



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 11 December 2008**

**DECLARATION ON STRENGTHENING CAPABILITIES**

Almost ten years after the founding of the European security and defence policy (ESDP) – the operational component of the common foreign and security policy – the European Union is a recognised and sought-after player in the international arena.

We want the Union, with all the resources at its disposal, to enhance its contribution to international peace and security and to develop its capacity to tackle the risks and threats to its security as identified in the European Security Strategy and the document updating it. Strengthening available capabilities in Europe will therefore be the principal challenge faced in the years ahead. In a tough budgetary environment, such a goal can only be achieved through a joint, sustained and shared effort which meets operational needs.

In order to rise to current security challenges and respond to new threats, in the years ahead Europe should actually be capable, in the framework of the level of ambition established, inter alia of deploying 60 000 troops within 60 days for a major operation, within the range of operations envisaged in the Headline Goal 2010 and in the Civilian Headline Goal 2010, of planning and conducting simultaneously a series of operations and missions, of varying scope: two major stabilisation and reconstruction operations, with a suitable civilian component, supported by up to 10 000 troops for at least two years; two rapid-response operations of limited duration using inter alia EU battle groups; an emergency operation for the evacuation of European nationals (in less than ten days), bearing in mind the primary role of each Member State as regards its nationals and making use of the consular lead State concept; a maritime or air surveillance/interdiction mission; a civilian-military humanitarian assistance operation lasting up to 90 days; around a dozen ESDP civilian missions (inter alia police, rule-of-law, civilian administration, civil protection, security sector reform, and observation missions) of varying formats, including in rapid-response situations, together with a major mission (possibly up to 3000 experts) which could last several years. For its operations and missions, the European Union uses, in an appropriate manner and in accordance with its procedures, the resources and capabilities of Member States, of the European Union and, if appropriate for its military operations, of NATO.

A Europe of Defence will rest on a robust and competitive European defence, technological and industrial base able to meet Member States' capability requirements and to support the ESDP.

We would encourage the Secretary-General/High Representative's efforts to set up a new single civilian-military strategic planning structure for ESDP operations and missions to enhance the coherence between the civilian and military aspects of our operations, which represents the European Union's specific and unique added value.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIAN CAPABILITIES

In 2008 the European Union launched a civilian mission in Kosovo, the largest in terms of personnel conducted under the ESDP. It also successfully, and within a very short timescale, deployed a civilian monitoring mission in Georgia. In 2008 the European Union also deployed a new mission for reform of the security sector in Guinea-Bissau. It increased its personnel in Afghanistan, the Palestinian Territories and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and continued its efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Iraq.

Thanks to improved command and control structures, in particular the full operational capability of the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, the Union now has ten civilian missions deployed in eight theatres of operation, including some which are particularly demanding in security terms.

Nearly six years after the first police mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ESDP civilian missions have thus become an essential tool of the common foreign and security policy. Their advisory, management and monitoring activities in the areas of policing, rule-of-law, civilian administration, security sector reform and observation provide added value specific to the European Union in support of international peace and security. This Union capability, which is unique internationally, will be increasingly in demand. We will continue work on improving our capability to anticipate, react, plan and execute, in order to ensure that civilian missions are put in place rapidly and efficiently.

Under the Civilian Headline Goal 2010, we have decided on the following priority objectives:

- strengthening the EU's capability to plan and deploy several missions at the same time, in particular in rapid-response situations;
- continuing to develop suitable management tools for efficiently mobilising capabilities needed for civilian missions;

- improving training for personnel likely to be deployed on missions, and continuing to strengthen civilian response teams;
- developing the administrative, financial, logistical and human resources aspects of the mission support function, including by seeking to optimise the synergy between civilian and military assets;
- developing national strategies to facilitate the deployment of mission personnel and encourage exchange of good practices between Member States;
- strengthening coherence and synergies between ESDP missions and other European Union instruments;
- introducing a proper feedback system for ESDP civilian missions.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MILITARY CAPABILITIES

The European Union has conducted five military operations in the Western Balkans and in Africa and has thus played a part in stabilising those regions. In 2008, the European Union deployed in Chad and the Central African Republic the largest autonomous military operation in terms of personnel carried out under the ESDP. It is currently preparing to conduct its sixth military operation and its first naval operation off the coast of Somalia.

Several issues and projects for meeting our operational requirements have been considered and, in variable configurations, the decision has been taken to launch an initial series of capability initiatives:

- to improve force projection in operations: modernisation of helicopters and training of their crews, in particular through a tactical training programme being drawn up by the European Defence Agency (EDA); preparation of a blueprint for a future transport helicopter; establishment of a European air transport fleet, creation of a multinational unit of A400M aircraft, and early establishment of a European airlift command in which several Member States are participating; a European Carrier Group Interoperability Initiative involving an aircraft carrier, carrier air groups and escort vessels; development of a concept for the projection of an airbase for a European force.
- to strengthen information-gathering and space-based intelligence: provision of Cosmo Skymed and Helios 2 satellite images to the European Union Satellite Centre and letter of intent to that effect for the SAR-Lupe satellite signed on 10 November 2008; preparation of the new generation of observation satellites (MUSIS programme); taking account of military requirements in space surveillance;

- to increase the protection of forces and assets and their effectiveness in operations: launching at the EDA of a new programme of maritime mine clearance to replace obsolete capacities by 2018; launching at the EDA of a future surveillance UAV project; networking of maritime surveillance systems; work under way on developing a European Union special operations concept, including cooperation between special forces; moreover, issues relating to the mobilisation of military assets under the consular lead State concept for evacuating European nationals are under consideration;
- to strengthen interoperability and the ability of European personnel to work together: development of exchanges of young officers, modelled on Erasmus; improved functioning of the European Security and Defence College; creation of European teams of experts that can be deployed to back up security sector reform.

