

„Permanent Cooperation for Defence, a new approach for ESDP”

This paper is an EuroDefense contribution to political decision making within the European Union

1. Introductory Remarks

The „Peace Dividend“, proclaimed in 1989/90, shrinking defence budgets and a new Mission profile for Armed Forces, facing new threats, have initiated transformation of European Security and Defence. Regardless of this process, the underlying philosophy, that Armed Forces in general are still needed, has never been put in question. Parallel to this change, Europe has not yet succeeded in forming a common foreign- and defence policy which provides clear benchmarks for a harmonized transformation process. Europe would like to become a global player. Europe must therefore be in a position to act on its own to provide both internal and external capability.

2. Political Setting/Situation

Notwithstanding the debate over the vote of an European Constitution the momentum of European’s future has to be maintained. Different views or even disagreement of member states on the nature and the objectives of the EU must not hamper or block the way ahead.

The close linkage between internal and external security of the member states of the European Union as a whole is without question. This philosophy has been clearly and convincingly expressed in the European Security Strategy (ESS). Consequently, a common foreign and defence policy seems an appropriate way forward.

The EU has made progress in the past in many fields of practical cooperation. Institutions, operational capabilities, social and industrial structures have already contributed to our common security. These results and achievements must not be lost and should be used as an example of our progress.

The EU, in the last few years, has proceeded step by step to strengthen its defence capabilities through the development of national contributions and multinational forces and in European Equipment Programmes. The European Defence Agency (EDA) has for instance been recently established to develop cooperation.

Participating nations agree on the principles but decide on their own level of contribution. The results of their decisions, however, should correspond with the strategic objectives of the EU. These developments are signals of the idea of cooperation for Defence between Member States.

3. The strategic objectives of the EU

- a. Any consideration for the future common security policy should be in harmony with the strategic objectives of the EU as being worded in the ESS. It will ensure:-
 - (1) A clear definition of existing or envisaged threats.
 - (2) Security Building internal and external
 - (3) The keeping of international law and order

Consequently the EU's further development process is focussing on the following criteria:-

- (1) **Strategic partnership of member states** to be more active, coherent and capable in cooperation with its partners
- (2) **Permanent arrangements and agreements**
- (3) **Single set of forces (regardless of being combined and/or joint)**
- (4) **Common shared EU/NATO objectives and the means to achieve them**

Drawing on **civil and military** assets, this will provide the EU with an operational capability. Therefore the member states have set themselves a Headline Goal for 2010 complementing the Headline Goal 2003. And again, vital elements as being defined in the Headline Goals will thus be determined as parts of the "Permanent Cooperation for Defence."

- b. It follows that, the Permanent Cooperation for Defence will become an additional instrument to implement European Harmony in the field of ESDP. This will also strengthen the EU missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations and in line with "Petersberg-Tasks".
- c. In respect of a) and b) above member states, that want to participate in Permanent Cooperation for Defence will notify their intention to the Council and to the High Representative.

4. Discussion

General

In the ESDP Presidential Report dated 15.06.2004 the targeted Headline Goal 2010 is defined with two very important comments addressed to the Member states:-

- Any existing shortfalls will need to be addressed.
- There is an absolute need for a commitment to respond with a rapid and decisive action to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations.

The Battle Group (BG) Concept

As a first step, in order to implement the Headline Goal 2010, the member states have established the Battle Group Concept. In other words, this concept is a *conditio sine qua non*.

The main elements, availability and flexibility, interoperability and deployment stay unchanged and are valid parameters for successful development.

As a further *conditio sine qua non* it is essential, that due to the fact that only "one set of forces" is available, the compatibility with NRF is also inalienable for **non NATO Nations** of the EU.

Regardless their current contribution all member states should be prepared to:-

- plan for more demanding missions,
- be capable of fulfilling more demanding military roles,
- be prepared to enter into more binding commitments.

