



The Chairman of the European Union Military  
Committee  
General Claudio GRAZIANO



**Berlin Security Conference: Europe and its external challenges –  
360-degree approach in uncertain times**

*"Implementing effectively the EU Global Strategy.  
The military perspective."*

Time: 17:10-17:30 (no Q&A)

Berlin, 26 November 2019

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**Opening:**

- Ladies and gentlemen, **DEAR ALL**, it is a real pleasure for me to be with you today, here in **BERLIN**, just few weeks after the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historical event of **FALL OF THE WALL**.
  - Before I open my intervention, **LET ME THANK GENERAL ZORN**, our previous speaker. **EBERHARD**, I really appreciate your comments on the value of the partnership between EU and NATO, a relationship that needs to **CONTINUOUSLY ADAPT** to the new scenarios.
  - I also believe that we must really **WORK TOGETHER** to address modern challenges, investing **MORE** in our cooperation, starting from **EXERCISES AND TRAINING** to **CAPABILITY, WITHOUT GIVING ANYTHING FOR GRANTED**.
  - From my side, you can rest assured: the EUMC is **FULLY COMMITTED** to further enhance our partnership.
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- Dear all, today, as Chairman of the European Military Committee, I will give you with **MY MILITARY PERSPECTIVE** on how to continue implementing the EUGS, a strategy with a 360-degree approach **BY DEFINITION**.

- I will start from the “**pre-GLOBAL STRATEGY**” era, coming to **WHERE WE STAND**, and finally looking at what **WE SHOULD DO**, in terms of European Defence and Security, also taking stocks of the outcomes of last week's meeting of the Military Committee at Chiefs of Defence level.

*Where we were:*

**It's June 28, 2016.**

- **5 DAYS BEFORE**, a British referendum announced the UK's intention to leave the EU.

- **2 DAYS BEFORE**, the City of Falluja was freed from Islamic State control after a month-long campaign by Iraqi forces.

- **UNFORTUNATELY**, June 28 is marked with a **TERRORIST ATTACK** at Istanbul's Airport, which kills **42**, wounds more than **200**.

- 2016 is also remembered by a **SAD RECORD**: illegal crossing into Europe reaches an **HISTORICAL PEAK**, with a total of **1.3 MILLION** people fleeing their motherlands. At the time, EU has already launched its operation Sophia, with results soon to come.

- It's a world characterised by **RAISING CONCERNS** about the link between **failed states - instability - crime - security**, with spreading **TERRORISM THREATS**.

- A world depicted as “**connected, contested and complex**”, with **STRONG CENTRIFUGAL FORCES** within the EU.

- Well, **ON THAT DAY**, the European Council adopts a **BRAND-NEW** Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy, a **MILESTONE DOCUMENT** for the security of European Union citizens, **BUT NOT ONLY...**
- The world **IS CERTAINLY DIFFERENT** since the previous Security Strategy was adopted, in 2003, when Europe was defined as "**NEVER BEEN SO PROSPEROUS, SO SECURE OR SO FREE.**"
- At the time, **LIKE NOWADAYS**, the leitmotiv is **UNCERTAINTY**.
- With new threats adding to old ones, while the topic of **TERRITORIAL DEFENCE** comes back into discussion.
- The new strategy is a **WAKE-UP CALL** to address internal and external challenges. **BUT EVEN MORE.**
- **EU TAKES RESPONSIBILITY** and aims to be **A TRULY RELIABLE GLOBAL SECURITY PARTNER** for international stability, filling a new **AUTONOMOUS SPACE**.
- **A NEW LEVEL OF AMBITION** is defined, **EXTENDING** the vision of Europe: while the neighbourhood remains the main area of strategic priority, the concept of the "**BUTTERFLY EFFECT**" is clearly acknowledged, recognizing that a country **FAR AWAY** from Europe can become a **GREAT POWER** but also a source of **BIG TROUBLES**.
- That's why, **ALSO in the EU**, we get familiar with the so-called **INTERNAL-EXTERNAL SECURITY NEXUS**.
- In order to translate this understanding into action, the Global Strategy calls for "**PRINCIPLED PRAGMATISM**", with solid proposals, converging into the so called **“EU STRATEGIC**

**AUTONOMY**", a **LONG-AWAITED DREAM** and a very welcomed message for many supporters of a **STRONGER AND MORE RESPONSIBLE EUROPE**.

- Strategic Autonomy, in fact, is about a Union that **WANTS AND NEEDS** to be able to act independently, **IF NECESSARY**, with its own means.

- The value given to **PARTNERSHIP** remains a **CORE CONCEPT**. Especially with NATO, as the most important partner, in particular for **collective defence**.

- But now the EU must show the capacity to **ACT AS ONE**, with **ONE VOICE**, with the necessary **CAPABILITIES** and the **WILL TO ACT**.

- Truth is that EU in 2016 is still **FRAGMENTED**, both in **capabilities** and the **capacity to act**.

