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EU Operational Engagement: Struggling for Efficiency

Report from the 2nd European Strategic Forum,
Brussels 2007

- Over the last few years the European Union has proven that it is a trustworthy and reliable global partner, carrying out many security operations with a global scope and a broad spectrum of missions and capabilities.
- An analysis of the past and current EU operations shows that the decision-making in this particular field is based on finding the lowest common denominator impairing the effectiveness of EU action and watering down ESDP mission mandates.
- Early consultations of member states on common challenges, a clear-defined "entry strategy" guaranteeing political influence of the EU as well as reforms of the financing mechanisms are necessary.
- A closer cooperation between EU and the United States of America on concrete issues will enhance the ambition of EU member states to engage and utilize European capabilities and improve relations with Europe's most important strategic partner.

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The European Strategic Forum – Constructing a Common Security Culture in Europe

The European Security Strategy of 2003 calls for an active, capable and coherent EU security policy and for a common 'strategic culture' in Europe. Since then much progress has been achieved, particularly with regard to the institutions and capabilities of European security policy. However, the construction of a common security culture remains a critical challenge. Too often the EU is hampered by a lack of strategic consensus between Member States on questions of where, how, when and for what reasons the EU should engage in security operations.

The Friedrich Ebert Foundation, one of the leading political foundations in Europe, has long been at the forefront of progressive debates on European foreign and security policy. Within its wide array of activities, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation has created a new flagship event to promote a common strategic culture and innovative thinking on the subject of European security policy: the European Strategic Forum.

The European Strategic Forum is an exclusive high-level roundtable that brings parliamentarians, government officials and experts from the Member States and the EU to one table to discuss the future of European security policy. The objective of the Forum is to build a security policy network where progressive voices from new and old Member States can meet and examine security concepts and policies for Europe.

The European Strategic Forum, Brussels, 3 May 2007

On 3 May 2007 the 2nd European Strategic Forum was held in Brussels on "Missions in Transition: Interlocking or Interblocking Security Policies?". European engagement regarding security operations is growing rapidly. 15 EU crisis management operations have been carried out so far and possible additional ESDP missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan are presently being discussed. The operations become ever more demanding and include a more global scope and a broader spectrum of missions and mission capabilities. The European Strategic Forum 2007 focused on the following questions: What effect has the growing scope and number of ESDP operations on the evolution of security policy and strategy in Europe? How can the European Union maintain a coherent and holistic approach to crisis management in the light of diversifying challenges? Will the EU be able to further

develop its specific security policy profile by closely linking civilian and military instruments?

The main topics of debate in Brussels were the successful EU engagements in Congo and Kosovo: the transition from military to civilian means whilst maintaining the missions' general focus and successful cooperation with other actors (e.g. UN, NATO, USA) on the ground to achieve the overall objective of the international engagement. Drawing on some aspects of the discussions of the 1st Strategic Forum, the Forum participants highlighted the necessity of close co-operation of separate organisations and states in the field to avoid the doubling of efforts and to demonstrate that the international community stands united.

The European crisis management efforts are still in the early stages. However, the Europeans are learning important lessons through practical experiences. Europe's increased involvement in external security matters is welcomed by the international community. With the ESDP, the European Union possesses a broad spectrum of crisis management tools, including military and civilian capabilities. With its increased capabilities and growing expectations, ESDP has reached out to others. Its role has become more global and more assertive. Nonetheless, most of its efforts are concentrated in Europe's immediate neighbourhood. While visible successes of ESDP were acknowledged by the Forum participants, it was observed that the external actions of the EU still lack coherence and suffer from the different strategic cultures of individual member states. Referring to the recent establishment of ESDP, the many operational experiences, and the subsequent progress, one participant noted that "... it has passed its infancy now, and reached puberty."

