



## **CEUMC speech at the Pakistani National Defence University (NDU)**

### ***"The role of the European Union Military Committee in the current evolution of the Common Security and Defence Policy"***

Time: 14:30

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Dear Zaeem (Air Commodore Zaeem Afzal, *NDU Head of Delegation*),  
Fellow Officers from the Pakistani National Defence University,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Good afternoon.

- It is a pleasure to me to address you today; I know very well the high efficiency of the Pakistani Armed Forces and the key role that they play for the stability and the security of the Region.
- As former Chief of the Italian Army General Staff and as Chief of the Italian Defence I visited Your Country and met Pakistani representatives on several occasions.
- I am honoured to appear here today in front of you in my capacity as Chairman of the EU Military Committee and to address such a high-level audience of military Officers in the middle of their career and with high expectations for it. I also note that there are colleagues from Sri Lanka and Oman among you.

#### **(Preamble – Pakistan's military commitment to UN and relations with the EU)**

- Earlier this year, I had the great pleasure of meeting the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Zubair Hayat, when he was visiting Brussels. We had a very cordial and fruitful discussion about matters of mutual interest.
- The military relation between the European Union and Pakistan is also demonstrated by regular Staff Talks at the military strategic level.

- Last year, the talks were held in Rawalpindi and the next round should take place in Brussels later this year. The interaction at military level is framed by a political ambition from the EU to enhance its security engagement in and with Asia.
- I will talk about EU-led military operations and missions later, including the prospect for cooperation with Pakistan, but please let me take this opportunity to praise Pakistan's commitment to UN-led peacekeeping operations with currently over 5,400 soldiers deployed.
- I note in particular that Pakistan is the second biggest troop contributors to MINUSCA in the Central African Republic, with over 1,200 troops.
- This creates a link with the EU and our military training mission in the country, which works alongside the UN in support of the Central African authorities, but also relies on the UN to provide a safe and secure environment.

#### **(1- Focus on the EUMC and on the role of its Chairman)**

- Now let me now say a few words on the role and prerogatives of the EU Military Committee, or EUMC, including my responsibilities as its Chairman.
- The EUMC was set up with a Council Decision in January 2001, and since then it has been and still is actively engaged in the evolution of European Security and Defence, by providing concrete recommendations and advices on matters of military concern.
- The EUMC ensures that the voice of the end-users of military capabilities is heard among the EU institutions and that it is incorporated into the decision-making process at all stages and levels of the evolution of EU's Common Security and Defence Policy, or CSDP.
- Accordingly, the EUMC has been also involved both at the conceptual phase as well as in the implementation of the EU Global Strategy, which was launched in 2016 as an ambitious but realistic framework for the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy, consistently with the evolving global security situation and with the aim to better address emerging threats and opportunities.
- In my capacity as Chairman, I am responsible for the conduct of the EUMC meetings in which the Chiefs of Defence of all 28 EU Member States convene personally or through their Military Representatives. In my role I act as the spokesperson of all Chiefs of Defence and I am also the Military Advisor to the High Representative.

- In addition to acting as the primary point of contact for the Commanders of the EU-led military operations, I attend the meetings of the Council of Ministers of the EU when decisions with defence implications are to be taken.
- This also means taking part in the meetings of the Political and Security Committee with the right to contribute to discussions, as well as liaising with the Presidency of the Council in the development and implementation of its work programme.

### **(1. CSDP foundations and the on-going military Missions and Operations)**

- Now, to better outline the military aspects of the Common Security and Defence Policy, or CSDP, it is worth noting that its foundations have been developing intermittently throughout the whole history of the European Union.
- The first attempts to establish such a common policy indeed occurred in the '50s.
- For historical reasons they were not developed during the Cold War, but we have seen acceleration in this regard since 1996, when at the NATO Summit in Berlin, the Allies agreed to develop a European Security and Defence Identity, or ESDI.
- The St. Malo declaration in 1998 signalled that the traditionally hesitant United Kingdom was prepared to provide the EU with autonomous defence structures, which facilitated the transformation of the ESDI into the European Security and Defence Policy in 1999, when it was transferred to the EU.
- In 2003 the EU deployed its first CSDP missions, and adopted the European Security Strategy identifying common threats and objectives. In 2009, the Treaty of Lisbon paved the way for the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and of the High Representative who acts as both Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- As Europeans we have understood the need to take greater responsibility for our security. We must be ready and able to deter, respond to, and protect ourselves against external threats.
- While NATO exists to defend its members – most of which are European – from external attack, Europeans must be better equipped, trained and organised to contribute decisively to such collective efforts, as well as to act autonomously if and when necessary.

