

New Impetus for European Security and Defence – taking a realistic approach BERLIN, 8&9 DECEMBER 2009

PANEL VII : ESDP OPERATIONS

1) Specificity and limits of the ESDP Operations Framework:

The framework of ESDP operations was designed in the Nice Treaty in Dec. 2000 (and is not deeply modified by the Lisbon Treaty): it is characterised by a limited level of ambition and restrictions in several areas.

▪ as far as military operations are concerned:

- the EU operations are envisaged only in support of the CFSP (ESDP is embedded in the CFSP); therefore they are limited to Crisis Management Operations outside the territory of the EU Member-States. Collective Defence stay exclusively with NATO since most of the EU Members are also NATO Nations and privilege their defence in the framework of this organisation.

- the maximum level of ambition for EU military Operations, which has been deduced of the requirements to deal with the Balkan Crises (Bosnia and Kosovo) in the 90ies has been limited to a single Army Corps (60 000 troops), 100 Navy ships and 400 Airplanes of various types. This was the basis on which the Helsinki Headline Goals was elaborated in 2003. In addition and as it is in NATO the capabilities declared to the EU are only available for EU operations after the decision of member States to contribute.

- no permanent EU operational chain of command was built (to avoid “unnecessary duplication” with NATO). Therefore 3 options (Berlin+, Framework Nation and OPCEN) are envisaged to anticipate the building up of operational chain of command when needed (that means when the decision of launching an operation is taken by the Council). These restrictions to ESDP ambition and capabilities in military field have political ground and the HHGs don’t represent actually the maximum capabilities and efforts the Europeans are able to deliver together but only what Member-States agreed to do in the EU framework.

▪ as far as civilian operations are concerned:

From the outset of the ESDP implementation, it was agreed that the EU should take advantage of its various instruments and adopt a global approach when dealing with Crisis management. Therefore a civilian component (5000 policemen) was included in the HHGs allowing the EU to deploy not only Military but also police, monitors, gendarmes or lawyers.

Decided from the early stage of ESDP the global approach in crisis management was not easy to implement due to the complexity of the EU institutions, organisation in three pillars: one being communitarian (Commission) and the two others being intergovernmental (CFSP/ESDP)

2) Achievements and Lessons Learned

- However within this agreed and restricted framework, the EU has been able to launch more than 20 ESDP operations of various types and sizes on 3 continents since 2003. Most of them are civilian operation but 6 are military. These operations can be globally considered as **success** to the extent that in each case, the local situation was better after than before the EU intervention.(ARTEMIS, ACEH, EUFOR DRC and CHAD, ATALANTA...). In most cases the EU was able to plan and deploy within the expected timeframe though using all the available time for taking decision.

Even if She adopted a global approach in crisis management, the EU was not always in a position to address all aspects of a crisis; therefore in many cases EU operations or actions were limited in scale and time but were always effect based and well focused on a limited political objective (EUBAM Rafah, Eusec Guinea-Bissau..). In most cases the limited **political ambition was coherent with the capabilities** member states were ready to contribute. So were Artemis in 2003 and EUFOR RDC in 2006 or more recently EUFOR Chad and ATALANTA. Nevertheless as a result the **CFSP has actually been strengthened and the EU has become a credible (even if limited) contributor to the world security.**

- In absence of a realistic role sharing with the other international security organisations (UN, NATO, OSCE, AU....) **the EU has become a partner** of them and use to play its role complementarily with them: Kosovo, DRC, Darfur, Afghanistan are good examples....

Taking advantage of the operations in DRC, Chad, Kosovo, a solid Partnership was developed with the UN. In each case the type of cooperation was adapted to the specificity of the situation and the available capabilities of the EU. This was illustrated namely in the flexibility to set up a good cooperation between the UN and the EU chain of command allowing in any situation the EU to keep command and control of the EU forces.

It was more difficult to implement between EU and NATO despite (or because) the fact that the 21 same Nations belong to the two organisations. A realistic **complementarity between NATO and the EU can only be founded on a complementarity of interests between American and European (namely between the USA and the EU).** The new transatlantic link must take into account this reality. On this basis it will come easier to

build an effective NATO-EU partnership giving to the USA and the EU which share common values and security objectives the possibility to intervene either together in NATO or alone.

