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## INFORMATION NOTE

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**Subject : Report on the Defence Seminar**

Members of the Convention will find attached the report on the Defence Seminar, organised by the Institute for Security Studies on 7 November in Brussels, at the request of Mr Barnier, Chairman of the Convention Working Group on Defence.

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### NOTE FROM THE INSTITUTE

## **SEMINAR ON DEFENCE, ORGANISED BY THE EUISS FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION**

### **Report on the Seminar**

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*On 7 November 2002, at the initiative of Michel Barnier, Chairman of the Convention Working Group on Defence, the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) held a seminar in Brussels to reflect on the future of European defence policy. The panel was composed of the following persons:*

- *Nicole GNESOTTO (EUISS, Paris)*
  - *Richard HATFIELD (Ministry of Defence, London)*
  - *François HEISBOURG (Fondation pour la Recherche stratégique, Paris)*
  - *Mathias JOPP (Institut für Europäische Politik, Berlin)*
  - *Stefano SILVESTRI (Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome)*
  - *Rupert SMITH (former Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe)*
  - *Rob de WIJK (Royal Netherlands Military Academy, Breda)*
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### INTRODUCTION

In his opening speech, Mr **Michel Barnier** reminded those present of the timetable and challenges facing the Convention Working Group on Defence. Since the Franco-British Summit in Saint Malo, followed by the Cologne and Helsinki European Councils which conveyed in concrete terms what had initially been a policy initiative, defence policy has assumed an increasingly large role in the European landscape. Today, Europe must respond to new challenges in this area posed by changes in the international situation, particularly by the emergence of the new threat which defence policy has to confront. The Convention Working Group on Defence attempts to respond to these challenges.

Ms **Nicole Gnesotto**, Director of the Institute, stressed the fact that "the real world goes faster than the institutional world". This general law of the international system is particularly true in the field of security and defence. Since the ESDP was launched in 1999, changes in the international strategic environment have indeed accelerated, culminating in the sudden attacks of 11 September which clouded our democratic skies. In 1999 the management of crises due to collapses within States, on the European continent in particular, was a priority: a regional crisis (Balkans) combined with uncertainty regarding the conduct of the United States and a vacuum on the part of Europe. In 2003, it will be the spectre of international terrorism and the proliferation of NBC weapons which dominate the theatres of operations in the Middle East and Asia. Likewise, the United States embarked upon a phase of profound strategic turmoil which makes it a very different partner from that of 1999. The EU is therefore going to have to live, expand and prosper in a completely new security context, which in many respects is unpredictable, in which strategic surprise will tend to be the rule and which will certainly not be the peaceful environment we would all have wished. The development of the Union's resources and objectives in the field of security and defence must, first and foremost, take account of this major international transformation.

### **THE FIRST SESSION WAS DEVOTED TO THE REASONS FOR AND AMBITIONS OF THE UNION'S DEFENCE POLICY**

Mr **François Heisbourg** started by stressing the rapid deterioration of the international environment, due to the interaction of three factors: the threat of mass terrorism; the erosion of arms control schemes as barriers to the proliferation of arms of mass destruction, and the heightening of internal and external tensions in the Middle East. This deterioration has led to a very high degree of threats against which the purely national context is no longer relevant. At the same time, transatlantic and especially NATO relations have also changed drastically. The Alliance is no longer in practice the collective defence organisation it used to be: 92% of US forces are not or are no longer assigned to NATO and American involvement has ceased to be automatic in an organisation which is no longer perceived by the US – which is committed to comprehensively redefining its role in the new context – as the appropriate framework for responses to these new threats. For the Union, three requirements emerge from this new situation: the deployment of forces in external crises, the protection of populations (rescue and removal) and the Petersberg tasks. However, it is not possible to have the use of three different types of army for these three missions.

In order to rationalise defence resources in the Union, Mr Heisbourg therefore proposed four initiatives concerning: (a) budgets: convergence criteria should be established to reduce the discrepancy between defence expenditure among Europeans themselves, which is greater than that between Europeans and Americans; (b) armaments: the industrial base must enable the Europeans to work with the United States and to master the necessary technologies (cooperation desirable in the context of OCCAR (LoI)); (c) command systems: a transfer of sovereignty is however necessary to set in place integrated military commands, for example in the field of strategic sea and air transport: here too, forms of enhanced cooperation could be useful; (d) collective defence: is it not time to consider a solidarity clause – if not a collective defence clause – within the Union (a clause that most members already accept elsewhere)? To make headway in these areas, flexibility would be desirable.