- An appropriate level of ambition and strategic autonomy is important for Europe's ability to foster peace and safeguard security within and beyond its borders.
- Europeans must be able to protect Europe, respond to external crises, and assist in developing our partners' security and defence capacities, carrying out these tasks in cooperation with others. Alongside external crisis management and capacity-building, the EU should also be able to assist in protecting its Members upon their request, and its institutions.
- All these steps bring us to the EU Global Strategy, and to the significant efforts that are currently put in place to implement its provisions, which on the military side is mostly done through the EU-led operations and missions, many of them in highly complex and dangerous places.
- Some of our military operations and missions are conducted in close cooperation with civilian EU missions that are deployed in the same areas.
- Accordingly, many soldiers from EU Member States are actively engaged in our near neighbourhood, such as the Balkans and also further away in Somalia, Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR) as well as the vessels and aircraft deployed in the Mediterranean Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.
- In this context, partnership is of huge importance to achieve the desired effectiveness and accordingly five of the six engagements are open to troop contributions from non-EU countries and several partners are already providing key assets in EU-led military training missions, as well as we are constantly seeking to enhance the way we are working with partners.
- The African continent is where the EU is focusing its main CSDP effort, as the root causes of many existing challenges lie there and this calls for the EU to act consistently with its primary interest, the security and prosperity of Europe, by promoting welfare and security at source.
- In relation to the multidimensional threats and challenges that we are currently facing, I will briefly clarify my vision on them and to give you an example of how those threats and challenges are interlinked and deeply affecting our perceptions.

- Especially within the African continent, the “triangular” relationship between the variables - Terrorism-Migration-Instability - retains particular importance and requires governments and international organisations to tackle the ensuing security challenges by systematically targeting all three variables.
- Although there is not a direct connection between terrorism and migration, and recalling that immigrants as such are not criminals, we cannot mitigate the consequences of migration without supporting the countries of origin, be it through capacity building measures or through support to their fight against terrorism.
- Recalling what I've just said about the need to address root causes in Africa, not by chance all the 3 military training missions are conducted on the African continent, as well as 2 out of the 3 CSDP military operations are carried out in the seas around it.
- The oldest of the operations is ALTHEA in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is aimed to contribute to a safe and secure environment.
- The operation makes use of NATO's command structure at military strategic level in accordance with the so called Berlin Plus arrangements, thereby providing a formal link for cooperation between EU and NATO.
- Operation SOPHIA in the Mediterranean, which has been recently extended until the end of September 2019, it is mainly aimed at disrupting the business model of illegal smuggler and arms and human traffickers from Libya to Europe, and at training the Libyan coastguard in order to build its capacity to counter illegal activities.
- Operation ATALANTA in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean has achieved excellent operational results over the 10 years of its existence, protecting World Food Programme transports and other vulnerable shipping from piracy at sea. The operation also offers an important platform for cooperation with Third States.
- For example, South Korea is regularly participating with a frigate and the operation is coordinating activities at sea with China and the United States.
- You may also be aware that Pakistan has expressed a willingness to cooperate with Operation ATALANTA against piracy at sea, something that the EU has welcomed.
- The operation's newly adopted Cooperation Concept would provide a solid framework for such collaboration and I know that our Operation Commander is in contact with the Pakistani Navy to discuss the modalities more closely.

- I imagine that you are all well informed about the recent move of the headquarters of Operation ATALANTA from the United Kingdom to Rota in Spain and to Brest in France due to the BREXIT, therefore I do not intend to touch on it.
- The 3 non-executive missions in Mali, the Central African Republic and Somalia are providing training to the local armed forces and advice to the military leadership.
- Many positive results have been achieved despite very difficult circumstances in complex and often dangerous situations, and despite very limited manning of the headquarter functions compared to other operations or organisations (such as the UN).
- The European Union has understood that at this time it is opportune to concentrate its efforts on *Capacity Building*, as an overall process aimed at helping the Countries in crisis to get back on their own feet in order to operate autonomously, supporting them not only from a military point of view, but also in terms of economic development and reconstruction of the institutional apparatus.
- For the conduct of the 3 training missions, the establishment of the **Military Planning and Conduct Capability, or MPCC**, in 2017 was a very positive step forward. This has given them a specific headquarters to cope with the political level here in Brussels and lets the 3 Mission Force Commanders focus on the tasks in theatre.
- The MPCC also provides a wider capacity of developing cooperative activities with other actors on the field such as the United Nations and the African Union, which is very hard for the Mission Force Commanders due to the limited staff at their disposal.
- We are now moving ahead, expanding the capacity of this headquarters function to also be able to lead smaller executive operations, and reinforcing the Joint Support Coordination Cell to assure synergies with our civilian missions.
- This more synergic approach can also be found in the intelligence domain, where civilian and military inputs are fused and produce a single, joint situational awareness.
- Force generation is a recurring issue across all our 6 operations and missions, due to their complexity, and we are constantly committed to match the operational needs with the contribution of forces, funds and other assets.

