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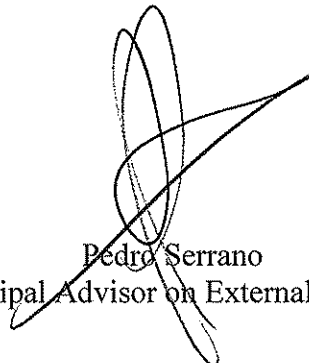
Brussels, 26 AOUT 2013

Dear Mr van Eekelen, cher Jean-Paul,

Thank you very much for your letter to President Van Rompuy of 20 June in which you are addressing the preparations for the European Council in December 2013 which will deal with security and defence matters. The President has asked me to thank you for this very useful contribution to the ongoing debate.

One positive outcome of the President's decision to deal with security and defence at the European Council at the end of this year is the depth and width of reflections that this has generated in the expert and policy community dealing with these matters. I am much obliged for the very concrete suggestions you are making such as reaching clarity on the level of ambition of CSDP, reinforcing rapid reaction capacity or the needs of the defence industry. Thank you also for transmitting the comments of EuroDefence UK which complete the picture. It is impressive that your 13 national associations have devoted considerable time and energy to this discussion and the suggestions show great insight into the complexities of the subject matter. I am sure that this work owes much to both your respective Presidency and Chairmanship which build on long-standing experience in the field. Let me therefore thank you again for this contribution and reassure you that they will form part of our reflections as we take the process towards December.

Yours sincerely,



Pedro Serrano
Principal Advisor on External Relations

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