EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL POLICIES OF THE UNION
DIRECTORATE B
- POLICY DEPARTMENT -

NOTE

The European Security and Defence Policy: from the Helsinki Headline Goal to the EU Battlegroups

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Abstract: This paper provides an overview of the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) with a particular examination of the dynamic to develop capabilities and operational concepts. The paper begins with a brief introduction to the ESDP and the dominant current trends. The third part reviews the important structural limits (the budgetary framework) and drivers pushing the transformation of European defence through the EU. The paper then focuses on mapping these dynamics by looking first (in section four) at the capability targets and then (in section five) at the operational demands. The paper concludes by drawing together again, in section six, the key interrelationships between capability targets and operational demands and defence concepts and planning.

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DGExPo/B/PolDep/Note/2006_ 146 **12 September 2006**

[PE N°] **EN**

This note was requested by the European Parliament's Sub-committee on Security and Defence.

This paper is published in the following languages: English

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Brussels, European Parliament, 12 September 2006.

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The European Security and Defence Policy: from the Helsinki Headline Goal to the EU Battlegroups

1. Introduction

This paper provides an overview of the development of the European Security and Defence Policy by examining two principal drivers and there impact on individual nations' defence choices: collective European capability targets and operational demands. Operational demands were first made at the 1999 Helsinki European Council under the Helsinki Headline Goal.[1] Capability targets were set primarily at the 2001 Laeken European Council, where the European Capability Action Plan (ECAP) was launched.[2] While operational demands preceded the capability targets, the ESDP has since become most heavily focused on the 'bottom-up' capability targets. The operational demands remained, at best, a generic political commitment until actual demand for two crisis management operations arose in 2003: in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The capability-development process has benefited from conceptual developments following from the Helsinki Headline Goal, such as new force concepts like the Rapid Reaction Force and the new Battlegroups. More general capability requirements, such as that defined in the Helsinki Headline Goal for the European Union as a whole to have up to 60 000 troops deployable within 60 days and sustainable for up to one year, have acted largely as a starting point and framework for discussions on how to rectify capability shortfalls. This paper shows that the original operational demands were part of that conceptual framework to support the capability-development process, but also that such targets soon took on a dynamic of their own as a result of real operations that in turn inspired new operational concepts (Battlegroups, standby forces and bridging forces) and planning requirements (the EU Civil–Military Planning Cell to be operational during December 2005).[3]

While the Headline Goal has been a political catalyst, it is the capability targets and operational demands that have provided the focus for discussions on the institutional evolution of the ESDP

[1] Council of the European Union, Presidency conclusions, Helsinki, 10–11 Dec. 1999, reproduced in Rutten, M., 'From St. Malo to Nice: European defence, core documents', Chaillot Paper no. 47, Institute of Security Studies, Western European Union, Paris, May 2001, URL <http://www.iss-eu.org/>, pp. 89–91.

[2] Council of the European Union, Presidency conclusions, Laeken, 14–15 Dec. 2001, Annex I, reproduced in Rutten, M., 'From Nice to Laeken: European defence, core documents', Chaillot Paper no. 51, EU Institute of Security Studies, Paris, April 2002, URL <http://www.iss-eu.org/>. See also Haine, J.-Y., 'From Laeken to Copenhagen: European defence, core documents', Chaillot Paper no. 57, EU Institute of Security Studies, Paris, Feb. 2003, URL <http://www.iss-eu.org/>.

[3] For an overview of early developments of the ESDP see Gnesotto, N., *EU Security and Defence Policy: The First Five Years (1999–2004)* (EU Institute of Security Studies: Paris, 2004), URL <http://www.iss-eu.org/>; and Lachowski, Z., 'The military dimension of the European Union', *SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2002), pp. 151–73. See also Quille, G. and Missiroli, A., 'European security in flux', ed. F. Cameron, *The Future of European Security* (Routledge: London, 2003); and Cameron, F. and Quille, G., 'ESDP: the state of play', European Policy Centre (EPC) Working Paper no. 11, EPC, Brussels, Sep. 2004, URL <http://www.theepc.be/>.