A more mature European Security and Defence Policy needs to further evolve its strategy. Europe's role in crisis management should be enhanced by combining in a specific way its different capabilities, experiences and traditional partners. The scarce resources at hand should be used optimally by taking advantage of the EU's tool box and by combining its attempts at creating international security with other international efforts. Beata Górká-Winter, participant of the 2nd European Strategic Forum and Research Fellow at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, draws some conclusions from the EU's experiences in Kosovo and Congo that highlight the need for a more efficient engagement of the EU.

Christos Katsioulis

EU Operational Engagement: Struggling for Efficiency

In the course of a few years the European Union has become one of the most active and successful actors in the field of external operations. It engaged its military forces or civilian instruments in 17 operations of diverse nature and complexity. At the moment, the EU-27 is also preparing to take on other serious challenges. Slowly but surely the EU has accepted more responsibility in the stabilisation efforts in Afghanistan, where most of the Member States have already sent their soldiers to support American and/or NATO endeavours. The EU is also waiting for authorization to launch the largest ever ESDP operation in Kosovo after a political agreement concerning the future status of Kosovo is reached. Moreover, the EU Military Staff is now defining the crisis management strategy of the long overdue mission to Chad (and possibly the Central African Republic), which is aimed at stabilising the situation affected by the Darfur conflict. These future challenges make reflection about the EU operational engagement exceptionally timely and necessary. A strong operational commitment of the EU in crisis management (CM) and the high number of CM tools available, provide us with abundant material for analysis and could lead to possible future policy recommendations.

In one of his recent articles, Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for CFSP, stated: "(...) the rapid progress in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) has been remarkable, even revolutionary. The paradox is that the sensitive nature of security and defence policy should make it the last 'hold out' in the progressive development of the EU. But in the past few years, ESDP is probably the area where we have made most progress in the EU."¹ Doubtless, one of the most authoritative indicators of this progress is the positive outcome of the operations the European Union has launched to date. What is worth noting, is that even some delays in accepting the EU reforming treaty, which will possibly include some very important provisions concerning this very policy, did not cause much harm to EU crisis management activities. However, Solana's optimistic picture of the ESDP's rapid progress is slightly flawed. The political will (or the lack thereof) of the Member States still remains a dominant element in the decision-making process as far as foreign operations are concerned. Consequently, the

European Union has most often launched small scale – mainly civilian – operations, the success of which was, to some extent, guaranteed due to their limited mandates. The real value of the European Defence and Security Policy, however, will be measured by its ability to positively impact situations which endanger international security in a serious way, whether these are further development of the Iranian nuclear program, total destabilization of the Middle East or the global terrorist threat.

The aim of this report is to assess how to make the operational engagement of the EU more efficient and adequate, especially in light of the fact that in the time to come, the EU-27 will have to rely on its existing institutional and technical arrangements. This paper focuses on four prominent spheres which, in the opinion of the author, are requisites of successful future EU performance in this field:

- enhancing the political will of the Member States to use the assets at their disposal in more complex and demanding projects;
- improving the balance and coherence between civilian and military instruments;
- assuring better application of the lessons learned from previous deployments;
- assuring better cooperation in the field with other CM partners.

No discussion of necessary improvements will be complete without focusing on the current undertakings in this particular field. Two cases (one mission concluded – in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and one planned – in Kosovo) were chosen as examples in this report². One section also concentrates on a particularly dynamic evolution of civilian instruments used in EU operational activities.

The Congolese Mission – 'a big Step for ESDP, a small Step for the DRC'

Unquestionably, one of the most demanding operations the EU has ever launched was last year's mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In December 2005, the United Nations Security Council called on the European Union to help in the organisation of the DRC's first elections in 45 years. The European Council responded positively to this request and decided on the temporary deployment of a 1,500 troops strong military contingent. The operation plan

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1 Javier Solana, *The Quiet Success of European Defence*, article published by Schlossplatz (Hertie School of Governance) in Spring 2007.

