



EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

Chairman's E - Newsletter
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Don't miss our interview at page 2 : Ambassador Walter STEVENS

Message from the Chairman

European citizens have enjoyed relatively high levels of security, compared to other parts of the world.

However, the recent events in France and Belgium have shown us that terrorism and organised crime have evolved with new menace, including within our own societies.

Europe's vulnerability continues to exist in a context of ever-increasing globalisation in which societies are facing security threats and challenges that are growing in scale and sophistication.

The threat of large-scale military aggressions has decreased and security concerns are focused on new multifaceted, interrelated and transnational threats.

Further, security presents fundamental challenges that cannot be resolved by independent and sector-specific treatment.

In this context the internal and external aspects of security are inextricably linked and need more ambitious, coordinated and holistic approaches.

The European Security and Defence Policy aims to strengthen the EU's external ability to act through the development of civilian and military capabilities in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Peace-Building.

The EU High Representative recently stated that security cooperation is key to terrorism fight and highlighted that "there should be no border between our external and internal actions".

General Patrick de Rousiers

tary assets, and properly dealing with security challenges, resulting from interlinkages between internal and external challenges, will be further goals.

The Presidency also believes that facilitating transatlantic dialogue on security and defence issues is crucial for global security. To take this forward, we would like to have a clear tasking on exploring all options for EU-US cooperation in security and defence from the European Council in June 2015.

The Presidency highlighted the close interrelation of the transnational threats pointing out that the Union requires effective responses using a comprehensive and innovative suite of instruments to protect freedom and security.

This will require taking forward work on, *inter alia*, the EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework, an EU Maritime Security Strategy action plan, and operationalising synergies between CSDP and Freedom/Security/Justice actors to tackle horizontal issues such as illegal migration, organised crime and terrorism.

In this framework the Presidency has announced that they will therefore seek to build consensus on the need to renew the **European Security Strategy**.

Another Latvian Presidency leading concept is the crucial role for the global security of the transatlantic dialogue on security and defence issues which has clearly been set as a priority together with high value added to the CSDP of the EU-Nato partnership.

Col Giovanni Ramunno

LATVIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL 2015

Latvia has officially opened its six-month **presidency** of the Council of the European Union in Riga on 8 January, after formally assuming for the first time the position on 1 January 2015.



The **Treaty on European Union (TEU)** and the **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)** contain a number of provisions dealing with the role of the Council Presidency and the conditions in which it is exercised.

More in detail, the Presidency defines and implements EU foreign and Security Policy on the basis of guidelines set by the European Council. This also includes the EU's development and humanitarian aid, defence and trade.

Together with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council ensures the unity, consistency and effectiveness of the EU's external action.

The programme of the Latvian Presidency has already outlined the priorities that will guide his mandate.

Regarding the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) it fully endorses the relevant aspects of the **December 2013 Council Conclusions**.

In particular increasing the effectiveness, impact and visibility of CSDP, will be a core objective. That is to say that the EU needs to think more about its narrative and strategic communications capabilities. This is of course a cross-sectorial issue which will require cooperation among several institutions.

Further, the Council will prepare a report drawing on inputs from the Commission, the High Representative and the European Defence Agency, on the basis of which the European Council will assess the progress achieved in June 2015.

To do this the new Presidency set as a priority the improvement of the EU's rapid response capabilities to deploy the right civilian and mili-



In this issue:

1. The cover story takes us to the new Presidency of the Council of the EU.
2. The newsletter also presents the Chairman of the Political Security Committee.



COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY STRUCTURES: Political and Security Committee

In this issue we provide an insight into the Political and Security Committee and interviewed Mr Walter Stevens, who is the Chairman of the Political and Security Committee (PSC).



Ambassador Walter Stevens

Mr President, could you explain the role of the PSC?

The PSC is designated in the EU Treaties as preparatory body of the Council of the European Union in the field of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). In that respect, it monitors the international situation, examines EU foreign and security policy options, discusses and tries to find consensus on draft Council Conclusions and follows the implementation of policies. It coordinates, supervises and gives guidance to the different relevant Council working groups.

The PSC is also the Council body dealing with international crisis

situations. It examines all options that might be considered as the EU's response and makes proposals. Under the authority of the Council and of the High representative, the PSC gives strategic guidance and exerts political control of the EU crisis management missions, both civilian and military. It examines strategic options for CSDP missions and operations and proposes action to be decided by the Council. It keeps also a close eye on the functioning of these missions and operations, for example through the presentation of Six Monthly Reports by the Heads of Mission or Mission Commanders.

For military operations the evaluation is done on the basis of the advice and recommendation of the EUMC. That goes also for the operation concept and the operation plan to be submitted to the Council. On that basis the Council decides to establish, launch, terminate or alter the operation within the framework of the overall EU regional Strategy. The Situation Centre supports the PSC and provides it with intelligence on crisis management. The PSC is also in charge, under the authority of the Council, for the strategic and political direction of the development of military capabilities. Also in this field it receives the opinion of the EU Military Committee (EUMC).

What drives you to achieve your objectives?

Bring people together, build bridges and foster consensus! CFSP and CSDP are based on unanimity. All Member States have to agree. The PSC is the committee that builds that consensus on common CFSP/CSDP approaches, policies and actions. Without a common agreement nothing can happen. This is sometimes a laborious, time consuming and difficult task taking into account that there are 28 Member States with different interests, views and backgrounds. But despite differences, I sense around the table the willingness to come to an agreement, to compromise and to find a common position. That the PSC is composed of permanent Ambassadors based in Brussels and working often together in the Committee certainly helps bringing positions closer together, discussing more as team, learning from each other's point of view. It creates synergies important to develop EU policies. This was for examples the case for the EU policy with regard to the Middle East Peace Process, often a very divisive subject or with regard to Kosovo where despite the fact that 5 member States have not recognized Kosovo, a EU common policy has been able to be developed as well as the biggest EU mission deployed.

Taking into account the increasing interconnection between external and internal security -, between CSDP and the area of Justice and Home Affairs - the PSC is regularly meeting with the COSI (Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security) to reach common approaches on challenges such as foreign fighters, terrorism, migration policies and piracy.

The PSC is also a bridge to and forum of discussion with key partners of the EU, such as the US, Canada, Norway, Turkey and others as well as with the UN, NATO and the African Union (AU). Regular meetings are taken place with Ambassadors and high representatives of these partners, including an informal meeting with the UN Security Council. In February, we have organized a joint trip to Mali with the AU Peace and Security Committee. Last but not least, as Chair of the PSC, I have a political dialogue with some 15 countries (Ukraine, US, Canada, Georgia,...) and 5 times per year I co-chair a Joint Consultation Meeting with the Chairman of the AFET Committee of the European Parliament.

What are your achievements?

I think that the PSC has contributed considerably to the development of the EU into a security actor and provider in the world by furthering its CSDP policies, capacities and actions. I would also mention the effort to bring all the instruments of the EU toolbox into a comprehensive approach, increasing its efficiency and possible leverage.



6th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting between the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the EU PSC

Chairman EUMC Communication office

Captain (Navy) Anne de Mazieux - anne.de-mazieux@ext.eeas.europa.eu
Colonel Giovanni Ramunno - giovanni.ramunno@eeas.europa.eu

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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