at the levels of decision making, planning and force conception. Nevertheless, the future development of the ESDP remains intrinsically tied to the choices of the key member states—France, Germany and the United Kingdom—particularly in the areas of further multinational defence cooperation and reform of the European defence industry. These two structural drivers lie at the heart of the member states' desire for more collective defence capabilities at the EU level. The success in applying other EU levers (i.e., community policy and resources) to effect such structural changes will be a key determinant for the success of European collaboration to get more 'bang for their euro' and in providing military responses for a demanding range of complex international conflicts, such as those detailed in the European Security Strategy, adopted at the December 2003 Brussels European Council.[1]

The second part of the paper then provides a brief introduction to the ESDP and the dominant current trends. The third part reviews the important structural limits (the budgetary framework) and drivers pushing the transformation of European defence through the EU. The paper then focuses on mapping these dynamics by looking first (in section four) at the capability targets and then (in section five) at the operational demands. The paper concludes by drawing together again, in section six, the key interrelationships between capability targets and operational demands and defence concepts and planning.

2. The European security context

The debate on European defence capabilities in the context of the EU took a dramatic turn in December 1998 when, at a bilateral summit in St Malo, France and the United Kingdom agreed that the EU 'needs to be in a position to play its full role on the international stage. . . . To this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises'.[2] The Balkans tragedies had underlined Europe's weakness and inspired France and the UK to kick-start European defence discussions in an EU framework. The bottom line—now a broadly accepted truism—was that no European state could act alone in meeting the new global security challenges and their collective responsibilities and that no major European power was facing a standing military threat. It was recognized that the new threats required more than a military response and that in some cases the latter was totally inappropriate; but the weakness of European states in terms of capacity for modern-day crisis management operations was widely seen as an area in need of urgent attention. In Europe this common analysis has since been anchored on a common threat assessment and was captured in the European Security Strategy.[3]

The main challenge, as defined in the European Security Strategy and also by NATO in its Strategic Concept adopted at the 1999 Washington summit,[4] is no longer to maintain cohesion

[1] Council of the European Union, 'A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy', Brussels, 12 Dec. 2003, URL <http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/showPage.ASP?id=266>. For more on the structural obstacles to European defence transformation see Quille, G. and Mawdsley, J., *The EU Security Strategy: A New Framework for ESDP and Equipping the EU Rapid Reaction Force* (International Security Information Service, Europe: London, Dec. 2003), URL <http://www.isis-europe.org/>.

[2] Joint declaration, British–French Summit, St Malo, 3–4 Dec. 1998, reproduced in Rutten (note 1), p. 8.

[3] Council of the European Union (note 4). For an analysis of the European Security Strategy see Bailes, A. J. K., 'EU and US strategic concepts: a mirror for partnership and difference', *International Spectator*, vol. 39, no. 1 (Jan.–Mar. 2004). See also Quille, G., 'The European Security Strategy: a framework for EU security interests?', *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 11, no. 3 (autumn 2004), pp. 1–16.

[4] NATO, 'The Alliance's Strategic Concept', Press release NAC-S(99)65, 24 Apr. 1999, URL <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/>.

against a threatening Russia, but for NATO and the EU to help their members in a process of *transformation* and *legacy management* of cold war defence systems to meet today's collective security challenges.[1] This transformation is taking place against the backdrop of a security environment in flux after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and of consequent high demands on European armed forces for deployments such as those in Afghanistan, Africa, the Balkans and Iraq.[2] These conflicts are putting heavy operational demands on NATO and the EU as institutions, promoting institutional change in the shape of new defence concepts, processes and, in the case of the EU, a pragmatic effort to implement the so-called defence deal agreed upon in the framework of the EU Constitutional Treaty.[3]

Thus, NATO and the EU, as well as being security providers in themselves, are the principal security frameworks for supporting the transformation of European states to meet common security objectives.

