

BIOGRAPHY

LIEUTENANT GENERAL ESA PULKKINEN



Lieutenant General Esa Pulkkinen was assigned as Director General of the EU Military Staff (EUMS) in May 2016. The EUMS is the source of EU's military expertise. As the DG EUMS he is responsible for early warning, situation assessment and strategic planning for EU military missions and operations.

Born in Southern Finland in 1957, Pulkkinen joined the Finnish Armed Forces in 1977. Having graduated from the Military Academy in 1980, he went on to serve in a wide range of leadership positions. A specialist in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) of the EU, Pulkkinen also has an extensive background in National Defence. Among other positions, he has commanded the Sodankylä Jaeger Brigade, the most northern army unit in the EU, and served as the Assistant Chief of Staff in the Plans and Policy Division of the Defence Command, thereby gaining significant practical high level military leadership experience.

Prior to taking up post in as DG EUMS, Lt Gen Pulkkinen served as Director General in the Ministry of Defence of Finland from January 2011 until February 2016. As Defence Policy Director, he was responsible for developing Finnish Defence Policy, participation in International Defence Cooperation, developing the basis for the Defence Forces' planning, and the direction of strategic research. As Director General for Defence Policy, Lt Gen Pulkkinen engaged regularly in consultations in EU capitals and the United States and also in China, Russia and other countries. Having participated in almost all of the EU Defence Ministers' and Defence Policy Directors' meetings during 2011-2016, he also chaired the Policy Steering Committee of Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) in 2013, encompassing Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Cooperation with NATO has also formed a substantial part of his dossier.

During 2008-2010, Lt Gen Pulkkinen served as the Director of Operations in the EU Military Staff. During that time, he was responsible for planning and political-strategic level implementation of the anti-piracy operation EUNAVFOR ATALANTA. He was the obvious choice to chair the Defence Policy working group for Finland's EU Presidency in 2006, following previous assignments in the EUMS as Branch Chief (OF-5), and Seconded National Expert (SNE) within the Interim Military Staff, in 2000-2003.

Lt Gen Pulkkinen places significant emphasis on the key role of the military community, represented by the EUMC and EUMS. This helps to shape the defence dimension of the EU. Already very familiar with the working of the European Union, CFSP and CSDP structures, Lt Gen Pulkkinen is committed to their further development. He believes in co-operation and co-ordination within the EU and externally, in particular with UN and NATO, and the development of the comprehensive CFSP.

Lt Gen Pulkkinen was a post-graduate student in the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva in 1995-1996 and studied in Harvard during 2014. He speaks Finnish, English, French and Swedish. His wife is Hanna and he has two grown children.