

DECLARATION ON THE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY OF THE COMMON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

(A) At Nice and Göteborg, the European Council undertook to make the European Union quickly operational in this field and to take a decision to that end no later than at the European Council in Laeken. The extraordinary European Council meeting on 21 September 2001 reaffirmed the objective: "it is by developing the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and by making the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) operational at the earliest opportunity that the Union will be most effective".

Through the continuing development of the ESDP, the strengthening of its capabilities, both civil and military, and the creation of the appropriate EU structures, the EU is now able to conduct some crisis-management operations. The Union will be in a position to take on progressively more demanding operations, as the assets and capabilities at its disposal continue to develop. Decisions to make use of this ability will be taken in the light of the circumstances of each particular situation, a determining factor being the assets and capabilities available.

(B) Such a capability to act results from the substantial progress that has been accomplished since the European Councils in Cologne and Helsinki.

CAPABILITIES

The conferences on military and police capabilities have enabled progress to be made towards the achievement of the capability objectives. The Member States have made voluntary contributions on the basis of national decisions. The development of military capabilities does not imply the creation of a European army. Non-EU European Member States of NATO and other candidates for accession to the European Union have made highly valuable additional military and police contributions, with the aim of enhancing European capabilities.

STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

On the basis of the approved exercise policy and programme, the Union has begun to test its structures and procedures relating to civilian and military crisis-management operations. The European Union has established crisis-management structures and procedures which enable it to analyse and plan, to take decisions and, where NATO as such is not involved, to launch and carry out military crisis-management operations.

ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND NATO

The Union's crisis-management capability has been strengthened by the development of consultations, cooperation and transparency between the two organisations in crisis management in the Western Balkans.

ARRANGEMENTS WITH ITS PARTNERS

The implementation of the arrangements with the non-EU European Member States of NATO and other candidates for accession to the European Union and with Canada, Russia and Ukraine has been taken further.

(C) To enable the European Union to carry out crisis-management operations over the whole range of Petersberg tasks, including operations which are the most demanding in terms of breadth, period of deployment and complexity, substantial progress will have to be made:

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN CAPABILITIES

The balanced development of military and civilian capabilities is necessary for effective crisis management by the Union: this implies close coordination between all the resources and instruments both civilian and military available to the Union.

The strengthening of military capabilities in accordance with the European Action Plan to remedy shortcomings identified and the implementation of the exercise policy will be necessary to enable the Union progressively to carry out more complex operations. The importance of adopting the planned mechanism for the development of military capabilities should be emphasised, in particular to avoid all unnecessary duplication and, for the Member States concerned, to take into account NATO's defence planning process and the planning and review process of the Partnership for Peace (PARP).

The Police Action Plan will be implemented to enable the Union to be capable in the near future of carrying out police operations. The Union will continue its efforts to develop means of rapidly achieving and implementing concrete targets in the following priority areas: rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection.

To achieve these objectives, the Union, and in particular the Ministers responsible, will seek solutions and new forms of cooperation in order to develop the necessary capabilities, in accordance with this report, making optimum use of resources.

FINALISATION OF THE ARRANGEMENTS WITH NATO

The Union intends to finalise the security arrangements with NATO and conclude the agreements on guaranteed access to the Alliance's operational planning, presumption of availability of pre-identified assets and capabilities of NATO and identification of a series of command options made available to the Union. These agreements are essential for the ESDP and will substantially increase the Union's available capabilities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARRANGEMENTS WITH ITS PARTNERS

The full and complete implementation of the Nice arrangements with the 15 and the 6, their additional contribution to the civilian and military capabilities and their participation in a crisis-management operation in accordance with those arrangements (in particular by setting up a Committee of Contributors in the event of an operation) will appreciably strengthen crisis-management operations carried out by the European Union.