While the EU member states can refer to a long tradition of support for common security concepts (not least from the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the Western European Union's 1995 Common Security Concept and indeed the relevant provisions of the EU's 1992 Treaty of Maastricht and 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam), it is no less important to note the more self-interested motives that help explain European support for collective or multilateral security frameworks.[4]

In an interdependent world with increased opportunities for market economies but corresponding risks for open societies, no single state, let alone a European one, can achieve global governance and global security. The threats prioritized in the European Security Strategy—international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, threats to regional security, failed states and organized crime—cannot be met alone. This is now a statement of the obvious for most Europeans; since the 1990s their governments have to varying degrees tried to respond by placing an emphasis on the transformation and management of legacy defence establishments, force structures and equipment, and have made moves towards capabilities tailored for force projection and humanitarian intervention (for both conflict prevention and crisis management).[5]

[1] Cold war legacy management has been conceptually developed in Bailes, A. J. K., Melnyk, O. and Anthony, I., 'Relics of cold war: Europe's challenge, Ukraine's experience', SIPRI Policy Paper no. 6, SIPRI, Stockholm, Nov. 2003, URL <http://www.sipri.org/>, where it is practically applied to the management of redundant cold war stockpiles in the former Soviet Union. The concept is also usefully applied to understand defence transformation debates in Western Europe and the role of the EU and NATO in legacy management of European defence.

[2] For a survey of the recent demands on Europe's armed forces see Giegerich, B. and Wallace, W., 'Not such a soft power: the external deployment of European forces', *Survival*, vol. 46, no. 2 (summer 2004), pp. 163–82.

[3] For an analysis of EU defence capabilities and the defence deal in the constitution see Biscop, S., 'Able and willing? Assessing the EU's capacity for military action', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 9, no. 4 (2004), pp. 509–27.

[4] For more on Europe's familiarity with comprehensive security concepts see Biscop, S. and Coolsaet, R., 'The world is the stage: a global security strategy for the European Union', Paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research Conference, Marburg, 18–21 Sep. 2003, URL <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/>.

[5] Notable examples include the UK's 1998 Strategic Defence Review: see McInnes, C. (ed.), *Security and Strategy in the New Europe* (Routledge: London, 1992). For the Nordic countries see Hopkinson, W., 'Sizing and shaping European armed forces, lessons and considerations from the Nordic countries', SIPRI Policy Paper no. 7, SIPRI, Stockholm, Mar. 2004, URL <http://www.sipri.org/>.

3. The European defence context

Transformation is about more than just a political reorientation—through institutions or policy statements—to meet new threats in a changing security environment. It is also about reaching to all levels of the defence establishment—policy, operational capacities including armed forces, and procurement including defence-industrial policies—to create appropriate defence instruments to support security policy priorities.[1] Perhaps the most significant motive for Europe to work collectively on defence matters is the task of restructuring European defence (including the defence-industrial base) and the state of defence spending.[2]

European defence spending began to stabilize around the mid-1990s, after a period of decline in the immediate aftermath of the cold war (see figure 7.1, which compares EU and US military expenditure in the 1990s). Most commentators believe that this level of defence spending is likely to remain broadly stable for the foreseeable future. Owing to the EU's overall rules of financial discipline, accepted (more or less) under the 1997 Stability and Growth Pact, as well as relatively low rates of economic growth, the members of the pact are under strong pressure not to expand public spending. Neither would an increase in spending necessarily provide more military capability, unless accompanied by reform of inefficient procurement processes, ministerial bureaucracies and relevant industrial sectors.

Even where defence budgets are maintained at present levels or increased slightly, it has been pointed out that the cost of defence equipment is subject to a higher rate of inflation than that in other sectors of the economy.[3] This is due to the fact that defence equipment is not subjected to the open economy's normal competitiveness, while cost overruns and equipment over-specification also contribute to the spiralling of defence equipment costs. Therefore, a budget that is constant, or that increases only at the rate of inflation for the civilian economy, will still not be enough to keep up with the higher defence-related rate of inflation. Defence budgets are also under constant strain from large multi-year defence procurement programmes.