2 Both of them were widely discussed during the 2nd European Strategic Forum, "Missions in Transition: Interlocking or Interlocking Security Policies", Brussels, 2/3 May 2007, organized by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Egmont, the Royal Institute for International Relations.

for EUFOR RD Congo was finally accepted in April 2006 and it tasked the EU forces to support the activities of the 16,000 UN blue helmets (MONUC) already stationing in the DRC during the electoral process. The European forces were mandated to protect civilian personnel, securing the airport in the capital city of Kinshasa and assuring the freedom of movement of the UN and the EU personnel (including small scale operations to evacuate endangered individuals). Moreover, EUFOR was authorized to intervene in case of serious emerging threats to the local population. However, this ability to intervene was confined to situations when MONUC or the Congolese security services were unable to act.

The mission timeframe was restricted to four months, starting July 30, 2006. The main responsibility for planning and preparing the operation was assumed by the Operational Command located in Potsdam, Germany. The largest military contingent of EUFOR RD Congo was formed by France, which was also responsible for the field command. The final list of contributors totalled 21 countries (two of them – Turkey and Switzerland – coming from outside the EU). A major component of the EU forces was deployed *over the horizon* (in the capital of neighbouring Gabon), while the rest was stationed in Kinshasa. Thus, the main deterrent against potential destabilisers was not the physical presence of a strong military force all over the country but the ability of European soldiers to react rapidly in case of a significant deterioration of the security situation in the country.

To evaluate EU performance in the DRC, consideration should be given to the goals set forth before the onset of the mission. The organizers of the elections (the UN and the interim Congolese Government, with the cooperation of other partners) believed that the undisturbed proceedings of the elections and the acceptance of the voting results by antagonistic political factions would mark the beginning of true democratic process in the country and put an end to civil war. From this point of view, the overall performance of the EU forces should be appraised quite highly. The construction of the mission (a relatively high percentage of the whole contingent were well-equipped special forces) allowed it to fulfil all tasks envisioned in the mandate. EUFOR had to intervene on a limited scale only once, during the August 20–22 unrest in Kinshasa, after the first voting results were presented. The goals of the mission were achieved from the EU point of view as well. By becoming engaged in the DRC, the Member States wanted to prove that the EU possesses the necessary capabilities to behave as a global actor, and, which is even more important, that the European Union as an institution is an acceptable

or even desirable partner for different political forces in war-torn countries like the DRC. Moreover, the Congolese mission also contributed to the creation of a positive image of the EU in the United Nations. The former is no longer perceived as another rival for limited resources (financial, material, etc.) but instead as a credible partner.

Undoubtedly successful, the European Union did not avoid its usual shortcomings as far as its foreign deployments were concerned. The decision-making and force generation process, which lasted for about six months, once again proved to be the most sluggish and painful part of the engagement. Most participants provided symbolic rather than substantial contributions. As usual, some countries put “national caveats” on their contingents, which is something that always has a negative influence on the flexibility of the forces on the ground. A number of such bans derive from what we call a “strategic culture” of a particular country. The military contingents of several EU Member States cannot perform certain activities during foreign missions due to constitutional or other legal constraints. Consequently, the provisions of the EUFOR mandate did not escape justified criticism. With such a limited mandate, the EU mission was perceived by some sceptics as a “VIP protection mission”. They argued that the forces would not have any real possibility of intervening in case of larger-scale turbulences in the country.

The question also arises, how much the EUFOR mission influenced the overall situation in the country. Apparently, the success of the election, even though a milestone in the process of democratisation, will not immediately lead to long-term peace and stability in the DRC. The situation there is still volatile since the state institutions lack executive power over the country's entire territory. Although this specific EU mission was confined to support the electoral process, there is no doubt that it raised some far reaching expectations among the local communities, which seek more complex and lasting solutions to their problems. Some of these can be partially addressed by the EU engagement in the Security Sector Reform in Congo through the EUSEC RD Congo mission as its mandate has recently been prolonged until 2008. Also, a lot of hope rests on the planned EUPOL RD Congo mission, which will take over for the current EU police mission in Kinshasa.