5. Conclusions

a. The Battle Group is the practical tool for crisis management or as open for any tailored individual contribution by the member states or any associated states. It is a perfect way to proceed to CSDP via ESDP. The nations are free to contribute smaller or larger elements or participate with the full spectrum of capabilities. This avoids a political split in the European Security and Defence Community and is true Cooperation for Defence.

b. A permanent Cooperation for Defence requires member states to firmly apply to the following criteria:-

(1) to proceed more intensively to develop its defence capabilities through the development of its national contribution and participate, where appropriate, in multinational forces, in the main European equipment programmes, and in the activity of the EDA in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments,

(2) to have the capacity to supply by 2007 at the latest, either at national level or as a component of multinational force groups, targeted combat units for missions planned, structured at a tactical level as a Battle Group, with support elements including transport and logistics, capable of carrying out the tasks in the framework of the "Petersberg Tasks" within a period of 5-30 days, in particular in response to a request from the UN, and which can be sustained for an initial period of 30 days and be extended up to at least 120 days,

(3) to cooperate, with a view to achieve approved objectives concerning the level of investment expenditure on defence equipment, and regularly review these objectives, in the light of the security environment and of the Union's international responsibilities,

(4) to bring their defence apparatus into line with each other as far as possible, particularly by harmonising the identification of their military needs, by pooling and, where appropriate, specialising their defence means and capabilities, and by encouraging cooperation in the fields of training and logistics,

(5) to take concrete measures to enhance the availability, interoperability, flexibility and deployment of their forces, in particular by identifying common objectives regarding the commitment of forces, including possibly reviewing their national decision-making procedures,

(6) without prejudice of their NATO responsibilities and possible shortfalls within the framework of Capability Development Mechanism to work together to overcome deficiencies.

c. The Permanent Cooperation for Defence of member states within the framework as being defined above will provide the EU with a tool of e.g. highly trained soldiers, best equipped, immediately ready, deployable everywhere, capable to fight under any condition, suitable for nation building (military-civil aspect), compatible with NATO and authorized by a UN mandate.

In addition Battle Groups as such have the flexibility to develop. Consequently they can be linked to larger (brigade) size formations, commanded and managed by international

headquarters still to be formed or drawn from organisations already in existence. Air and naval assets will be associated if required.

6. Proposals

The development of Battle Groups is in good shape and must continue as described and must become a permanent instrument of the ESDP.

For a meaningful Permanent Cooperation for Defence EU member states should be ready to enter commitments for deployable forces in the light of targets and goals which would be measured against criteria in the areas of

- Capacities and military means contributed to EU operations
- Harmonization of operational requirements
- Participation in common equipment programs
- R&D efforts for defence
- Financial participation in the EDA

As regards committing and assigning forces, it is important to note, that forces committed by nations may also be committed to national, UN or NATO tasks.

Furthermore it has to be considered, that the EU is still in the process of building a Defence and Security Union, covering external security as well as some aspects of domestic security and natural disaster management. On the military-political level, existing planning and management elements have to be enhanced and tailored for success. In detail, member states must create:-

- Common Early Crisis Identification and Evaluation capabilities
- Decisions to enhance the readiness of “On Call” forces
- Compatibility of EU/NATO arrangements
- Cooperation regardless the size of an individual Contribution
- Linkage of military –civil cooperation on NATO-EU level
- Definition of projects to practise and test
- Harmonization of employment decisions
- Exercises and practical tests with HQ-Staff elements of the strategic HQ’s in France, Germany, Greece, Italy and UK, as they are assigned to date to EU- Operations
- A common EU-budget fund for ESDP operations.

In the field of armament/procurement the EDA must be strengthened. In return, the member nations must initiate and provide:-

- Definitions of national long term objectives for an armament procurement policy
- Harmonization of procurement strategy
- Transparent cooperation

Progress in these fields would complement any individual effort of nation’s contributions to the **Permanent Cooperation for Defence**.