Some analysts argue that, if defence budgets are not going to increase, one should look at how they are structured in order to acquire resources for the capability-development aspect of defence transformation.[4] It is argued that by restructuring the armed forces, especially in those countries with large standing or conscript armies, more money can be invested in the research and development and procurement areas of the defence budget, leading to greater equipment-based capability. This is a simple argument with some merit, but in the short term there are significant costs associated with retiring serving (senior) members of the armed forces, with training for specialized professional forces, and indeed with closing barracks and other facilities made redundant by reduction in forces size.

After considerable effort in the 1990s by EU member states, at the national level, to transform their defence establishments from cold war-oriented postures with an emphasis on mass land-based armies, major platforms (fleets, fighter aircraft and bombers, and tanks) and successor-

[1] For more on understanding the levels of defence and communities of actors see Baylis, J., *British Defence Policy: Striking the Right Balance* (Macmillan: Basingstoke, 1989).
[2] For a comprehensive survey of the contemporary structural obstacles see Quille and Mawdsley (note 4).
[3] Alexander, M. and Garden, T., 'The arithmetic of defence policy', *International Affairs*, vol. 77, no. 3 (July 2001), pp. 509–29.
[4] Garden, T., Clarke, M., Quille, G., 'Achieving the Helsinki Headline Goals: an analysis of European military capabilities in the light of the process of developing forces to serve the European Security and Defence Policy', Centre for Defence Studies, King's College London, Nov. 2001, URL <http://www.tgarden.demon.co.uk/>.

based procurement (more fleets, more fighter aircraft and bombers, and more tanks), there is now a growing consensus among national planners and governments that these projects can no longer be achieved by individual nation states. New concepts are drawing defence planners away from the cold war emphasis on large military platforms towards an emphasis on communications as a key linking enabler in 'network-enabled warfare' and through concepts such as 'effects-based warfare'.[1]

The privileged relationships that developed between defence establishments and national defence industries during the cold war, which were believed to be essential to ensure security of supply, have now become part of what is understood as a structural obstacle to transforming national defence postures. To simplify the problem, governments appear reluctant to withdraw support for an industry that cannot compete without the government's business and that this leads at the European level to the over-production of equipment—sometimes of inappropriate equipment for today's defence needs, for example, the Eurofighter—for national and European markets. In some cases it has led to irresponsible exporting of weapons and equipment to unstable regions and repressive regimes.[2]

This combination of structural problems has driven EU member states, the European Commission, the Presidency and the defence industry—after many years of hesitation—to push collectively for a breakthrough on armaments policy at the EU level. The argument is that, if defence spending is not to increase, one obvious way of bridging capability gaps is through increased cooperation in armament. Joint procurement of the necessary equipment would offer savings through economies of scale and reduced duplication. However, this might not be such an easy option, given that the armaments market in the EU is not particularly efficient, European defence-industrial consolidation is still patchy and defence procurement remains oriented towards national needs. Two dominant features are evident in the defence-industrial scene: a growing monopolization in the aerospace and defence electronics sectors; and a lack of consolidation of mostly subsidized and protected national capacities in the other sectors.[3]

The 25 EU members undoubtedly have a defence budget problem, starting with the strong imbalance between expenditure on personnel and equipment that affects almost all of them, and including the mere pittance—one-quarter of the US total—that they spend on research and development. The main problem thus lies with the quality of European defence spending—that is, how EU member states allocate their limited resources. The overall level of investment (especially on equipment and research and development) is largely insufficient if measured against the shortfalls that the member states have agreed to address together under the ECAP and NATO's 2002 Prague Capability Commitments. Uneven spending across EU countries, even among the main spenders, further creates a potential 'burden sharing' problem *inside* the Union. The EU members neither use comparable budgetary invoicing nor have compatible procurement cycles, which further complicates policy coordination and convergence.[4]

Alongside the intergovernmental ambition to work more closely on defence matters, the EU can support defence transformation in other ways—specifically its Community pillar (the EU's first pillar), where the issue of creating a single market in defence is being explored and a European Security Research Programme will be established to help boost 'science- and technology-based