The Balkan Conundrum – the EU is about to Confront the Kosovo Challenge

After the final adoption of the Kosovo status, the European Union will become the key institution responsible for implementing the provisions of the agreement achieved by the international community. At the same time the EU will also become the main “soft” and “hard” security provider in the still unstable Balkan region. In neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU is still very active militarily although it decided to gradually reduce the forces deployed within the Althea mission framework as of this year.

The EU mission in Kosovo is to be led by the double-hatted International Civilian Representative/European Union Special Representative, possessing executive powers. The goal of the ESDP mission is the creation of a police and judiciary system as well as state institution building (“rule of law” mission). Many experts, however, predict that there will already be troubles at this stage of the planning process. It has been pointed out that responsibilities of the ICR/EUSR and the head of the ESDP mission overlap in many instances. The EU mission could also suffer from a shortage of well-qualified personnel (especially highly qualified police experts), which are already engaged in other operations, which are not under the EU aegis. The next problem is that ICR/EUSR shall be granted executive powers. The Bosnia case, where the High Representative has so called “Bonn powers” at his/her disposal, is a very instructive example. On the one hand, this empowerment helped avoid some dangerous situations and assured stabilization of the country. On the other hand, many experts emphasize that a prolonged situation where the international community is in charge of a whole range of important issues and decision in a given country rather than involving the country’s citizens in the decision-making process, deprives the citizens of “ownership” and results in a lack of political responsibility.

Exceptionally troublesome is EU involvement in Kosovo aiming at economic reforms (reduction of high unemployment), the establishment of property law regulations (especially in the context of Serbian minority rights), the protection of Serbian cultural heritage sites, and a revamping of the judicial sector and Kosovo’s correctional services without local involvement. Undoubtedly, all institutions responsible for planning the mission in Kosovo should take into account the lessons learned from the EU experiences in neighbouring Bosnia. The EU presence there has been concentrated mainly on delivering economic assistance, reforming the security sector and fighting organized crime. At the same time, many civilian di-

mensions of the reconstruction effort (judiciary, education, administration) have been heavily neglected.

Once the final decision on Kosovo status is made, however, all these “technicalities” should, be manageable since the EU has already gathered some experience in dealing with Kosovo’s internal affairs – since 1999 the EU is managing the “fourth” pillar of UNMIK by dealing with economic reconstruction in the province (including customs, the privatization process, supervision of Kosovo’s monetary and banking system etc.). Moreover, some EU institutions – the European Agency for Reconstruction, the Personal Representative of Javier Solana, the Commission Liaison Office etc. – are also active in the province.

However, the Kosovo mission will be extremely difficult from a political point of view since the EU could potentially face incidents, which would put it in a very awkward position. Prolonged negotiations concerning the province’s future status could result in Albanian leaders proclaiming independence without waiting for a final agreement on this issue by the international community. Although the EU supports “supervised” independence for Kosovo in the future, it is doubtful whether the EU would remain united when faced with the decision to back self-proclaimed independence. The question of Kosovo’s political status would also add another item to the list of troubling questions between the EU and the Russian Federation. Although the RF was invited by the EU to participate in the Kosovo mission, Moscow rejected this proposal. So far, there is little prospect of winning Russian consent on this issue. Consequently, the already prepared EU mission in Kosovo, which requires a UN Security Council resolution, is in doubt, calling the whole stabilization effort in the region into question.

Kosovo’s unconditional independence could negatively impact other EU projects in the region. Certainly, it will not be welcomed by the authorities of Republika Srpska (RS) in Bosnia and Herzegovina either. Some Serb radicals have claimed that in the case Kosovo gains independence, they will strive to organise a referendum about the status of RS. Moreover, some tensions could arise in regions with high proportions of Albanian population groups (in Serbia and Macedonia). Thus, the EU has to be prepared to engage in highly delicate political negotiations in this region. If not, the entire effort to stabilise the region over the past decade could have been in vain.

