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In December 2008, the President of the Council of the European Union released a report detailing the current European Security and Defence Policy. Here is the second part summarising the contents of the report.

Conflict Prevention

Efforts were pursued to improve the culture and strategy of conflict prevention. In this connection, the French Presidency of the EU, in close cooperation with the Secretariat of the Council, the EU Commission and the EPLO (European Peace-building Liaison Office), supported a seminar organised by the Madariga – College of Europe Foundation and the Folke Bernadotte

Academy on Conflict Prevention and the Fight against Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons. This seminar formed part of the work of the UN Group of Experts on the Arms Trade Treaty and made possible an update on implementation of the European Strategy to combat SALW (Small Arms and Light Weapons).

Training and Exercises

On the basis of the Study on the future perspectives of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), which particularly stresses the growing demand for training in the ESDP field faced by the College, its Steering Committee recommended improving the functioning of the College by giving it a larger secretariat, a budget of its own and legal personality. In November 2008, the Council approved the launch of the European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus. The aim is to develop exchanges between officers in their initial training phase, in order to reinforce the ability of European armed forces to work together and the interoperability of forces. An experimental internet-based distance-learning (IDL) course was established to support the first module of the High Level Course. Experience has confirmed the great potential which ID capacity could have in the training process.

The holding of the second EU crisis management exercise CME 08, made possible the simultaneous and coordinated planning of a military operation and a civilian mission engaged in the same theatre. The exercise involved the European Operational Headquarters in Mont Valérien (France), which is also involved in the conduct of EUFOR Tchad/RCA operation, as well as the civilian Planning and Conduct Capability. The third EU military exercise (MILEX 08) in June 2008 demonstrated the full capability of the Rome European Operational Headquarters to conduct European military operations.

Co-operation with International Organisations

European Union – United Nations

EU-UN cooperation is an important component of ESDP. Widening and deepening the area of cooperation between the two organisations in the following areas: early warning; training and exercises; planning; arrangements for transition between operations; and security sector reform. It is necessary to continue close coordination between the two organisations in theatres of operation in which they are jointly committed, notably the Central African Republic, Chad, Kosovo, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and Somalia.

European Union – NATO

The high-level seminar on relations between the EU and NATO in July 2008, confirmed the need for more far-reaching cooperation between them in the direction of mutual reinforcement of their activities. In this context, the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO must be strengthened, it is also important to continue cooperation between the two on military capabilities development matters.

European Union – Africa

The first meeting in Brussels in September 2008 between the members of the EU's Political and Security Council (PSC) and the members of the African Union's Peace and Security Council afforded the opportunity of further enhancing crisis-management ties and dialogue between the two bodies, with regard to such essential issues as strengthening the African peace and security architecture and African peace keeping capabilities.

European Union – OSCE

In Georgia, the OSCE and the Civilian ESDP Mission EUMM are cooperating closely in monitoring the plan for implementation of the agreement of August 12th 2008, signed by all parties on September 8th 2008. Coordination between the monitoring actions of the two organisations is important for the success of the Mission and for peace in the region.

European Union – EUROPOL

Work on mechanisms for cooperation between civilian ESDP missions and EUROPOL on the exchange of strategic information led to the signing in July 2008 of an arrangement between the Secretary-General for the CFSP and the Director of EUROPOL.

Mandate for incoming Presidency

On the basis of the current report and taking into account the European Security Strategy the incoming President is invited to continue work on developing the ESDP, and in particular.

1. To prepare and ensure effective implementation of decisions relating to present and future mission and operations, both civilian and military.

2.To continue to develop civilian and military capabilities in the framework of the Civilian Headline Goal 2010.

3.To support the European Defence Agency in its work.

4.To continue work on implementing the recommendations addressing shortcomings in the EUMS's ability to conduct planning for EU-led operations at the strategic level.

5.To continue implementing the EU exercise programme, including conducting the comprehensive evaluation of CME 08 and taking forward the planning of CME 09.

6.To strengthen training in the field of ESDP, encompassing both civilian and military dimensions

7.To enhance EU-NATO strategic partnership in crises management.

8.To continue the EU engagement in the Western Balkans.

9.To continue strengthening the strategic partnership between the EU and Africa in the area of African capabilities for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

10.To follow on promoting the implementation of relevant human rights-related provisions in the context of the ESDP crisis management activities.

11.To continue the implementation of Conflict Prevention including launching a two-year programme "sharing the Best Practices" as well as to prepare a Presidency Report on Conflict Prevention.

12.To Work on implementing the European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus.

The full report can be found here