



EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

Chairman's E - Newsletter
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Interview at page 2: Mr Arnout MOLENAAR (PMG Director)



Message from the Chairman

Time has come for me to leave the function of Chairman of the EU Chiefs of Defence and as Military Advisor to the HR/VP.

Taking stock of my three years of duty I can say that the European Defence is both active and committed!

An unprecedented number of Operations and Missions in the broader and very unique method which is called Comprehensive Approach have been launched and significantly contributed to global security and governance.

Further, Crisis management procedures have improved, embedding the Comprehensive approach and reducing the length of procedures.

Furthermore, efforts to foster strategic partnerships and improve the effectiveness of military operations and missions are bearing their fruits.

However, taking into consideration the complexity and tempo of the threats challenging our security, we need more than ever a proactive, coherent and situationally aware Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

I am deeply indebted to many individuals who contributed with countless efforts toward promoting the CSDP: to them go my sincere thanks and deepest appreciation.

Much gratitude goes to the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Ms Federica Mogherini. I do not only treasure the support she kindly gave me and for all the knowledge she shared with me, but also for her encouragement and her contagious enthusiasm.

General Patrick de Rousiers



THE MEDITERRANEAN REFUGEES CRISIS

The recent approval of Security Council Resolution 2240(2015) has once again drawn attention to the migration crisis and the evil trade that is allowing callous people to profit from others' despair. Trafficking in human beings is a human rights violation and a heinous crime. As such, it is the only form of organised crime expressly prohibited in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 5, paragraph 3.

Migration is a transnational complex phenomenon and the EU is gradually developing a more systemic and geographically comprehensive approach to address it.

Concrete measures have been taken to prevent further loss of life at sea, to find new ways of confronting smugglers and to intensify cooperation with countries of origin and transit, while respecting the right to seek asylum. The launch of the EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia, decided on 22 June by the Council, is an important contribution in this respect. The Operational action to tackle the traffickers and smugglers in accordance with international law is an essential part of the EU comprehensive approach.

On the other hand, it is broadly accepted that it is crucial to reinforce our overall cooperation with countries of origin and transit, on tackling the root causes of migration so as to reduce the incentives for illegal migration and to combat the smuggling networks.

Development assistance plays an important role in this respect as well as the EU partnerships with the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) on peace and security issues. The focus on the security-development nexus promoted new ways of defining policy.

As security and development in these two regions are crucial to the EU, the engagement of the EU, along with the activities of the Member States, has been impressive over the past four years in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.

As crisis response measures, CSDP missions pursue short to medium-term objectives, but they offer natural synergies and complementarities with the longer term mandate of the development instruments' security components.

Under the umbrella of its CSDP, the EU is currently conducting three military operations targeting the Somali region: European Union Naval Force Somalia (EUNAVFOR-Operation Atalanta), which is combating and deterring piracy at sea, off the coast of Somalia, and two CSDP missions are deployed in support of the interior and defence security forces: EUTM Somalia to train the Somali defence forces, and EUCAP Nestor to enhance coast-guards capabilities in the region.

Concurrently, the EU counts today three missions in Sahel: EUCAP Sahel Niger, EUCAP Sahel Mali, EUTM Mali, in support of interior security and defence forces. All three missions are assisting the national security forces to build capacity, raise standards and move towards the goal of becoming modernised, effective and accountable.

At the same time in Central African Republic, we have experienced demand of an operation EUFOR RCA, in support of the UN build-up of forces and a training and advisory mission, EUMAM RCA. The first was more of a empowering and enabling partners to prevent and manage crises; the second, including through concrete projects of capacity building.

All in all, specifically the CSDP has highlighted the capacity to operate using the full range of diplomatic, civilian and military tools (e.g. comprehensive approach), and the capability for integrative (civ-mil) planning is particularly unique in this regard (cf. the Horn of Africa, Sahel).

Going beyond development, it seeks to establish a partnership among equals, determined to tackle issues of common concern together.