Even before the EU mission in Kosovo finally materializes, the European Union should set long-term goals for its presence there. The following questions arise: what kind of political ties will emerge between the two entities and (although this sounds like political fiction at the moment) is there any possibility that

Kosovo could become a candidate for EU membership in the future? Even if the answer to this second question is yes, the Kosovo integration process will be extremely complicated because both sides are not prepared for such a scenario. Most Kosovo Albanians, although they benefit substantially from EU assistance, have a negative attitude towards the EU, which, in their opinion, did not do enough to protect their population during the conflict in 1999. We cannot expect much enthusiasm within the EU for Kosovo's possible membership either, considering that many EU Member States are suffering from "enlargement fatigue".

Europe's Capabilities: too Civilian, not Enough Military?

In the last few years the European Union invested much in boosting its military capabilities. The plan of forming Battlegroups got off the ground and the European Defence Agency, in operation since 2004, launched its first programs. Nonetheless, the EU civilian arm still appears to be much stronger than the military one. Most of the EU's foreign deployments launched within the ESDP framework were of civilian nature and included such diverse tasks as: Security Sector Reform (SSR), Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), establishing the rule of law and providing expertise in such fields as human rights, political affairs, border control, media policy, etc.

Performing these tasks was possible due to a consistent effort by the EU to utilize its many different tools in the area of civilian crisis management. The whole process of building EU civilian capabilities already started in Santa Maria da Feira (2000), when the European Council pledged to provide 5,000 police officers for foreign missions, with one fifth of them ready for rapid deployment. Further on, even more ambitious goals were set with the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 (CHG 2008) at the Brussels European Council in 2004. It has to be conceded that the outcomes of EU efforts in this particular domain are impressive. With over 12,000 civilian personnel (police-men, rule of law and civilian administration experts, civil protection experts, military police officers from the EUROGENDFOR, etc.), the European Union can justifiably claim that it is an unrivalled power in the field of civilian crisis management.

The EU's strength in civilian crisis management is not only its many available tools and instruments, but rather their timely and appropriate use. So far, most of the EU civilian deployments were quite successful in completing their tasks. One of the EU's most spec-

ular successes in this field, although it did not achieve wide media coverage, was the EU Aceh Monitoring Mission, which allowed for the preservation of the Aceh peace process (It is worth mentioning, that prior to the agreement between the Indonesian government and the insurgent GAM movement being signed, the European Commission supported negotiations between both sides through its Rapid Reaction Mechanism).

Despite the generally positive outcome of EU civilian operations, it has to be noted that some valuable EU assets could still be used more effectively. This is especially true as far as the European Gendarmerie Force (EGF) is concerned. This multinational force, created in 2006, is still waiting to be deployed. It was considered to deploy this force in the framework of the Kosovo mission, but reservations of some Member States prevented them from being used there.

In the near future, it is clear that there will exist a strong demand for combined military and civilian EU operations. These operations cannot exist separately from each other. Consequently, it will be necessary to explore the following issues: 1) In what way could civilian capabilities be more effectively combined with military capabilities? 2) Is the current approach, in which civilian instruments follow rather than precede or accompany military involvement, optimal? 3) Does the present institutional framework of the EU allow the smooth and conflict-free application of these instruments? 4) Does the European Union take into consideration the capabilities of other organizations that are active in the field of crisis management to avoid unnecessary duplications of efforts? And finally, 5) how to assure the continuous growth of civilian capabilities, both in scope and effectiveness?

Although answering the above mentioned questions could be a topic for a separate report, the conclusion of several EU civilian missions allows for some preliminary and very general answers. As Gustav Hagglund pointed out, a lot has to be done in such areas as "joint civil-military planning, doctrine and training, joint early warning, situation assessment and fact-finding, co-ordinated command and control arrangements, sharing of information and the wide spectrum of co-ordinated arrangements in the field".³ The next important issue concerns the still limited available resources. With the increase of the number of missions in some categories, EU contributions to future missions could be limited. This is particularly relevant with respect to the availability of highly

³ Intervention of General Gustav Hagglund, Chairman European Union Military Committee at the seminar on Crisis Management and Information Technology, Helsinki, 30 September 2002.

qualified police officers and experts since a lot of EU resources are also made available to other organizations, especially the United Nations.

