering the Declaration of Intent regarding the establishment of an European Air Transport Fleet, signed in Brussels on 10 November 2008, under the auspices of the European Defence Agency,

in accordance with the Council Joint Action 2004/551/CFSP of 12 July 2004 on the establishment of the European Defence Agency,

in reference to their intention to extend the participation to this EATF to other EU Member States intending to adhere to the principles of this LoI,

have reached the following understanding:

1. Vision

- a. The EATF is a flexible and inclusive partnership between national and multinational military air transport fleets and organisations in Europe, aimed at the enhancement of standardised air transport services, accessed through an identified process and using simplified common procedures. The provision of those services will be implemented through the most cost effective sharing, pooling, exchange or acquisition of capabilities.
- b. The long term vision of a European air transport fleet aims at the efficient usage, through a networked fleet linking various European air transport fleets, of all present and future air transport assets made available by the pMS for military needs, regardless of type or origin.

2. Scope of EATF

- a. EATF is to be seen as an innovative concept to enhance the airlift capacities. It will consist of a framework federating different projects identified by the signatories, different structures and different types of assets, in order to optimize cooperation and coordination.
- b. The output of EATF should address the way different types of air transport assets are acquired, operated, supported and managed in the most efficient way.
- c. EU Member States participation to EATF, could take the following form, among others: making available military transport aircraft; purchasing flying hours; providing or exchanging flying hours; providing and benefiting from shared and/or pooled aircraft and/or support functions.

3. Main objectives of EATF

- a. To increase the military airlift provision within the EU by facilitating the acquisition of additional assets and better use of existing ones.
- b. To be able to transport any personnel/equipment by any asset with a minimum of constraints, by i.e. harmonizing rules and procedures.
- c. To develop concrete solutions to better use existing and future airlift assets made available by the pMS for military needs to meet national, EU, NATO and other frameworks operational requirements and to improve the airlift provision within the European Union.

- d. To develop means for optimisation of interested existing and future air transport organisations and structures in order to create synergy between them through far-reaching coordination.

4. Basic principles

- a. Depending on national policies, the level of involvement within the EATF initiative may be different from Nation to Nation.
- b. Work will be carried out in a modular way through different work strands and projects. Participation in these may differ and results will be coordinated at the appropriate level.
- c. The intention is not to create a supplementary air transport structure within Europe, but to better coordinate and strengthen existing and/or future ones, thus avoiding duplication. This project is not in competition with the European Air Transport Command (EATC) as one of Europe's major suppliers of capacity and expertise in air transport.
- d. The EATF will look for cost effective solutions.

5. Governance

- a. A governance system will be used to provide guidance for all relevant EATF activities and ensure coherence between the different work strands and projects that will be undertaken in the EATF framework.
- b. A Steering Board will be created to provide high-level guidance with the support of all available expertise. Its initial task will be to define a strategy towards the implementation of the EATF network, including a roadmap consistent with the imperatives of other existing and future air transport organisations.
- c. The EATF with the aim of federating all efforts in the area of military air transport, will collaborate with other interested organisations and initiatives in Europe.
- d. Until the legal framework for EATF is set up these functions will be fulfilled within the EDA.

6. Participation

- a. Participating Member States (pMS) can sign this LoI at any time thus accepting decisions already made.
- b. Decision taking will be limited to the signatories, though active contribution of non-signatories to the further development of EATF is encouraged.

7. Timeline

After signature of this LoI, Ad hoc working groups will be created in order to develop the documents required for the overarching EATF legal framework that could include financial aspects.

This Letter of Intent does not represent a legally binding commitment and will not require any financial implication.

The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Belgium,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Pieter de CREM
Signature

Pieter de Crem

The Deputy Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Jan FULIK
Signature

Jan Fulík

**The State Secretary of the Federal Republic of Germany, on behalf of the
Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany,**
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Rüdiger WOLF
Signature

Rüdiger Wolf

The Minister of Defence of the Republic of Finland
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Jyri HÄKÄMIES
Signature

Jyri Häkämies

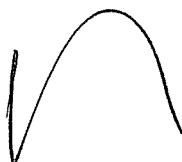
The Minister of National Defence of the Hellenic Republic,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Evangelos VENIZELOS
Signature

Evangelos Venizelos

The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Spain,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Carmen CHACÓN PIQUERAS
Signature



The Minister of Defence of the Republic of France,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Hervé MORIN
Signature



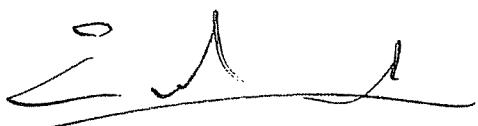
The Deputy Minister of Defence of the Republic of Italy,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Giuseppe COSSIGA
Signature



The Minister of Defence of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Jean-Marie HALSDORF
Signature



The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of the Netherlands,
Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009
Name: Eimert van MIDDELKOOP
Signature



The Under-Secretary of State for Defence Policy on behalf of the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Poland

Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009

Name: Stanisław Jerzy KOMOROWSKI

Signature



The Minister of Defence of the Republic of Portugal,

Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009

Name: Augusto SANTOS SILVA

Signature



The State Secretary of the Slovak Republic on behalf of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic,

Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009

Name: Daniel DUCHOŇ

Signature



The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Sweden,

Signed in Brussels on 17 November 2009

Name: Sten TOLGFORS

Signature

