

Working Group VIII

Working document 42

WORKING GROUP VIII « DEFENCE »

Subject : Note by Ms Gisela Stuart

At the last meeting of the Defence Working Group, a number of questions were raised about the precise meaning of the UK proposals (WD 23) on up-dating the Petersberg Tasks. I attach a short note offering further explanation, which I would be grateful if you could circulate to the members of the Working Group.

Up-dating the Petersberg Tasks

The Petersberg tasks, originally framed in 1992 by the WEU, cover “humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking”

Since they were drafted, our understanding of the scope of peacekeeping and peace support has developed considerably. The UK believes that to reflect the new security environment, the tasks should be up-dated. We propose the following three concepts should be added:

“Defence outreach/diplomacy” - a practical but imaginative programme of military-to-military co-operation to assist in the development of democratically accountable armed forces by sharing good practice and to reinforce the Union's CFSP objectives.

This would include offering:

- military-to-military training and assistance programmes (potentially including the provision of advice and through short-term training teams);
- information exchanges;
- targeted visits or exercises;
- and weapons destruction and arms control assistance (building on work already funded through the CFSP budget).

Such a programme would therefore encompass a number of the activities and objectives undertaken within NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme. But each intervention would be tailored, time-limited and focus on the Union's CFSP priorities. It could be deployed in both a conflict prevention capacity (to stabilise areas of concern to the Union) and in support of post-conflict settlements. It would require a modest central budget -- ideally through enhancement of the CFSP budget, which could be complemented by pooling or co-ordination of bilateral funding programmes.

- **“Conflict prevention”** - a peace support operation employing complementary diplomatic, civil and, when necessary, military means, to identify the causes of conflict, support monitoring, and take timely action to prevent the occurrence, escalation, or resumption of hostilities. Task Force Harvest in Macedonia, which focused on weapons collection from para-military forces, was a good example of such an operation.
- **“Stabilisation”** – an operation, focussed on training, public security and democratic and military reform activities, that seeks to move from a “conflict prevention” phase to a return to civilian rule with minimal dependence on external military or political support.