



ANNEX 1

Letter to **the President of the European Council** on the preparation of the “Defence agenda” for the December 2013 European Summit

EURODEFENSE POPOSALS

1. To clarify the level of CSDP ambition.

The definition of the CSDP content and instruments by the Nice Treaty (December 2000) entails restrictions put as much to its level of ambition (operations limited to crisis management outside EU territory) as to its means (capabilities ambition limited by the Helsinki Headlines Goal, no permanent integrated operational chain of command). Apparently, these restrictions, to a large extent confirmed by the Lisbon Treaty, aimed to avoid any duplication with NATO.

From an EURODEFENSE perspective, these self-restrictions should be reconsidered in the present context.

On the one hand, NATO and the EU which are only collective frameworks for international operations do not have their own assets and capabilities. These belong only to the Member States. The only necessary assets to be at the disposal of the two organisations are Command and Control, indispensable for assuming their responsibilities ; they represent a very small expenditure. Therefore there is no room for any argument of duplication of capabilities between NATO and the EU.

On the other hand, limitation of the CSDP competence to Crisis Management out of Europe (with little need of coercitive means) prevents the Europeans analysing globally their operational requirements and their necessary defence capabilities while defence and security are more and more interlinked, and expensive asset redundancy between Nations must be eliminated.

NATO, like the EU, suffers from European capability shortfalls but everybody knows that in the current economic context the solution can only be found through “pooling and sharing” between European Nations. The EU framework to achieve this seems to be privileged since the problem is with the European deficit. In addition, the EU is a global political organisation which the Europeans use to develop common interests. Furthermore, through this, the EU could become a stronger security actor than the sum of its Member States, able to play within or without NATO. This would be in line with the new orientation of the US defence strategy looking more to the Asia-Pacific area and pushing their European partner to take care on its own of security in its periphery.

In other respects, in the current situation, the CSDP becomes visible as the sum of 26¹ national defence policies from which are excluded “home defence” and “own vital interests”. The “common” part of that European defence results only from the intersection of 26 defence “partial” national interests. It is doubtful that an effective European defence policy can be built up on such a basis. The right approach would be rather to consider the EU as a whole political entity composed of 500 million inhabitants producing 23% of world GDP located between the Asian, African and American continents. This *top down* approach seems essential to us to have a global view of what is needed to defend the EU and consistently streamline the defence organisation and the burden sharing of defence of its Member States. Such an approach should not supercede national defence planning (*bottom up*) but offer a reference framework of consistency and effectiveness.

To summarise : EuroDefence recommends that the defence of the EU and its Member States be considered globally without taboo and without unnecessary restrictions from the EU level (*top down*) and from individual member states level (*bottom up*).

This study should be led by the EEAS; it could be set up by experts within this organisation, or if there were institutional obstacles it might be given to an ad hoc working group composed of think tank experts coming from Member States and Brussels. The outcome of this study should be submitted for analysis by national and EU competent organisms. This could initiate a substantial reflection which could conduct gradually to the definition of a consistent framework to optimise Member States national defence policies taking account of the European overall defence need.

2. To improve the credibility and effectiveness of EU rapid reaction capability, in particular of its *Battle Groups (BGs)*.

Born in 2004 from an initial FR/UK proposal supported by DE and later agreed by the Council, the *Battle Group (BG 1500)* concept was inspired by two factors :

- the need for the EU to rely on rapid reaction forces able to deploy at short notice at the very beginning of a crisis before it worsens ;
- the lessons learned from the Artemis operation launched successfully by the EU in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003 which demonstrated that a group of 1500/2000 troops, well trained and equipped, built around an Infantry battalion plus supporting elements, was adapted to manage efficiently a low intensity crisis happening far from EU borders.

Hence the BG structure was designed and then agreed with a 6 months rotational organisation of the standby BGs 1500 bi- tri- or multinational formed by the EU Member States (with two BGs available on a permanent basis). However nine years later, no deployment of a BG has ever taken place and we can notice a gradual loss of interest and enthusiasm of the EU Member States towards this concept.

¹ Denmark is not a participant in the CSDP (*opting out*)

Nonetheless whatever the shortfalls of the concept may be, **the need for available rapid reaction forces for the EU remains** to make it able to manage efficiently crises where its interests are concerned.

