

Working Group VIII

Working document 45

WORKING GROUP VIII « DEFENCE »

Subject : Note by Mr Liviu Maior

In view of the meeting of the Group on 10 December, members will find attached a note by Mr Liviu Maior, member of the Convention.

Proposals for the Draft Final Report

- Our work here is now approaching to an end. Of course, consensus has not been reached on all matters that we have discussed, but I believe major progress has been achieved in critical areas for the development of a sound ESDP, by specific recommendations for improving its missions and capabilities, building structural and institutional coherence and increasing sustainability in terms of budget and procurement policies.
- Much remains to be done in respect to harmonising the WG conclusions with the work of other groups on external relations, institutional architecture and so on. The proposed revisions have nevertheless acquired a high level of inner consistency that I am sure will produce tangible results in the near future. The intent of my short intervention is to outline some of the most important aspects included in the preliminary report that we consider as requiring additional work at the experts level on their concrete development. Also I would like to briefly comment on some major issues included in the Franco-German proposals to this WG.

Institutional roles and responsibilities

- We have all agreed that coherence is a must if we want to increase EU efficiency in crisis management. Therefore co-ordination between foreign policy and defence policy should substantiate in a system of relations between EU Representatives with special responsibilities in those areas. Furthermore, EU Secretary General and CFSP High Representative should ensure the translation of political decisions into operational tasks and be empowered to react to emergency situations. Rapid reaction in crisis situations is probably required today more than ever, if we want to assume, along classical Petersberg tasks, missions related to prevention and consequence management.
- I am glad that the preliminary draft report has underlined the importance of defence policy oversight. Parliamentary scrutiny has been presented in details at the EU and national levels and I believe that a special focus ought to be given to the functioning of these processes, as the need for democratic and legitimacy proceedings has increased alongside the European bureaucratic construction. Romania as a candidate state and as a direct participant to ESDP is strongly attached to the deepening of such developments.
- Within current debates related to force structures and operational efforts, there was a tendency at the beginning to forget the role of the European Parliament, as too often, we are inclined to deliberate more on particular details, than to take account of the broad picture. One of the most important roles of the parliament in ESDP is of course the approval of the budget. If we want to be accountable and if we want to achieve a certain degree of flexibility in funds allocation to allow for rapid intervention in operations, we ought not only to keep the European Parliament informed on the daily business, but also to directly involve it in the construction of EU defence policy.
- Further down on the institutional channel, the extension of military structures to incorporate specific operational requirements (particularly the creation of EU military command structure and joint training centre) will be a major undertaking. Co-ordination or update of EU regulations on the role of Contributors Committee in operations needs however to be further elaborated.
- Romania has expressed on different occasions its interest in participating to EU military exercises and I have to state here, once more, the need for all forces committed to the Headline Goal to be jointly trained and to acquire a certain level or status of representation in all military command structures.

New missions and new requirements

– We have all agreed on the need to adapt the Petersberg missions to the complexity of the security environment and on the relevance of current tasks that should not be changed entirely, but significantly supplemented. I would like to draw your attention on the continuation of this endeavour by the establishment of new means and ways of action derived from the new type of missions. Of course, the preliminary draft underlines for example the proposal for a joint pool of civil protection, but there is much more to be done if the European Union as an organisation will undertake actions related to prevention and post conflict rehabilitation. A proposal for example to co-ordinate member states' security assistance tools could be investigated (the possibility to create a sort of clearing house mechanism that could also include representatives from NGOs or educational community).

– The same principle - defining structures, means and capabilities for assuming new missions - should also be applied to some aspects of the intervention in case of a terrorist attacks on the territory of member states. It is evident that current EU military and civilian capabilities have been drawn on the basis of traditional Petersberg assessment and while they do cover currently an important number of assets, we should think however in the future to their concrete accommodation to a new framework of objectives and tasks.

– We have debated during previous sessions the need for establishing a security concept to build upon future EU defence policies. We have come to a more concrete proposal to develop a Threat Assessment Declaration that will be regularly updated and will provide the framework for further strategic evaluations of the current security environment. Such an endeavour will require specific structures responsible for revision of the declaration. Although political consensus towards a certain general risk assessment could be considered as implicitly included in EU common security policies, more detailed proceedings would require the creation of a Situation Centre, similar to the unit for ESDP civil aspects. Such a Situation Centre will also provide an essential input to the EU structures involved in concrete military operations in the future, whereas co-ordination with NA TO system in this field should also be pursued.

– The defence component has already, as we all know, achieved a comprehensive level of development that creates the need for new forms of Cupertino and a more flexible approach, as stated in the preliminary draft, similar to the one used for the management of Euro. The process of enriching Nice Treaty to embrace closer types of co-operation, based on states' willingness and concrete contributions, should be extended on the same principle to EU candidates that are already participating to the overall ESDP construction. Building a "Euro-defence zone" will not be a task for the near future, therefore it should be created from the very beginning in such a manner to accommodate a predictably larger European Union and include specific procedures for those candidates that already committed an important capability package to ESDP .

– In the end, a few remarks related to the proposals to the WG presented by the France and Germany representatives. We consider that they include substantial contributions that will facilitate our analysis on ESDP in the field of enhanced co-operation among member states, especially by establishing a capability planning process and a sound, more integrated armaments policy.

– The need to reinforce the European identity within NATO, as well as the need to avoid overlapping and duplications are important principles, as stated in the proposals and we ought to bear them in mind during the overall development of the WG final recommendations.

– The creation of EU Armaments Agency and the establishment of specific criteria in this field by the adaptation of art. 296 of the EC Treaty would ensure a basis for common policies and directly support the substantiation of ESDP, in terms of capabilities and equipments. We strongly support the proposals related to harmonising security of information and defence research policies, as being essential to the EU role in this field. To some extent, those areas will benefit from the WEAG experience, and Romania, as a candidate country, has a direct interest in continuing and deepening the WEAG type of co-operation, within future responsible structures.

CONCLUSION

– Finally, I would like to express the Romanian delegation belief that this Working Group has tackled With a tremendous number of sensitive issues up to now and that it has gradually become a unique framework for consultations and debates that should be capitalised within future ESDP concrete developments.
