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## EU Demands Five Billion Euros to Strengthen Defense

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The European Union (EU) has demanded the contribution of five billion euros from its member states for the creation of a fund to finance joint defense projects.

The European Commission announced on Wednesday that initiative at a press conference, as part of a plan of measures to boost military cooperation and support the regional war industry, according to the agency.

The EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Common Defense, Federica Mogherini, clarified that the objective of this program is not to create a European military or military headquarters, 'like North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Mogherini said during contacts with press and media that 'a strong technological and industrial base of European defense and more cooperation' is essential in order to guarantee security in Europe.

The most recent proposal of the plan is precisely the creation of the European Defense Fund, with voluntary contributions from the member states of the bloc to develop and acquire priority defense resources; as well as support research in the field of defense from the Community budget.

Jyrki Katainen, vice-president of the Union's Employment and Growth Commission, said that while they expect to raise five billion euros, it is an 'indicative figure', since each country will contribute what it wants and 'will decide on what projects it wants to participate.'

Mogherini referred on November 10th to the need for the defense of Europe to be strong 'for a healthy relationship with the United States.'

She said that regional security 'matters even more than during the Cold War', therefore it is important for the EU to take steps to ensure its strategic autonomy.