- The comprehensive approach in crisis management which is the centre piece of the EU operation concept is getting better and better implemented operation after operation. **Lessons learned from the numerous and various EU operations provide a unique background to make synergy more effective** in using all the EU available instruments. For ATALANTA, the cooperation between the Commission and the other pillars made the EU capable to manage concurrently the military operations and the negotiation with the Red Sea neighbour countries to gain their support; for the first time in such circumstance the Commission demonstrated its capability to be reactive and to respond swiftly and in real time to the requirements. In this occasion the EU proved the added value of its multidisciplinary capacity and commitment even if there is still room for progress.

- **In spite of its encouraging achievements and results the EU must and can improve its ambition and capabilities to enhance its credibility as a security actor.** The size of operation the EU is able to launch to date is not consistent with the level of its security interests and international responsibility. Although the Helsinki Headline Goals include the possibility for the EU to engage up to 60 000 troops (which is likely less than what the European could do) this theoretical assumption doesn't seem realistic today. There is a vicious circle between the lack of ESDP capabilities and the lack of its ambition. In addition, in many occasions it appeared that despite potential national intent of contributions contained in the HHGs it was difficult to get the required capabilities to launch the operation timely (lack of surgeons and airplane before EUFOR DRC 2006 or helicopters before EUFOR CHAD 2008)

The reinforcement of the EU capabilities should be threefold:

- **Lift the restriction** to the development of EU command structures and as a priority to the establishment of a permanent operational chain of command able to command and control from Brussels all the ongoing EU operations integrating the civilian and military aspects; the existing options (Berlin+, framework nation and OPCEN within the EUMS) are complex, costly and not very effective. The lack of symmetry between the civilian and military structures is damageable to the civil-military cooperation.
- **Strengthen the synergy** between the EU instruments in Brussels and in theatres taking advantage of the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. As already mentioned progress has been made but the implementation of the Crisis Management Planning Directorate

in the Council General Secretariat and the establishment of the European Service for External Action should lead to a more reactive and integrated capability for watching the emerging crises, prevention and planning strategic civ-mil operations or actions. This should be complemented in the theatres by integrated management and structures where it is more efficient.

- **Reduce shortfalls and develop European military and civilian capabilities adapted to the new security context.** The expectation to see increased Member States Defence budget is low; therefore reinforcement can only come from more cooperation and integration of their efforts. The implementation of the Defence package of the Commission (2008), the setting up of an EU DTIB, joint efforts in the field of R&T are the most promising ways to eliminate the waste of resource due to the unnecessary duplication of national Defence planning.

3) Prospects offered by the Lisbon Treaty:

Although it doesn't change dramatically the spectrum of action, the capabilities, and the level of ambition for ESDP operations (which become CSDP), the Lisbon Treaty comprise some interesting progress which could contribute to a stronger EU in that field:

- in the preamble of the new Treaty the CFSP ambition is confirmed:
 - its objective is to establish and keep Peace in Europe and in the world
 - the EU project is to achieve an EU autonomous identity
- the field of CSDP missions is extended to:
 - united action in favour of a global disarmament
 - military assistance and advisory mission
 - conflict prevention and stabilisation
 - fight against terrorism, this aspect being strengthened by a solidarity clause which require mutual assistance of EU members in case of terrorist attack including with military assets.
- the new competence of the High Representative also vice President of the Commission supported by the ESEA let hope a better EU unity of action and a better synergy in using the various EU instruments in a more coherent and powerful EU external action.
- finally the possibility to have EU initiatives and operations undertaken and conducted by a limited number of member States through the PSC, reinforced cooperation or ad-hoc coalition is likely to bring more flexibility and capacity of action to the EU as a whole.

- the confirmation of the EDA in its role to streamline and strengthen an EU more integrated and autonomous Defence planning

If correctly implemented and under the condition that the EU member States are able to make their foreign policies more convergent, these disposals should make the EU more coherent and more capable to launch operation. However in spite of these promising disposals we must note that the restrictions to the CSDP ambition contained in the Nice Treaty are not lifted and in particular with regard to the implementation of a permanent autonomous operational chain of command. This has to be linked to the renewal of the transatlantic link and the establishment of a sound foundation for a complementarity between NATO and the EU. This issue is crucial and must be considered as a priority while a new strategic concept is being elaborated in NATO.

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