[1] Much of this is associated with debates surrounding the 'Revolution in Military Affairs'. See Freedman, L., *The Revolution in Strategic Affairs*, Adelphi Paper no. 318 (International Institute for Strategic Studies: London, 1998).
[2] Miller, D., *Export or Die: Britain's Defence Trade with Iran and Iraq* (Cassell: London, 1996).
[3] Quille and Mawdsley (note 4).
[4] Garden, Clarke and Quille (note 16).

security innovation'.[1] Considering the deep roots of defence policy in national defence-industrial partnerships and policy, this approach might have an equally or even more critical impact on the shape and process of European defence reform. Tackling structural change in defence policy has always required an approach that deals with not just the political and strategic aspects but also the other critical levels of operational restructuring and defence-industrial policy.[2] Against this background, the next section turns to the EU 'demand side' of the capability–hardware debate, to look at how capability targets are affecting the political and operational levels of defence policy and to map out some of the key issues arising as the debate moves on to the implementation of the new Headline Goal 2010.[3]

4. How is the ESDP being used for capability targets?

At the Helsinki European Council of December 1999, the EU member states defined the Helsinki Headline Goal as follows: 'cooperating voluntarily in EU-led operations, Member States must be able, by 2003, to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least 1 year military forces of up to 50,000–60,000 persons capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks'.[4] Initial developments focused on establishing the institutional framework to support the Helsinki Headline Goal, and the Nice European Council of December 2000 approved decision-making structures for the ESDP in the shape of the Political and Security Committee, the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and the EU Military Staff (EUMS).[5]

The Helsinki Headline Goal prompted a new debate, alongside a much older one in NATO, on European defence capabilities, which has been a mainstay both of subsequent European summit meetings and of expert debate.[6] In order to move towards the Helsinki Headline Goal's targets, in November 2000 an EU Capability Commitments Conference (now an annual event) was held, at which member states were easily able to volunteer enough manpower and assets to satisfy the EU's initial operational demands for that year.[7] Indeed, there was a surplus of commitments in some areas, such as soldiers (over 100 000), combat aircraft (over 400) and ships (100), but an absence of commitment in other areas, such as strategic airlift and tactical transport (including

[1] Hagelin, B., 'Science- and technology-based military innovation: the United States and Europe', *SIPRI Yearbook 2004: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2004), pp. 285–304.
[2] Baylis (note 13).
[3] Council of the European Union, ESDP Presidency Report, Annex I, 'Headline Goal 2010', Brussels, 17–18 June 2004, URL <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/2010 Headline Goal.pdf>. The Headline Goal 2010 was approved by the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 17 May 2004 and endorsed by the Brussels European Council of 17–18 June 2004. It was first introduced in a French 'Non-Paper' entitled 'Towards a 2010 Headline Goal'. This was further elaborated by an Italian Presidency Paper and again by a British 'Non-Paper' focusing on implementation and entitled 'The road to 2010'.
[4] Rutten (note 1), p. 82.
[5] Council of the European Union, Presidency conclusions, Nice, 7–9 Dec. 2000, reproduced in Rutten (note 1), p. 171.
[6] The Helsinki Headline Goal provided the basis, on 6 June 2000, for a 'Food for thought paper', the 'Elaboration of the Headline Goal', including the 'strategic context' and 'key planning assumptions' and as a third step led to the development of 'illustrative scenarios'. These served to help the identification of capability requirements and to develop force packages, which in turn would lead to the drawing up of 'a generic list of capabilities'. Meeting of European Union Defence Ministers, 'Elaboration of the Headline Goal', 'Food for thought' paper, Sintra, 28 Feb. 2000, reproduced in Rutten (note 1), pp. 102–107.
[7] Two catalogues were produced by the EUMS: the Helsinki Headline Catalogue, which reviewed all European military capabilities, and the Helsinki Force Catalogue, which compiled all the member states' commitments at the Nov. 2000 Capability Commitments Conference. At the second Capability Commitments Conference, held on 19 Nov. 2001, the Helsinki Progress Catalogue was produced, under which the shortfalls were documented and monitored for improvement. This cataloguing process is supported by the EUMS and directed to the EUMC and overseen by the member states' representatives in the Helsinki Task Force.