Hopefully, many problems connected with EU civilian missions will be alleviated by establishing an Operations Headquarters for civilian operations in order to consolidate the chain of command. There is also an important role to be played by the European Defence Agency, which should facilitate cooperation between the civil and military components of ESDP. The EU should also consider more carefully the problem of closer cooperation with other organisations. In some volatile regions, the European civilian missions will demand the protection of their mission by military forces supplied by non-EU Member States. The most recent example is Afghanistan, where the EU launched a police mission. Due to a very unstable security environment in this country, EU experts will have to rely on NATO and US military forces operating in the area to guarantee their security.

Conclusions

Over the last few years the European Union has proven that it is an efficient, trustworthy and reliable actor. Consequently, we can expect a higher demand for EU crisis management involvement. This demand may exceed current EU capabilities. In many parts of the globe, there is a strong demand for the EU to engage more vigorously in resolving existing or potential crises. As the Indonesian and Congolese examples shows, the EU is perceived as a neutral and, consequently, desirable partner. The resolve of the EU to remain active in many parts of the globe is also very strong. As French Defence Minister, Michelle Alliot-Marie stated recently: "(...) the European project has been built on values that we deem to be universal." However, the worldwide presence of the EU requires more meticulous preparations and proper application of conclusions from the lessons learned.

1. So far, the European Union has failed to establish clear and precise criteria for engagement. Although the European Security Strategy points out the regions that are of special interest to the EU, as well as the most important dangers it may face, decisions on possible mission deployments are made on an ad hoc basis and no prioritisation is made in advance (for example, some Member States opposed the EU engagement in Aceh pointing out that this region was not placed highly on the list of EU security concerns). An analysis of the past and current EU operations proves that the decision-

making in this particular field is based on finding the lowest common denominator. This kind of decision-making process impairs the effectiveness of EU action and waters down ESDP mission mandates. Unquestionably, EU engagement in more complex and challenging projects will demand, in addition to a wide array of civilian and military capabilities, strong political leadership to assure that assets like Battle Groups or European Gendarmerie Force are used effectively. The new political landscape in leading EU countries is a sign of hope for positive change. France and the United Kingdom have already announced their decision to harmonise their positions on the most important issues that lie ahead at the next EU summits. It is to be expected that such consultations (which have already take place between France and Germany) will also positively influence future plans of EU operational engagement and will make some difficult decisions (like establishing a permanent EU operational headquarters) easier to agree on.

2. The strong need for a common European approach to future EU missions is especially visible in the context of formulating conditions of possible future engagements. The most important issue is what can be labelled the EU "entry strategy". Beyond any doubt, the EU cannot accept a situation where it is requested to provide considerable military forces without having any or only minor influence on the overall strategy in the country. Consequently, one of the most important rules of engagement should be formulated as "no participation without influence". This is especially important when the EU accepts a great part of political responsibility for the overall situation in a particular country. The case of Afghanistan is a pertinent example. The plan for dealing with the Afghan conflict was drawn up by the U.S. and, to a far lesser extent, NATO. However, the six-year campaign led to a deterioration of the situation there, mostly because the civil dimension of the conflict was heavily neglected. The EU agreed to engage its forces at a stage in the conflict when the country had deteriorated to a point where political rebuilding efforts had to be started from scratch. Now responsibility for the political situation in Afghanistan may lay with the EU. Thus, when considering any major deployment, the EU should clearly define its role (as peace-maker, peace-builder or state-builder etc.) before any decision on its involvement is taken. If the EU does decide to play a major role in a given conflict, it should have major input in the overall strategy development

process, even if this means developing an entirely new strategy. And if the EU accepts such a role, the necessary deployments should be matched by its current capabilities.