Mr **Richard Hatfield** presented a British perspective. He started by noting that European ambitions in the field of defence had long remained purely aspirations: there was no convincing vision, or necessary consensus or relevance during the cold war. NATO remained the basic organisation, and Europe's capabilities were very weak, even within the Alliance – which explained WEU's powerlessness. Saint Malo marked a real watershed in this standpoint. In British eyes European defence had now acquired real added value. The current agreement was a sound agreement and that was the basis on which we should work. Was it necessary to go further? For the moment there was no consensus on this question: vis-à-vis collective defence, the neutral States had reservations and NATO still provided the only credible assurance. Admittedly, the Alliance was changing rapidly and there were many candidates for enlargement. It was also true that the security environment had changed radically: territorial defence had been replaced by the projection of stability. As the Balkans showed, this involved military and civilian resources. The ESDP aimed to reinforce these crisis management capabilities in such a manner as to complement NATO, not to replace it. However, the Union could have a real role when it was able to contribute added value. There were many unstable situations on our periphery and we could not always count on the United States to handle them, nor should we do so. The Union should exploit its comparative advantages, i.e. the integration of economic and military resources, the link between military and political objectives and the global legitimacy of the Union. Efforts should therefore focus on several aspects:

- Improving the effective use of military force. That was the objective of Helsinki and the Petersberg tasks. But those tasks are now too vague to be relevant from an operational point of view. These tasks must be defined generically and the role of the armed forces clarified. This role should not be limited to the European continent alone (Africa?) or confine itself to military crisis management, but should include economic, civilian and military components (field hospitals, rescue units, logistics).
- Ensuring institutional cohesion. Close links should be developed between the CFSP objectives and the military and civilian tools at the Union's disposal. (Solana/Patten)
- Strengthening military capabilities. We have got off to a good start, but the Headline Goal must be given substance and financed adequately. As for the industrial base, it cannot be guided by national sectoral interests, but must on the contrary be based on real management logic.

In conclusion, Mr **Richard Hatfield** stressed that the UK government supported Saint Malo as long as the process was pragmatic, based on capabilities and linked to NATO.

Mr **Mathias Jopp** started by underlining three reasons why the ESDP had to be intensified. Firstly, the threat: the enlargement of the Union brought Europe closer to real crisis areas, while the terrorist threat and the risks of proliferation were increasing. Secondly, transatlantic relations: the asymmetry between the Union and the United States had become more pronounced vis-à-vis capabilities and the perception of threats: the arrogance of power was met by the arrogance of powerlessness. The Union had to learn to speak with a single voice (CFSP) and increase its military capabilities so as to be able to influence the United States. Thirdly, public opinion: it demanded security and was largely in favour of European defence. It would be politically harmful for the Union to be incapable of overcoming what the analysts call the discrepancy between expectations and capabilities. The Union should therefore concentrate its efforts in four directions: (a) a comprehensive approach to security, involving deployment of forces and protection of citizens, and leading inter alia to a common policy on arms control and arms exports (whilst relaxing or even deleting Article 296 of the Treaty establishing the European Community); (b) a twofold solidarity

clause: political solidarity involving all in crisis management (abolition of the veto) and military solidarity involving a few. Those States wishing to go further in their military assistance and the real integration of their defence (joint command, joint planning) should be able to do so, well beyond WEU's modest legacy; (c) the legitimacy of military interventions, through recourse to UN mandates; (d) flexibility of decisions concerning security and defence: constructive abstention should be more clearly applied to the matter of defence, the concept of enhanced cooperation should also be allowed (also as a means of institutional "dissuasion"), and voluntary coalitions encouraged.

Ms **Nicole Gnesotto** concluded this first session by laying emphasis on three challenges. The first related to the consolidation of the Petersberg achievements, while the other two concerned the new international environment: (a) the deployment of forces for the stabilisation of crises: one of the paradoxical effects of terrorism would in fact be to make stabilisation and crisis management missions even more urgent, and more necessary for the Union – if only because America no longer included this kind of mission among its priorities and the burden would fall increasingly on Europeans; (b) protection: not so much in terms of territorial defence but in terms of interdependent defence and protection of citizens, the prime targets of terrorist threats; (c) flexibility: this was the only legitimate means of reconciling the different zones of sovereignty and historical legacies of the Member States as regards defence. The way in which the flexibility requirement could be taken into account would have to be examined: for example, the setting-up of autonomous agencies for certain functions, specialisation of tasks, protocols annexed to the Treaty for Member States wishing to intensify their cooperation, with criteria for admission.

## **DEBATE**

The discussion which followed focused on three aspects: the future of NATO, flexibility and the costs of the ESDP.

