

Working Group VIII

Working document 37

WORKING GROUP VIII « DEFENCE »

Subject : **Comments by Mrs Maria Eduarda Azevedo on the preliminary draft final report of Working Group VIII "Defence" (WD 022)**

Members of Working Group VIII will find attached comments by Mrs Maria Eduarda Azevedo , member of the Convention, on the preliminary draft final report.

EUROPEAN CONVENTION
VIII GROUP
DEFENSE

27th November of 2002

Subject: Contribution of Mrs. Maria Eduarda Azevedo, Member of the Convention, on the Draft Report of the Defense Working Group

Crisis Management

- I. It is considered fundamental the increase in the efficiency of all processes related to crisis management, namely, at the level of a reinforced role of the High Representative. For example, by giving him some financial powers, that will allow him to have room to manoeuvre and a greater capacity to answer to situation of crisis.
- II. In this field of crisis management the Commission's delegations, or eventually, representatives of the High Representative, could work with cabinets of early warning, endowing this way, the European Union with a more active attitude in relation to new threats referred in the document.
- III. New methods of cooperation can be introduced by the EU with other actors and entities of crisis management, that should permit an effective cooperation in the ground, and easing up, even, an institutional cooperation in Brussels. These partnerships could take place, for example, with non – governmental organizations, which have experience in acting in civil crisis management.

- IV. Regarding the problem of financing the operations of crisis management, some doubts arise relating to the proposal of constituting a “fund, relatively modest, constituted by contributions of Member States”. Will we be facing an increased contribution by the Member States, destined to supply these needs? If this is so, won’t this then be a way to make the process more difficult, as we already know the difficulty that the National States have in increasing the budgets for defense? Shouldn’t this fund come from the budget of the EU?
- V. It is considered very important the training of the armies, by exploring deeper the recommendation of the possibility of forming a common military academy. The final report should emphasize this point about the training of the military.

Institutional Framework

- VI. Once again, it is important to highlight the role of the High Representative, making him responsible for defense and foreign affairs relations of the EU. It would be advisable that the coordination of these two sensitive areas stay attached to one and only person, increasing thus the capacity for more coherent answers to the new challenges. The High Representative could be the link between the political and military structures of the EU, in a way to facilitate the decisions to be taken and speeding up the processes.

Answers to the new threats – more solidarity

- VII. It is considered that there are new threats to which the EU will have to be able to answer in a positive manner, namely, the new dangers of international terrorism and the possibility of the use of armaments of massive destruction. Before, these new challenges, it is fundamental that the EU finds answers beyond the traditional military methods, making sense of what is proposed in this document.
- VIII. It is considered fundamental this effort of systemization and rationalization in this field, avoiding the duplication of efforts amongst the EU. The important thing is to provide better conditions for the use of the means and military capacities that already exist.
- IX. Regarding the establishment of criteria and objectives of convergence in the topics related to security and defense, we think that they can function like a mechanism which could traditionally lead to a restrict group of Member States which assumed a leading role in this process. In this manner, can't we be before a factor that will raise difficulties to the principal of solidarity?
- X. The increase in the investment in research and development should be a priority of the EU, that should be clearly emphasized in the final report. In this sense, a constitution of an European Agency of Armaments could be a solution for the harmonization of the European defense sector.

XI. The constitution of a Council of Ministers of Defense is a welcomed proposal, suggesting an annual report on the development of the military capacities amongst the EU, to be given to the European Parliament aswell.

The document presented by Commissioner Barnier is a very good proposal, that reports diverse opinions through out the meetings that took place in the VIII th Working Group. It is a balanced document, with some important proposals and that contribute for an advance in questions of security and defense amongst the EU.