We renew our full backing for the EDA, which plays a key role in developing the critical capabilities identified in the context of the Headline Goal 2010, in particular through implementation of the Capabilities Development Plan, which will help guide our capabilities efforts. In this context, the taking into account of the Capabilities Development Plan in participating Member States' defence planning should be encouraged. Close cooperation between the EDA and the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) will contribute to safeguarding continuity in the development of capability projects. Cooperation between the European Union and NATO on military-capability development issues, seeking the involvement of all EU Member States, must be strengthened on the basis of hitherto approved procedures.

On the basis of efficiency and operational need, we undertake to seek new methods for developing and optimising our capabilities, and will accordingly explore the pooling of efforts, specialisation and sharing of costs. In this context we will examine in particular:

- establishing joint capabilities by sharing national capabilities;
- organising and using capabilities on a collective, sustainable basis by pooling capabilities and devolving the management of assets to a multinational cooperative structure;
- for niche capabilities, or those which are rare or costly, specialisation, on a voluntary basis, which would require the strengthening of forms of mutual interdependence between European States;
- procurement of collective, multinational critical capabilities among some European countries.

## EUROPEAN DEFENCE TECHNOLOGICAL AND INDUSTRIAL BASE

The fragmentation of defence markets and of the European defence industry makes companies less competitive and weakens the security of supply for our forces in the long term.

A robust and competitive European defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB) able to meet Member States' capability requirements and to support the ESDP is both a strategic and an economic necessity for the EU. In this connection we support the EDA's work on implementing the European strategy for an EDTIB which was adopted in May 2007.

Work on structuring the defence technological and industrial base needs to continue in order to encourage the formation of world-class transnational European groups, backed up by a network of innovative and responsive SMEs distributed throughout the Union's Member States.

This structuring effort would enable European centres of excellence to be built up around key technologies, reducing unnecessary duplication. It will also require efficient corporate governance mechanisms.

It is for the industrial players and their shareholders to take the relevant initiatives and to ensure implementation, but for States, as defence industry customers and guarantors of their forces' security of supply, to facilitate their realisation. We undertake to encourage such European consolidation projects, while ensuring that an appropriate level of competition is maintained in the supply chain to enable the purchase of equipment best suited to our performance and cost requirements.

To achieve this goal, we will support, in particular through the action of the EDA, the development and preservation of key industrial capabilities in Europe, so as to lessen our dependence for key defence technologies on non-EU suppliers, to improve our security of supply and to be able to develop our operational capabilities. In this context, we will also pay particular attention to SMEs.

We will continue measures in hand to lessen unnecessary regulatory hindrance and to further the activity of the defence industry.

The implementation of the intergovernmental regime on defence procurement (EDA) and the future Community directives under discussion on intra-Community transfers of defence-related products and on the coordination of procedures for public defence and security contracts should contribute to achieving these aims. In particular, they should help foster trade between the Member States and make defence procurement procedures within the European Union more transparent, while respecting the latter's specific characteristics. They will contribute thereby to reinforcing the EDTIB.

We undertake to provide SMEs with more transparency in the field of public purchasing. To that end we will support the simplification of administrative procedures and will promote an improved dialogue between SMEs and their State customers and major groups.

Research & technology is crucial for acquiring the necessary capabilities and also for the future of the European defence industry and its global competitiveness. For this reason, the EDA Steering Board approved a European defence R&T strategy on 10 November 2008. We will use innovative measures to seek to stimulate our research investments in the defence technologies sector and such investments in the private sector in order to ensure a thriving EDTIB.

To that end:

- we undertake to achieve, on a voluntary basis, the collective target of 2 % of our defence spending on research funding, approved by the EDA Steering Board in November 2007;
  - a multinational fund, outside the structures of the CFSP, could be established into which States would pay, in order to contribute to the financing of cooperation between private or public stakeholders in defence R&T;
  - in order to reflect the duality of civilian and defence technologies, we wish to continue to ensure the synergies between activities conducted under the framework R&D programme and the defence domain. We call on the European Commission to develop its cooperation with the EDA with a view to submitting proposals to that effect;
  - we will aim to increase forms of voluntary mutual interdependence, which create responsibilities but also develop solidarity between Member States and strengthen the security of supply, without compromising the competitiveness and efficiency of the global market;
  - non-European investments in strategic defence enterprises can in certain cases have an impact on defence security or supply security. In this regard, Member States will exchange information when they deem it appropriate to do so.
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