Mr **Norbert Gresch** (EP) asked whether the Atlantic Alliance had really become obsolete.

Mr **Tim Williams** (assistant to Conservative MEP) questioned the panel as to the risks of nuclear proliferation and on the relevance of Article 5 of the Atlantic Alliance vis-à-vis these threats.

Mr **Heisbourg** thought that the collective defence provided by NATO was now jeopardised. The debates at the end of the Kosovo war and the tensions between General Clark, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and General Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, concerning the chain of command and the responsibility of the US forces engaged in the operation reflected these difficulties. For that reason, he explained, the Americans would no longer be using the Alliance for risky military operations with significant US participation. The Atlantic Alliance was no longer an instrument of first choice for Washington. Furthermore, the fact that the Americans were less interested in NATO also meant that Europe was now a less dangerous and unstable place than Asia or the Middle East. Mr **Hatfield** took the view that it was too soon to announce the "death" of the Alliance, but that there was no doubt that the Alliance was going to change. Mr **de Wijk** stressed NATO's importance in preserving and increasing interoperability between the allied forces, but also emphasised that, in the eyes of a whole new generation of Europeans, the Alliance was perceived as a peace-keeping and no longer a collective defence organisation. Its original function had thus been subject to "erosion". Ms **Gnesotto** noted that it was particularly the Americans who were reconsidering the role of NATO, which they would like to be more flexible and better adapted to the new strategic priorities. But there were no grounds for welcoming the Alliance's "crisis".

Two **Commission** speakers asked who should "drive" cooperation between certain Member States and what might be the costs of the Headline Goal. The first question was taken up by Mr **Jopp**, who commented that it would be difficult to obtain a consensus of 25 and that flexibility would therefore have to apply also to defence, which would also be an institutional "arm of deterrence": he recalled the precedent of October 2001, when the Belgian Presidency had threatened to resort to enhanced cooperation with regard to the European arrest warrant, thus facilitating a new consensus of 15. This was also a way of responding to the public's expectations on this question (a topic also raised by Mr **Ion Tinga**, Romania). Mr **Heisbourg** explained that enhanced cooperation regarding armaments should first of all set aside the principle of a "fair industrial return", which had to date prevented any progress in this field: a better formalised Council of Defence Ministers could become its driving force. For his part, Mr **Hatfield** expressed some doubts as to the legitimacy of a group of Member States acting on the Union's behalf. Ms **Gnesotto** observed that it was also necessary to ask how these new forms of cooperation were to be constructed, by what method and who should subsequently control them. She stressed that the term "enhanced cooperation" was simplistic and that there were other means of ensuring the necessary flexibility.

As for the second question, Mr **Heisbourg** commented that the costs of the Headline Goal depended on the mission assigned to the force in question. In a way, the objective adopted in Helsinki in 1999 was "either too much, or too little" and a more precise political guideline would be necessary. Mr **Hatfield** stressed that, in a field as essential as defence, the costs were of little importance. The objective of Helsinki was to prepare a "pool" of forces which could be deployed for a series of operations and this objective should be refined and carried out. Mr **Jopp** stressed the fact that there was too much wastage and duplication in the Union: the way in which the Member States spent their money on defence bore more similarity to an employment policy than a security policy: it was therefore necessary to start by improving spending practices and rationalising the procurement market.

## **THE SECOND SESSION FOCUSSED ON THE CONDITIONS FOR THE UNION'S DEFENCE POLICY TO BE EFFECTIVE, POLITICAL AND OPERATIONAL**

On the question of capabilities, General **Sir Rupert Smith** stressed two aspects which he considered vital. On the one hand, capabilities were not just an inventory of resources; taken together, they were inseparable from political will, military resources and procedures for using them. On the other hand, the difficulty for European defence was not so much the ability to *deploy* forces as the ability to *employ* them to achieve a clearly defined political and security objective. Moreover, we had only one and the same body of forces to cater to the needs of the Alliance, the European Union, the UN, etc.: they must therefore be rendered flexible to avoid dispersion. This prompted the following thoughts:

- The Union had a relative advantage over NATO in its ability to combine different resources, both military and non-military. But the difficulty for democracies lay not only in the political will to use force, but above all in maintaining that will once the operation had been launched. It was necessary to reconcile collective action and national responsibilities in each State answerable to its parliament for the lives and deaths of its citizens. Given this dilemma, it was easier to build up an integrated defence by starting with the least risky aspects, e.g. logistics, command and control, rather than with those who would be called upon to fight.

