

## Concept Paper

High Level Seminar in Preparation of the December 2013 European Council

12 July 2013, Paris

### **BOLSTERING THE EUROPEAN UNION AS A FULL-FLEDGED CRISIS MANAGEMENT ACTOR**

In preparation of the December 2013 European Council on defence, this high-level seminar will focus on the “first cluster” issues and will aim at discussing concrete proposals on how to enhance the role of the EU in crisis management and to turn the CSDP into a more rapid, effective and visible policy.

#### **Panel 1. A more active CSDP: from anticipation to action**

Since the 1998 Saint-Malo Summit, the European Union has gradually become a credible actor that cannot be ignored in the field of crisis management. Back then, little did anyone expect that such results could be achievable in the area of crisis management, by an organisation whose external projection had not been one of the main priorities. Yet, over the last 10 years, the EU has managed to agree on a high level of ambition and on a Security Strategy, to build an external action institutional framework and to launch 29 field missions and operations on three continents.

Although progresses were fast and tangible, the EU integration process in the field of defence is now at a crossroads, facing economic, political and institutional challenges. Strategic choices at the highest political level have to be made in order to ensure that the EU develops into a full-fledged security provider in its neighbourhood and beyond.

The European Security Strategy does not necessarily provide the best guidance in a changing security environment. The EU’s ambition in crisis management is at stake if not supported by the political will to commit the necessary level of civilian and military capabilities and personnel.

The provisions of the Lisbon Treaty can be considered as steps forward in ensuring coherence among different EU military and civilian tools and providing conditions for a faster political decision-making process. Yet, delays and obstacles keep on hampering the EU's ability to be credible in asserting its capacity to be a rapid response actor: it took 12 months for the EUTM Mali mission to start its first training activities in the field; the same time was needed to deploy EUBAM Libya's 14 personnel team. Many improvements can obviously be envisaged in facilitating EU’s comprehensive response, within which the CSDP has an obvious added-value.

The first panel will therefore aim at discussing potential proposals on how better facilitate the decision making process and ensure full support by member states for the EU action by providing

common an updated assessment of threats and challenges as well as ensuring good knowledge, anticipation and advice at EU level.

Debates will focus on the following topics:

1. Do member States share common security interests?
2. How to strengthen the security and defence expertise within the EEAS (in Brussels and in the field)?
3. Promoting flexibility in crisis management: how to make full use of the Lisbon Treaty?

**Panel 2. A more rapid, effective and efficient CSDP: strengthening the EU's capacity to deploy**

Rapid deployments always rely on quick decisions and on a facilitated access to the resources and tools available.

The EU has an exclusive, if not unique, set of instruments at its disposal to deal with the whole spectrum of a crisis and to ensure the essential link between security and development. Whether they are diplomatic, political, operational or financial, preventive or reactive, military or civilian, in Brussels or in the field, short or long term oriented, all of them have their own specific added value within a comprehensive response. This broad toolbox represents the very comparative advantage of the EU, should all the instruments be used in a synchronised way. This panel will essentially aim at promoting ways to improve such coordination.

Being comprehensive therefore requires coherence in the overall crisis management architecture and an interaction of these tools is necessary to avoid any counterproductive duplication and financial mismanagement. In this respect, the question of how to make an optimal use of the different external action funds should be asked, at a time when CSDP operations require flexibility, keep on evolving in their mandate and the distinction between the military and the civilian tasks is less and less obvious.

The Common Security and Defence policy plays a major role within the EU's crisis management response. As far as its military identity is concerned, its presence in the field through 9 operations (4 currently) and its own rapid response force capacity, shows the CSDP military potential. However, the persisting difficulties in agreeing upon the robust engagement, the difficulties in filling important gaps in the EU Battlegroups roster or the tendency to contain the military engagement of the EU to training tasks put into question the EU's military ambition and readiness to respond to high intensity crises. In addition to these strategic questions, ways to ensure the efficiency of the EU as a military actor will be addressed in the seminar.

Civilian crisis management has been and remains a major pillar of CSDP. Envisaged as a short-term tool, CSDP civilian missions became the basis for the long-term constant EU engagement in strengthening democracy, good governance and state-building in conflict-affected regions. Application of a comprehensive approach from the outset of the CSDP engagements and

streamlining horizontal questions (set-up of missions, financing, procurement, staffing) for civilian crisis management missions still present challenges that need to be discussed in the seminar.

Debates will focus on the following topics:

1. How to take full benefit of the CSDP within the EU's comprehensive response?
2. Promoting the EU's financial architecture
3. Does the EU have the ambition and the military means to respond to high intensity crises?
4. How to improve the CSDP civilian crisis management?

### **Panel 3. A more visible CSDP: coping with the evolving security environment**

The so-called Petersberg Tasks, recently amended by the Lisbon Treaty as well as the 2003 European Security Strategy and its 2008 implementation report provide a comprehensive list of security challenges and threats that the EU should be in a position to face.

Yet, the increased complexity and interconnection of those security threats, should they have a geographical footprint or not, and the growing probability for them to occur, ask for a debate on how can the CSDP deepen its ability to keep on responding to the "traditional" challenges and adapt to the emerging ones. By nature borderless, energy security, maritime safety or cyber security are issues that will more and more require common responses from the EU, within which the CSDP will have an important role to play.

The efficiency of the EU crisis management response very much depends on the constant EU's ability to adapt to the security environment as well as on the lessons learned from its previous and current engagements. Key questions will therefore need to be addressed: What have we learned from the previous CSDP civilian missions and military operations? How could and should we adapt our tools according to a given crisis and in the light of what has or has not been achieved in the past? How can the EU ensure a stronger coordination of its instruments and a better interaction with its partners?

Last, but not least, as one of the main EU flags in the field, the CSDP has not yet proven its ability to be visible among its citizens and partners, both asking for a stronger involvement of the EU in the field of security and defence. The lack of efficient communication strategy puts the CSDP's credibility at stake and seems like a missed opportunity for the EU to demonstrate its added value in tackling crises. Therefore, the ability of the EU to develop a comprehensive, simple and visible communication strategy for the CSDP is of major importance.

Debates will focus on the following topics:

1. What role for the CSDP in developing the EU's response to emerging challenges?
2. How to strengthen the CSDP operations and missions' lessons learned process?
3. Reinforcing visibility in the field: a path toward a CSDP communication strategy?