In reality the shortcomings are both of political and operational nature :

- **From a political perspective**, the decision to contribute national forces in a multinational crisis management operation depends dramatically on the level of individual Member States (MS) interest, their acceptance of assessed risks and their trust in the means available for that operation. It is on the basis of those three factors that the national contributions might be justified to the public opinions. As far as multinational BGs commitment is concerned, the contributing nations must be equally interested by that operation, trust the BG leading nation (the provider of the Infantry Battalion) and accept to endorse a same level of risk with respect to the security of their soldiers. Looking at the current state of the “political Europe”, these three determining factors are very unlikely to be agreed at the same time and therefore the likelihood of engaging a BG is for the moment very low.
- **On the operational side**, the current *BG concept* suffers because of its rigidity. In all modern wars and operations, Force Structure has to be adapted to the specific requirements and the singularity of the operational context and not the other way around. The chance of meeting a situation corresponding adequately to a pre-built BG is very unlikely. It would be more effective to rely on a package of force-modules in standby as set up by the French with their "Guepard" alert system used particularly for the “Serval” operation in Mali : a set of units and sub-units able to provide combat, combat support and logistic capabilities to be assembled as a mechanism in a consistent force according to what is required by the situation. Air and Naval modules should be added to give to the BG the capacity of a combined and joint task force. The establishment of a permanent OHQ in Brussels to command and control all EU military operations must be considered as the preliminary step towards a credible EU rapid reaction system. A short notice standby Force without a permanent chain of command is merely inconsistent.

The credibility of the BG concept requires a solution in the two problem areas : political and operational. The operational issues are doubtless easiest to be overcome. If the option was to go on with the same BG format (around 1500 troops), it would be helpful to ***co-locate temporarily in the same base all the component units of a BG***. This would facilitate the training, improve its readiness and operational effectiveness, and make more visible the determination of the Member States to pool their forces and capabilities. This common settlement might last for one year (6 months for training and 6 months in standby including common exercises and activities). A partnership between the various component-units of the BG should be sustained in order to maintain the BG cohesion and ease its swift setting up for another standby period at short notice if required. This could give birth gradually to a common working culture. Beyond an expected operational effectiveness improvement, the presence of those multinational units on the territory of welcoming Member States would be a strong symbol of their willingness to integrate within the EU.

Another improvement might result from adopting a more flexible modular approach and deciding to increase the strength of the EU standby set of rapid reaction forces. As in the French so called “Guepard system”, the standby force might go from a BG available in two days up to a brigade (3BGs) available in one week. The size and composition of the modules as well as the *standby regime* should be agreed by the Member States. The resulting force planning - under coordination of the EU Military Staff (EUMS) - would be a little more complicated but it would become for individual MS a major stake to integrate in their Force Planning and mark a strong engagement in favour of their common security. Also the integrating role of European multinational units would be strengthened.

However, **the main difficulty will stay with the political decision making to engage BGs.** As long as this decision will rely on intergovernmental consensus, national interests and acceptance of risks will stay the key factors, but some measures might facilitate it. A political reflection should be launched on the EU global security interests as well as on circumstances justifying an EU operation and conditions to be filled to launch it. Furthermore, multinational BGs might be composed in considering the contributing nations proximity of interests. A consensus could be built on areas and a situation which might trigger a EU operation. European solidarity might appear in establishing a fair common funding system which would avoid the more important force contributors paying twice. At midterm in the spirit of the global approach of the EU, an implementation of an EU integrated set of forces could be envisaged under the European Council President's leadership for humanitarian operations or in case of natural disasters, as already suggested in the Barnier Report in 2006.

Be that as it may, although having demonstrated its interest for improving interoperability and creating a common culture between Armed Forces, the BG concept must be reconsidered urgently to keep up the Member States adhesion. BGs are the only visible and concrete EU forces and it would be a pity to see them given up while the Europeans are urged by their American Ally to assume more responsibility for defence in their neighbourhood and deliver more with their forces.

Operations in Mali and Libya are a good illustration of what the minimum strategic ambition of the EU should be in its neighbourhood : ability to deploy and operate :

- *a rapid reaction force of 1 to 3 Brigades supported by Air and Sea, and possible relief if needed ;*
- *an Air Force component to impose a “no fly zone” while supporting local land forces and ensuring their Air Defence.*

In addition, on-going Operation “Atalanta” points up the need to operate a naval Force in a large maritime area to protect lines of communication and economic interests. Of course provision of enabling capabilities such as Intelligence, command and control, logistics.... should be associated in proportion to the set of Combat Forces made available for EU operations.

EU defence credibility will not be achieved overnight. It can only result from gradual converging steps made by the Member States toward a common approach. The BG concept is one of these required steps ; their co-location might be another one, but others will be needed until the decisive reality of their first engagement in an international crisis.

3. To increase and improve the defence capabilities of EU : namely to give credibility to its Command and Control (C2) System.

The EU capability shortfalls have been repeatedly identified. The *Capability Development Plan*, in its various versions, and the lessons drawn from military operations in which Member States have participated, point more specifically to space intelligence by MALE UAVs, strategic airlift, air to air refuelling assets, helicopters, missile defence systems, capability of the EU to contribute to *NATO's anti missile Defence*, maritime surveillance.

Numerous statements of intent have been made to remedy one or another of these shortfalls but rarely followed by concrete measures. Why the European Council, at its meeting of December 2013, would not require these good intentions to be materialized, either with intergovernmental projects or included in the “*pooling and sharing*” initiative of the EDA ? The Member States should be asked to report about the achievements by the end of 2014.