- With a defence budget second only to the one of the USA, EU in 2016 has an **OBVIOUS IMBALANCE** among personnel-research-operations-training and capabilities expenditures.

- **MS ARE FAR FROM COORDINATING** among each other.

- Something must be done: somebody called it "**PAY TO PLAY**".

- I'd say: "**PAY WELL, TO PLAY BETTER**".

- And like for capabilities, the EU must find **ITS SINGLE VOICE**, to be **A CREDIBLE AND EFFECTIVE SECURITY PARTNER**, as proposed by the Global Strategy.

### *Where we are*

- From June 28, 2016, ladies and gentlemen, we have walked a **LONG WAY**.

- The Global Strategy was **NEVER** meant to be a **THEORETICAL EXERCISE**, but the statement for **GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY** and a compass for **REAL ACTIONS**, for what somebody would call a **EUROPEAN DEFENCE UNION**.
- Both in terms of **CAPABILITIES** and **WILL TO ACT**.
- As for **CAPABILITIES**, we launched a cascade of initiatives.
- **EARLY 2017**, we started with the **Co-ordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)**, a **COHERENT MAPPING** of Member States defence planning and spending.
- Still in 2017, we initiated the **Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)** for exploring **SHARED DEFENCE PROJECTS**. Two weeks ago, during the FAC meeting, the third wave of 13 PESCO projects has been agreed, bringing the total to 47, with **SOME** ‘strategic’ projects for the benefit of EU, its Member States and NATO.
- Finally, in June 2018, the 13-billion euro **European Defence Fund** project was presented, an **INNOVATIVE TOOL** to promote a competitive defence industrial base and contribute also to the Strategic Autonomy.
- **So far about capabilities.**
- But all the efforts in procuring capabilities will be **IN VANE** if not exploited in our **MILITARY MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS** in support of the Global Strategy.
- Our military actions, in fact, **THAT YOU CAN SEE IN THE SLIDE**, are one of the ways to demonstrate our **WILL TO ACT**, providing **HIGH VISIBILITY** to the EU foreign policy and **ITS CAPACITY** to address crisis situations.

- Accordingly, the Global Strategy inspired a **NEW APPROACH** about the **NATURE** of our CSDP missions and operations, their **MANAGEMENT** and the **WAY TO CONTRIBUTE** to them.
- **FIRST OF ALL**, our Common and Security Defence Policy actions are now **MORE FOCUSED** (geographically), **MORE STRATEGIC** (looking clearly at potential butterfly effects) and **MORE JOINED-UP** (because of the enhanced partnerships with international and regional organizations).
- In terms of objectives, **CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING** of partners remain the priorities of our military missions and operations.
- In particular, in the context of **CAPACITY BUILDING**, as discussed during the CHODs meeting last week, we agreed on the **POSSIBILITY TO ENHANCE THE NATURE** of our training missions, for which we have now an **autonomous managing tool**, the **MILITARY PLANNING AND CONDUCT CAPABILITY**.
- Making these missions **MORE ROBUST AND INFLUENTIAL** in the regions of interest **WILL MAKE THEM MORE EFFECTIVE-**
- Additionally, I think, it could make them **MORE ATTRACTIVE** for potential contributions, providing a solution to the **CONTINUED SHORTFALLS** in personnel, often in **CRITICAL AREAS** of expertise.
- For the moment, in fact, as confirmed by the Global Force Generation Conference held last 19 November, we continue to witness a **NEGATIVE TREND** in troops and equipment contribution.

- These shortfalls - **I DULY REMIND** - affect not only the achievements of our objectives, but also the EU external actions **CREDIBILITY**. As I said, shortfalls are evident in **ALL** our activities, but in particular for EUTM Somalia, EUTM RCA and EUTM Mali, where, **IN SOME CASES, EVEN THE LEVEL OF AMBITION IS AFFECTED**.

- And to contrast this trend, in June 2018, the EU proposed the **EUROPEAN PEACE FACILITY (EPF)**. This new 10 billion euro tool aims at **FUNDING MILITARY RELATED ACTIVITIES**, possibly providing more impetus also to initiatives like the **EU BATTLEGROUP CONCEPT**.

- We truly expect the EPF, **ONCE IMPLEMENTED**, to improve the EU's ability to **SAFEGUARD** European security interests, by **PREVENTING CONFLICTS, BUILDING PEACE** and **STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**.

- And I believe that not fulfilling the expectations about the EPF will send **A VERY NEGATIVE SIGNAL**.

- As I already mentioned, we **OBVIOUSLY** look with particular attention at our cooperation with NATO, **AS OUR MAIN PARTNER**, with which there will **NEVER BE COMPETITION**, even in reference to the EU Strategic Autonomy.

- EU and NATO **MUST CONTINUE** to work together, to be sincere partners, **COMPLEMENTING** each other on many issues of common interest, truly **MOVING** from declarations to implementation of projects, **OVERCOMING** difficulties, **sometime at staff level**.