helicopters). Member states made their commitments in such a complicated manner (referring to combinations of forces and timeframes for availability) that a force planner would not be able to state with any confidence which of the troops were available at any one time without substantial re-discussion and confirmation with the member states.[1] This auditing function was beyond the mandate of the EUMS, which simply held the Helsinki Headline Catalogue that could only be updated with voluntary information from the member states.[2] By making the EUMS responsible for compiling and analysing the member states' commitments but not providing it with the authority to determine the exact status and availability of the assets committed, planners had been appointed who were not allowed to plan. Should the Political and Security Committee discuss a crisis and seek military advice on the possibilities for an intervention, the EU military authorities would have to seek that advice from member states' capitals or from NATO (following the agreement of April 2003, known as the 'Berlin Plus' arrangements, that gave the EU access to NATO's planning capability).[3]

Subsequent analysis of the 'generic list of capabilities' contained in the 'Elaboration of the Headline Goal' and of the EUMS Catalogues reinforced the consensus that Europe has capability shortfalls.[4] Five key shortfalls affected force deployability: in strategic and tactical lift; sustainability and logistics (including air-to-air refuelling); effective engagement (including precision weapons); survivability of force and infrastructure (including rescue helicopters); and command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.[5] The aim was to acquire these capabilities by 'voluntary' commitments made under the European Capability Action Plan (ECAP).

Under the ECAP the member states agreed to 'mobilise voluntarily all efforts, investments, developments and coordination measures, both nationally and multinationally, in order to improve existing resources and progressively develop the capabilities needed for the Union's crisis-management actions'.[6]
The core principles to be followed were: (*a*) improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of European defence efforts, using existing or envisaged cooperation between countries or groups of countries; (*b*) a 'bottom-up' approach, creating additional capabilities on a national and voluntary basis; and (*c*) coordination between EU member states as well as EU–NATO harmonization. Nations or groups of nations can commit themselves to the improvement of specific capabilities.[7]

While the member states had originally identified 42 shortfalls at the 2001 Capability Commitments Conference, 19 ECAP Panels were set up to rectify 24 'significant' shortfalls. After analysis of these shortfall areas the panels were to report on 1 March 2003.[8] By late 2002, however, it became clear that the progress of the ECAP Panels was losing momentum and that

[1] Garden, Clarke and Quille (note 16).
[2] Council of the European Union, 'Council decision of 22 January 2001 on the establishment of the Military Staff of the European Union', *Official Journal of the European Communities*, vol. L27 (30 Jan. 2001), URL <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/>, pp. 7–11.
[3] Quille, G., 'What does the EU agreement on operational planning mean for NATO?', *NATO Notes*, vol. 5, no. 8 (Dec. 2003), URL <http://www.isis-europe.org/>, pp. 6–9.
[4] Meeting of European Union Defence Ministers (note 26).
[5] Garden, Clarke and Quille (note 16).
[6] Council of the European Union (note 2), reproduced in Rutten (note 2), p. 123.
[7] Council of the European Union (note 2).
[8] The ECAP Panels consist of and are chaired by so-called experts from the member states. The work of the panels is coordinated by the member state representatives in the Helsinki Task Force, which draws on the support of the EUMS. Final direction is from the Political and Security Committee.

there would be no announcements of new capabilities or projects to acquire the capabilities by the deadline. The EU members and their Helsinki Task Force representatives to the EUMC were also very busy during this period negotiating an agreement with NATO on the Berlin Plus arrangements, in order to ensure access to NATO assets for the EU's first planned military operation, to be launched on 1 March 2003 in FYROM.[1] Member states thus decided to extend the ECAP process to a second phase with more focused work undertaken by ECAP Project Groups, which replaced the ECAP Panels. From April 2003 the ECAP Project Groups focused on 15 project areas: (*a*) Headquarters, (*b*) Combat Search and Rescue, (*c*) Attack Helicopters, (*d*) Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence, (*e*) Medical, (*f*) Strategic Sea Lift, (*g*) Strategic Airlift, (*h*) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, (*i*) Nuclear Biological and Chemical Forces Protection, (*j*) Space-based Assets, (*k*) Special Operations Forces, (*l*) Air-to-Air Refuelling, (*m*) Interoperability of Humanitarian and Evacuation Operations, (*n*) Support Helicopters, and (*o*) Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance.[2]