- A method common to all was needed for the use of pooled forces. This was something which had to be worked out in peacetime, not just in times of war, through a common doctrine and common training standards. The real problem at present was the paucity of military R & D resources. The Union must develop research by encouraging the development of a firm and sustainable industrial base as provided in the past by nation States.
- Whatever the theatres of action, missions or institutions, we had only one body of forces, which must be able to respond to different situations without dispersion. Discussions about the Union/NATO were in fact not really relevant. To a military authority, all our forces were expeditionary as they would have to travel in order to carry out their tasks, even under Article 5. But there must be a single focal authority capable of mobilising, deploying and directing them. Without that authority, our action could not be either effective or legitimate.

Mr **Sylvestri** returned to the question of uncertainty: we were now called upon to deal with a situation that was uncertain, threats that were uncertain and an institutional process that was uncertain – the only certainty was that the international environment had undoubtedly become more militarised. Given this outlook, the Union must multiply its options for action: it was absolutely necessary that we have a highly flexible system which made it easier for us to take swift and effective decisions (rather than preventing us from doing so). There was not really any conflict or competition with NATO: our forces must be used for three fundamental tasks: peacekeeping, high-intensity expeditionary operations and civil defence. We must therefore develop our capabilities in the specialised areas where NATO was not present. If the Alliance had been able to develop a common capability like the AWACS radar aircraft, why should the Europeans not be able to develop comparable capabilities in the field of strategic transport or satellite surveillance? The task might even prove easier since our interoperability could easily be improved while interoperability with the United States was in decline. But it was quite indispensable to have a political and military command unit for reasons of transparency, consensus and effectiveness. The command must be in the hands of one person, who would have a mandate to ensure the consistency of joint (civilian/military) action and would in turn be subject to adequate political control. Finally, it was necessary to ensure greater consistency between military action and civilian action, not only in peacekeeping but also in defence.

For his part, Mr **de Wijk** began by stressing that the distinction between Article 5 of NATO and the Petersberg tasks (Article 17 TEU) was indeed political and legal but of little importance in the eyes of the military planners: today's threats were all very similar. Within the Union there were two differing approaches: on the one hand, a "minimalist" approach whereby the Union should only become involved in small low-intensity operations avoiding any duplication of NATO's activities; on the other, a more ambitious "maximalist" approach aimed at carrying out the whole gamut of Petersberg tasks with independent means. From the military point of view, however, there was no choice: Mr de Wijk thought that the "maximalist" approach was the only one which made it possible to deal with the threat of escalation, the necessity of protecting our forces, uncertainty about the Americans' commitment, our vulnerability to mass terrorism and the need to defend our global interests. It could not be repeated too often that a 9/11 was possible in Europe. There was, moreover, nothing in the Treaty to prevent us adopting the "maximalist" approach and we had to build up specialist and credible forces to be able to conduct independent operations, in particular in

the deployment of headquarters, the development of precision weapons, the projection of forces and their support in the theatre. For the United States, Europe was no longer a priority and consequently the Union must be able to count on its own resources in order to ensure its security. In the new international context, our weakness could become our strength: we were more used to dealing with rogue States and terrorism using a combination of military, political and economic means.

Ms **Nicole Gnesotto** then took the floor to stress the need for flexibility and unity: we must have the operational flexibility to deal with threats which were legion and unpredictable, the institutional flexibility for fewer than the 25 to manage situations and unified decision-making, authority and command. Among the problem factors highlighted were (a) the fact that our fellow citizens did not really believe in the terrorist threat, which made it indispensable to produce a common assessment of that threat; (b) the strategic "nostalgia" which made it difficult to overcome the illusion of peace in the post-Cold War era and (c) the potential contradiction between security questions involving violence and the use of force, and the tradition of European integration based conversely on the abandonment of force and a state of peace between peoples.

## **DEBATE**

The discussion which ensued focussed on two aspects: relations with the United States and possible reform of the Treaty.

In reply to a question from Mr **van Eekelen** (Senate, Netherlands) on the Petersberg tasks, Mr **de Wijk** stressed the difference between the military crisis management favoured by the United States and the more pluralist European approach. If the political will existed, we could carry out such missions in a way which differed from that of the Americans but was not necessarily less effective. General **Sir Rupert Smith** confirmed that the Europeans did not need the whole of the American *kit* and could manage crises in their own way, provided action, at least in Europe, to some extent still complemented that of the United States. In view of the forthcoming enlargement of the Union, it was more important than ever that the Member States should find a way of moving from *consensus* to action by *consent* with a single protagonist assuming responsibility for the action. Mr **Silvestri** pointed out that there was still some uncertainty about the development of relevant technologies and the use of standards, something which complicated transatlantic interoperability.