- And doing so, we will also continue to send a **POWERFUL MESSAGE** both to partners and competitors: **A STRONGER EU MAKES A STRONGER NATO.**

**Now:**

- **WHAT SHOULD WE DO** to continue implementing **EFFECTIVELY** the Global Strategy?

- In my humble opinion, the main challenges remain essentially **THREE:**

- **FIRST OF ALL,** we should **PROPERLY COMMUNICATE** to our internal and external audiences the **SENSE OF URGE TO INTERVENE** at the roots of potential international stability and terrorism, with energy and commitment.

- Our citizens **MUST CLEARLY UNDERSTAND IT:** curing the symptoms of a disease **IS NOT ENOUGH.**

- **SECONDLY,** MS must **UPHOLD THEIR COMMITMENT** in force generation for our operations and missions, the latter to possibly become **MORE ROBUST**, moving from training **TO MENTORING AND ACCOMPANYING** our partners, for a **TRUE EU's INTEGRATED APPROACH AND LONG-TERM RELIABILITY.**

- Let me add that substantial contribution to missions and operations will also demonstrate that MS have fully understood that sense of urge, in the eyes of the **HOST NATION**, of the **INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**, and in front of **POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES AND STRATEGIC COMPETITORS.**

- **THIRDLY,** as a necessary enabler for our missions and operations, MS must continue to **fully embed all the mentioned**



**capability initiatives in their national defence planning, OVERCOMING** national approaches and demonstrating unity of intent

- This way, **we, the military** will have the **necessary tools to support the Strategic Autonomy.**

- And in regard to the implementation of the Global Strategy, let me recall Sir Winston Churchill, who once said: **“however beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.”**

- Exactly what the EU will do soon, with its Strategic Review, to include a **PAUSE** for our PESCO projects, while we consolidate existing initiatives, capture lessons and achieve tangible results, **BEFORE introducing new projects.**

- To me, this is a clear demonstration that the EU is not an organization for which the **"PROCESS BECOMES THE PRODUCT."**

- Our role as Military Committee will be to **MAINTAIN OUR PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY**, remain fully involved in all the processes, to make sure that our voice is **CLEARLY HEARD**, that security and defence **REMAIN HIGH** in the EU political agenda.

- This way, we will help our political leadership to make the **BEST CHOICES**, in the interest of the European Union, the Global Strategy and its objectives.

- Like we are doing nowadays, supporting the decisions about Operation Sophia, for which the EU Member States - **HOPEFULLY** - will manage to find an agreement that could allow our EU presence at sea **TO BE RESTORED**, so what has been achieved so far, in terms of knowledge, **DOES NOT GET LOST.**

- In this context, **LET ME HIGHLIGHT ONE POINT**: think about the sea line connecting the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Strait of Hormuz, and the maritime area where the narcotraffic is originated.
- Now associate our engagements as European Union in the areas concerned (Sophia, Atalanta, EUTM/EUCAP Somali).
- You will see a **LINE OF INSTABILITY CONNECTING ALL THE DOTS**.
- Well, **ENHANCING OUR ENGAGEMENTS** - also through information sharing initiatives like the **MARITIME COORDINATION** Presence - and activities, like Crisis Management, Capacity Building, Training and Mentoring, **IN COORDINATION WITH ALL RELEVANT ACTORS**, will be a clear example of an **EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED GLOBAL STRATEGY**.

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- **AND I CONCLUDE**.
  - EU has been sometime portrayed as a **SHIP**, with **TWENTY-EIGHT** potential captains: it is vital to have a **SHARED SENSE OF DIRECTION**.
  - In 2016 we set our destination.
  - **BUT** although we have reached important results, **THERE IS NO TIME TO REST**.
  - Seems strange when said by an alpine troops officer: the **BIGGEST OBSTACLE** in front of us **IS NOT** the **TROUBLED WATERS** we may encounter in our journey (and we will!)

- **INSTEAD**, it will be our **LESS-THAN-FULL COMMITMENT** in maintaining the course, translating the "**UNITY OF PURPOSE**" into "**UNITY OF ACTION**".
- With a future that remains **UNCERTAIN** - I wished I had a magic crystal ball, but I don't - and that will probably surprise us again (as we learned from the past), we need to continue to implement the **MILITARY COMPONENT OF OUR STRATEGY**, along the diplomatic, informative and economic tools.
- In fact, *as the incoming European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen recently said*: "**SOFT POWER**" **WILL NO LONGER BE ENOUGH**, if the EU wants to assert itself on the **WORLD** stage, **AS THE WORLD IS ASKING FOR...**
- And in order to unleash the full potential of a strong strategy we need **THREE THINGS**: the **WILL TO WIN**, the **DESIRE TO SUCCEED**, the **URGE TO REACH OUR OBJECTIVES**.
- I firmly believe that the **URGE** and the **DESIRE** are there.
- We need to express the **FULL WILL TO WIN**, *hic et nunc*, here and now, working on our resilience, when we may face those surprises.
- **FAILURE** in delivering the promised and expected results will probably bear a **HEAVY COST**.
- Many thanks for your attention.