3. The EU's desire to strengthen its civilian capabilities is entirely reasonable. In the near future, there will be a greater need for the use of civilian capabilities than for military action. This is true particularly regarding the Security Sector Reform, which usually encompasses more civilian than strict military tasks. Civilian deployments give the EU more autonomy since these missions are not restricted by the Berlin Plus arrangements between EU and NATO. It is worth remembering, however, that EU ambitions to become a global actor and a major partner in the global governance process also requires credible military power. Therefore, beefing up EU rapid reaction capabilities in response to international crises should be considered one of the most important tasks from now onwards. A number of actions included in the European Headline Goal 2010 have already gotten off the ground. Fifteen planned Battlegroups have been formed and become operational since January 2007. Additionally, the European Defence Agency launched its first programs such as the Joint Investment Programme and the Capability Development Plan. However, there have been some problems with the implementation of assets. The first problem is related to the financial aspects of the missions. Although the German-led Battlegroup, which began its rotation in the second half of 2006, could have been at the core of the EU mission in DRC, this idea was quickly abandoned. The majority of the costs of the mission would have to have been paid by Germany, which is already carrying a heavy financial burden of other missions (the Balkans, Afghanistan). The second problem is connected to the above mentioned "national caveats". Most of the Battlegroups are multinational. It is easy to imagine that contributing countries will restrict Battlegroup deployments into dangerous situations, thereby hampering overall Battlegroup effectiveness. Therefore, countries that have contributed troops to particular missions should be required to withdraw or harmonise all restrictions imposed on their troops at the time of deployment.

Successfully activating Battlegroups requires necessary reforms of the financing mechanism. Although many expenses are covered by the Athena mechanism, many costs continue to be carried by countries that are on active Battlegroup rotation.

These associated costs are what prevent them from accepting mission deployments.

4. The Battlegroup concept favours a rather temporary EU presence in the area of conflict. However, even limited deployments raise many far-reaching expectations among the local populations (e.g. Congo). Even when the mission mandate includes only limited tasks, the improvement of the overall situation in the country should always be the ultimate goal of an EU presence. To avoid situations where successful short-term missions could be spoiled by the lack of a follow-up process, the EU has to find ways of transforming its short-term successes into projects that build stabilized and prosperous countries. Even the most successful EU mission performances, like in the DRC, could be tarnished by economic difficulties a given country is confronted with. The most pertinent example is the DDR process, which cannot be brought to an end without assuring for the former warriors ways of alternative livelihoods. In most cases, the resolution of such a conflict is beyond the capacity of the local government. Therefore, the model of assistance applied by the European Union in Indonesia is especially worth imitating. The European Commission provided reliable financing of projects aimed at improving living conditions in the Aceh province while also supporting reintegration projects for former GAM warriors and refugees. Such a complex approach requires constant improvement of cross-institutional cooperation, especially between the European Commission and the Council, whose role is becoming increasingly prevalent in EU crisis management activities. This is especially true in the field of humanitarian and development assistance, rehabilitation and reconstruction.
5. Although the European Union managed to establish good working relationships with different partners operating in the crisis management field over the past several years, much remains to be done in this domain, especially as far as NATO-EU relations are concerned. Some time ago, both organizations agreed on a "strategic partnership", but to date their cooperation has not been effective. That there exists a lack of political will to boost collaboration is evidenced by both sides' invention of technical obstacles (such as exchange of classified information). In the long term, such an approach cannot be beneficial and both partners could lose out by foregoing cooperation. The case of Afghanistan is a good example. The situation in this country will not be improved without large-

scale EU engagement, especially in such fields as Security Sector Reform, public administration and education.

Much has to also be done to improve the EU-United States political dialogue in this field since both partners are usually engaged (economically, politically or militarily) in the same regions. The lack of a common approach to the problems they face hampers their successful resolution. Considering the special European interest in promoting peace on the African continent, the momentum on the American side to substantially increase engagement on the continent, should be taken advantage of to improve strategic relations. This could be a first step on the way to enhance the will of EU member states to engage and utilize European capabilities as well as to improve relations with Europe's most important partner when it comes to operational engagement.



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