On institutional questions, Mr **Dini** (Senate, Italy) first stressed the variety of European ideas about security: there were those who favoured neutrality, the advocates of NATO and the nuclear powers. It was therefore important to avoid any discrimination in decision-making while at the same time fulfilling commitments. In this connection, it did not, he thought, seem necessary to amend Article 17, which already covered virtually everything except commitment to collective defence. The latter should, moreover, be incorporated in an *ad hoc* protocol that was also open to the candidate countries. He expressed the wish that, while keeping to the principle of consensus, the Treaty should reinforce or extend the idea of constructive abstention and of cooperation between some Member States. He felt that the creation of a Council of Defence Ministers was desirable and that the Western European Union should be dissolved. Moreover, the European Union should acquire "shared" competence with regard to the armaments industry and an independent Armaments Agency was indispensable in this context.



Mr **Heisbourg** made the point that any Article 5 would not necessarily have to refer to military means (the NATO Treaty did not do this either). He stressed the paradox that, ten years after Petersberg, no operation of this type had been conducted under the aegis of Europe. Mr **Hatfield** stressed that Article 17 covered everything but, for precisely that reason, had ceased to be any use to military leaders since it remained too vague about possible missions. It was necessary to turn this political instrument into an operational military reality. According to Mr **Silvestri**, the Union could envisage more than one decision-making process for the ESDP. Not all decisions had to be taken in the same way, he said, and it was necessary to avoid making the present system even more inflexible, indeed the opposite was required. Three different types could be envisaged to deal with three types of action: common action by the Union, decided on unanimously (e.g. Article 23); common action by some EU Member States; and the possibility of vanguard initiatives, decided on by small groups. As for the role of the Defence Ministers, its redefinition should form part of necessary reform of the General Affairs Council. Finally, Mr **Jopp** thought that there was a need to clarify the text of the Treaty regarding constructive abstention, extend its application in the defence sphere and authorise the idea of enhanced cooperation. Moreover, a right of initiative for the High Representative for the CFSP should be introduced; Article 296 of the TEC should be amended to allow for the development of a common armaments market.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Chairman of the Convention Working Group on Defence, Mr **Michel Barnier**, stressed the following points:

- the Convention should make appropriate amendments to the Treaty for the very long-term and ensure the proper long-term functioning of the Union. It was therefore necessary to combine reform and flexibility if the Treaty were to enable the Union to cope with varying and continually evolving situations;
- the mechanisms of the European defence policy must be founded on the idea of flexibility, so that the Union respected the sovereignty of the more "abstentionist" States as much as that of the more "interventionist" States in security and defence matters;
- the creation of a "*Foreign Secretary*" post combining the present functions of Mr Solana and Mr Patten could be a solution to the problem of consistency in the Union's external policy. This high official would be answerable to the Council and should have a deputy answerable for defence.

Jean-Yves HAINE  
Antonio MISSIROLI



## **SEMINAR ON DEFENCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION**

**Brussels, 7 November 2002**

*Press room, ground floor, Justus Lipsius Building*

### **PROGRAMME**

**9.00 Reasons for and ambitions of the ESDP**

Petersberg and beyond – Regional and international emergencies – The cost of missed opportunities – Public opinion and its expectations – The impact of 11 September: protection and/or projection? – What collective solidarity for the 25 or fewer? – The legitimacy (internal and international) of missions

**10.45 Break**

**11.15 Conditions for the ESDP to be effective**

1. Operational  
Capabilities – budgets – the industrial base
2. Policy  
Political will and decision-making – Means: cooperation, mutualisation, integration? – The consistency of the EU's actions.

**13.00 Lunch**



## **SEMINAR ON DEFENCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION**

**Brussels, 7 November 2002**  
*Justus Lipsius Building*

### **LIST OF EXPERTS**

**GNESOTTO** Nicole, Directeur, Institut d'Etudes de Sécurité de l'UE, Paris

**HATFIELD** Richard, former Policy Director, Personnel Director, Ministry of Defence, London

**HEISBOURG** François, Directeur général, Fondation pour la Recherche stratégique, Paris

**JOPP** Mathias, Directeur, Institut für Europäische Politik, Berlin

**SILVESTRI** Stefano, Président, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome

**SMITH** Rupert, General Sir, former DSaceur (1998-2001), Bristol

**DE WIJK** Rob, Professor, International Relations, Royal Netherlands Military Academy, Breda

Organiser of the seminar: **MISSIROLI** Antonio, Research fellow, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris

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