- Drawing from my personal experience on the ground as Battalion Commander in Mozambique, Multinational Brigade Commander in Afghanistan in NATO's ISAF and in particular as Force Commander for UNIFIL in Lebanon, I know very well the problems this brings to the Commanders in the field. should mention that the EU has no mechanism for reimbursement to troop contributors as the United Nations
- However, we are we are intensively working with the aim of optimizing the use of the existing EU rules and mechanisms for funding of military activities, to better support the efforts we are putting in the 3 EU-led military training missions and the great achievements made by the mission Commanders in the field.
- Another issue based on my field experience is the fact that both the EU and its Member States are often engaged in parallel in the same theatre. All efforts made by Member States to increase the stability in Africa are very much appreciated.
- However, while we struggle to resource our EU-led missions we should also seek better integration among the various initiatives in the different frameworks such as UN and national operations.

## **(2. The EU Global Strategy and its main deliverables)**

- Ladies and Gentlemen, as a result of the unceasing efforts made over the past years to implement the EU Global Strategy, we have set the basis for a new security and defence architecture for Europe.
- The December 2016 European Council endorsed a raised Level of Ambition for the Union's security and defence, with the aim of enabling the European Union to meet European citizens' security needs as well as the expectations of its partners.
- To achieve this, the EU is gradually establishing itself and playing its role as a credible global security provider, not just as a trading partner.
- At this stage, I will briefly describe some of the main deliverables of the EU Global Strategy, and notably in the area of Defence Capability Development, as the fulfilment of the Level of Ambition is conditional upon the possession of the relevant capabilities.
- **The Permanent Structured Cooperation, or PESCO**, is basically a framework and a process to create a more integrated cooperation among Member States who are

capable and willing to do so, and it aims at jointly developing defence capabilities and making them available for EU military operations through some specific projects.

- While the membership of PESCO is only for those Member States who have undertaken the ensuing commitments, Third States might eventually participate.
- **The Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, or CARD**, is a tool which aims to better coordinate and synchronise defence planning among Member States. Careful mapping of defence spending and capability planning will facilitate coordination of efforts and the establishment of collaborative projects.
- **The European Defence Fund, or EDF**, and **the European Defence Industry Development Programme, or EDIDP**, come to complement the previous tools as they will make cooperation more attractive by providing financial support to eligible defence research projects and joint development and acquisition projects.
- Finally, **the European Peace Facility, or EPF**, is an important initiative aimed at establishing a comprehensive funding mechanism by regrouping the existing financing instruments, as already mentioned, with the intent to make better use of them and widen their scope, which will hopefully also benefit force generation and to better support the missions in the field.
- The EUMC has significantly contributed to bringing all these initiatives forward, with a particular focus on developing the necessary military capabilities for sustaining and enhancing CSDP and thereby fulfilling the agreed level of ambition. Fundamental to this work has been the identification of the overall military requirements while maintaining the perspective of the end-user: The military commander in the field.

### **(3. EU Strategic Autonomy and its complementarity with NATO)**

- Before going to the conclusions, I would like to focus on the notion of **Strategic Autonomy** stemming from the EU Global Strategy.
- First and foremost, it is worth noting that the EU and NATO share basic values, interests and most of the respective members and that strengthening the European pillar is a clear strategic goal for NATO itself and a long-lasting demand by the US.
- Therefore, the EU defence initiatives are clearly reinforcing NATO and seeking complementarity, rather than undermining the Alliance or competing with it.



- To achieve this integrated and global approach, an even more intensive dialogue is promoted by the EU with all relevant international partner countries and organisations, to start from NATO and the United Nations. EU's political ambition to enhance its security engagement in and with Asia can also be seen in this context.
- At this point, I think you realise that the European Union is a very complex and multi-faceted actor. I would like to take this opportunity to mention the European Security and Defence College, an institution that organises a range of courses open for participants from third countries. That is an excellent way of learning more about EU's Common Security and Defence Policy.

#### **(4.Conclusion)**

- Concluding my address, I would like to reiterate that the creation of a Common Security and Defence Policy stems from a long-standing project thanks to the foresight of the founding fathers of the European Union, who even at their time had realized the necessity and the importance of pooling the efforts in order to better guarantee the security of European citizens.
- What the European Union has lacked until now is the actual willingness of all its Member States to actively work for the completion of such an ambitious and necessary project. To achieve this it is definitely appropriate to promote a European identity alongside the existing national identities.
- Europe is not remote. Altiero SPINELLI, one of the founding fathers of the European Union, wrote "It is a hard and difficult road, in which it is necessary a concentration of thoughts and of willingness to seize the opportunities when they arise, to face the debacles when they occur, to decide to continue when necessary".
- I hope that I have been able to provide you with a sufficiently broad and comprehensive picture. I thank you for your attention and I hand the floor to Air Commodore Afzal for the ensuing debate.