Colonel Giovanni Ramunno



In this issue:

1. The cover story takes us to the recent crisis in the Central Mediterranean.
2. The newsletter also presents the Political Military Group.



COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY STRUCTURES: European Union Politico-Military Group (PMG)



1. Could you explain to our readers the role of PMG?

The mandate of the Politico-Military Group is very straightforward: 'to carry out preparatory work in the area of CSDP for the Political and Security Committee'. You see, this is actually a very broad mandate. Within this remit, PMG covers the political aspects of CSDP, with the exception of civilian crisis management. This means concretely that PMG prepares Council Conclusions for adoption by Ministers, via PSC. But we also provide PSC with Recommendations on particular subjects, in which Member States can respond to proposals by the EEAS.

PMG is composed of delegates coming from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs but also civilian and military colleagues from Ministries of Defence. This makes the Group a very interesting melting pot. In PMG, the foreign affairs and defence community meet at the EU level. We work side by side with the EUMC, and with CivCom which is responsible for civilian aspects. We have regularly joint meetings with CivCom,

but also, for example, with the Committee for Development Cooperation or with geographical committees like COAFR.

The Group is unique to work across the three so-called clusters of CSDP: operations, capability development and increasingly defence industry, market and technology. When it comes to military missions and operations, PMG is mostly involved in the early stages of decision-making and at strategic reviews. CSDP Partnerships are a particular responsibility for the PMG, including most famously the EU-NATO relations but also EU/UN cooperation and dialogue with other partners. Policy development has been an increasing focus as well, where PMG has been pioneering an array of new subjects. Capability development and defence cooperation have been another major area of work, and since the European Commission's watershed Communication of 2013 also issues regarding the defence market and industry belong to the PMG portfolio.

2. What drives you to achieve your objectives?

I sincerely believe that the EU should become better at being a security and defence actor. In today's changing world, the EU needs to assume its responsibilities and step up its role in actively shaping its security environment. Every day in the news we see why. My challenge as a Chair is to actively steer deliberations and I'm committed to find the best possible outcomes with the Member States, on behalf of the EEAS.

3. What are your recent achievements?

Standing out above all are the Council Conclusions on CSDP of May 2013, which took a herculean effort to negotiate in the Group – sitting in meetings until 3 o'clock in the morning! These conclusions paved the way for the European Council in December 2013, which re-launched CSDP and integrated a new strategic and economic outlook. With the CSDP Conclusions of May 2015, in view of the European Council rendez-vous in June, the challenge was rather that we only had about five working days in which to prepare them, so we had to be extremely efficient in the negotiations.

I'm proud that the PMG has helped pushing the CSDP agenda forward in so many different fields. The PMG was the first to develop the so-called Train & Equip initiative already in 2013. It played a leading role in the joint discussions on the Comprehensive Approach in May 2014. It negotiated the Cyber Defence Policy Framework of November 2014 as well as the Policy Framework for Long Term and Systematic Defence Cooperation, in co-production with the European Defence Agency, that same year. I'd like to think therefore of the PMG as being at helm of CSDP development, keeping a strategic and political overview, at the forefront of tackling new challenges.



Defence informal meeting in Vilnius

4. The PMG has a particular responsibility regarding partnerships with third states and other organisations, including EU-NATO relations, could you tell us more?

How the EU pursues cooperation with other international organisations, such as the UN and NATO, or with partner countries, is inherently a political question. In PMG we discuss the main parameters of such cooperation, for example within the Council Conclusions or PMG Recommendations. But we also have informal debates with interlocutors from these organisations. This year, for example, we have had very interesting informal exchanges with NATO's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, Ambassador Marriët Schuurman, and with NATO's Assistant Security General for Emerging Security Challenges, Ambassador Ducaru. A few weeks ago, we also had a very useful discussion on Rapid Response with the Head of the UN liaison office for peace and security here in Brussels, Mr. Rory Keane.

Chairman EUMC Communication office

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The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not represent the official position of the European Union Military Committee or the single Member States' Chiefs of Defence.



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