Even more important than the aforementioned capability shortfalls, the gap of an EU permanent planning, command and control capacity alter significantly CSDP credibility². To remedy this shortfall it seems essential :

- on the one hand, to better structure the “defence pole” within the EEAS so that political decision makers (High Representative) can rely on a full capability to analyse globally the defence issues and implement CSDP actions in establishing hierarchical and functional links between the various entities to be involved (CMPD, CPCC, EUMS,...) ;
- on the other hand, to equip the EU with a permanent integrated operation planning and command structure which is still lacking when the EU has to engage in crisis management. In consideration of the true interests of all the EU members, the creation of such a structure (MPCC) within the EEAS is indispensable. The lack of that cell jeopardizes the operational credibility of EU.

This requirement has been analysed in a previous EURODEFENSE study³ which shows that there would be no duplication with NATO. For the 21 Member States which belong to NATO and the EU, the two organisations must be complementary. But if the military capabilities of NATO, thanks to the US military arsenal, are much stronger than those at the disposal of the CSDP, the EU must be capable of intervening autonomously when the US is not engaged.

This justifies the establishment of a permanent Military Planning Command and Control Centre (MPCC) which might open the way to save most of the resources required for the five national OHQ available to the EU and give the EU the full capacity to implement its global and unique approach in crisis management, combining diplomatic, economic, judicial and military assets. This would not preclude EU civil operations requiring military support turning to NATO (Berlin +) and reciprocally NATO operations being supported with EU civil instruments, as in Kosovo or Afghanistan.

² Often underlined by US experts of Pentagon and think tanks

³ Sent to the HR of EU for FA & SP in November 2012

Nevertheless, experience gained from previous EU operations show that the recourse to NATO assets by the EU takes long time (Althea) and may be stalled by a single NATO member State which may not even belong to the EU. The use of national OHQs declared to the EU is not actually an effective option due to their distance from Brussels, lengthy implementation and lack of cohesion. Finally the recourse to the non-permanent OPCEN is not an efficient solution while it entails a severe cut in the EUMS manpower, preventing it from continuing with its normal mission.

Only the creation of a MPCC could allow the establishment of a comprehensive and permanent EU operational chain of command from political-strategic level down to the Force deployed HQs. That MPCC is indispensable to conduct the operational planning, the multinational force generation, the operations running and the security of the units on the ground..

An MPCC, military equivalent of the CPCC and located also in Brussels, must be seen as a key measure for a credible CSDP. To use the number of multilateral initiatives to fill the capabilities gaps and to create a permanent Military Planning Command and Control Capability might be done in the framework of the Permanent Structured Cooperation as defined in the Lisbon Treaty. A group of voluntary nations might open the way to move forward like it has been done in the economic and budget areas (following the model of the Eurogroup).

4. To reinforce European Defence Industry.

Governments presently fund developments and production of defence equipments from their national budgets, alone or with partners, and this does not always encourage them to choose cooperation. EURODEFENSE is looking forward to taking into account the content of the expected European Commission Communication on defence industry.

Establishing a channel for the partial funding of cooperative programmes by the EU would increase the proportion of European solutions chosen by governments.

This should be done without the Union changing the funding and IPR rules established by the participating governments. If not, industry and governments will not participate in such programmes.

EURODEFENSE recommends creating a budget line for “R&D cooperation programmes” to allow EU to participate in the funding of those programmes prepared by cooperating governments, for example within EDA.

Upstream, the European R&D Framework Programme funds non-military research and may fund dual-use research according to its own rules. But these rules - 50% funding by industry and Europe-wide dispersal of IPR - are not acceptable by industry or governments for military R&T. The domestic or the export market for military goods is indeed unpredictable and consequently cannot justify a self-funding of R&T by industry, except on a marginal basis. This is why military R&T, like R&D, is funded by governments, which then own the IPR and share it with industry.

Few R&T cooperation programmes are in existence today. In order to increase that ratio, EURODEFENSE suggests to create an ad hoc budget line – “military R&T cooperation programmes” - while accepting the rules set up by participating governments and the industry.

EDA could, with expert advice, propose which R&T programmes among those proposed by governments should be selected for co-funding, and would check the use of European funds, by participating in the corresponding steering committees (a similar system was successfully implemented within IEPG/WEAG for the EUROFINDER programme).

EDA, thus endowed with significant funds and stronger political support, would be in a position to devise and implement an industrial and research policy serving the defence and security of the European Union.

The same tools would be used to select the R & D programmes which should be co-funded among those proposed by governments, and to participate in their management.

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EURODEFENSE

Adresse postale : Case 44 – 1 place Joffre – 75700 - Paris-SP 07

Téléphone/Télécopie : (+33)1 44 42 42 15 - E-mail : secretairegeneralnet@eurodefense.net