The ECAP process included the emphasis in the Helsinki Headline Goal on 'voluntary' commitments. Although capabilities were not immediately forthcoming, the process was seen as a success. Indeed, NATO's Prague Capability Commitments process, adopted in December 2003 to replace the earlier Defence Capabilities Initiative, was said to have drawn on ECAP's success in getting EU states to voluntarily commit to an operationally focused set of capability goals.

Nevertheless, generating defence capabilities is a longer-term process with considerable obstacles to overcome, including those outlined above on spending and defence-industrial relations. Both NATO's Prague Capability Commitments process and the EU's ECAP process began to suffer the same fate as the original Defence Capabilities Initiative—a lack of political will from their members. Unfortunately, although the two organizations were focusing on almost identical capability shortfalls, member states did not permit them to hold joint meetings on the subject, even after agreeing security arrangements for inter-institutional exchanges. A number of ECAP Project Groups adopted informal 'back-to-back' meetings whereby national experts could attend an EU capability meeting on one day and a NATO meeting on practically the same subject the following day. While this relationship is improving, it represents another obstacle to achieving capability targets.

The 'bottom-up' focus of the first Helsinki Headline Goal, and its intensification under the ECAP process, had achieved early successes in getting member states to focus on capability gaps and voluntarily commit themselves to seeking ways to make up the shortfalls. Turning that political will into an investment of resources would take much longer. Considering the experience of NATO under its Defence Capabilities Initiative, this was not such a surprise, and even less so considering the challenge posed by defence spending and procurement practices in Europe. The awareness among member states and some analysts of the need for a renewed injection of political will would lead in due course to the establishment of the European Defence Agency (EDA), designed for a 'top-down' injection into the EU capability-building process.

[1] Cameron and Quille (note 3).

[2] Quille, Gasparini, Menotti, Monaco, Valasek, with an Introduction by Alyson JK Bayles, ,'An Action Plan for Euroepan Defence: Implementing the Euroepan Secuyrity Stratgey, CeMISS, Rome, May 2005, p. 35 See: http://www.difesa.it/NR/rdonlyres/87B27D0B-2EAC-4A6A-902E-7B5812E35F35/7939/suppl_05_05.pdf

4.1 The European Defence Agency

The European Defence Agency was established by a Joint Action of the EU in July 2004, following the so-called Barnier Proposal in the European Convention.[1] The Council decided that during 2004 an 'agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments' would be established. It would have four key roles: (*a*) 'developing defence capabilities in the field of crisis management'; (*b*) 'promoting and enhancing European armaments cooperation'; (*c*) 'strengthening the European defence industrial and technological base'; and (*d*) 'creating a competitive European defence equipment market as well as promoting, in liaison with the Community's research activities where appropriate, research aimed at leadership in strategic technologies for future defence and security capabilities'.[2]

In 2004, ministers agreed that the agency should be tasked with: (*a*) identifying future defence capability requirements, in both quantitative and qualitative terms (forces, equipment, interoperability and training); (*b*) continuing to work with NATO through the Capability Development Mechanism; (*c*) encouraging member states to meet their capability commitments in the ECAP process; (*d*) promoting the harmonization of military requirements; and (*e*) pursuing collaborative activities to make up shortfalls, and defining financial priorities for capability development and acquisition.
The agency is now slowly becoming operational under its director, Nick Whitney.[3] A useful report was produced during the start-up process by the EDA's Establishment Team, outlining in detail the future shape and key functions of the agency, and which reportedly stated clearly that 'the agency's *raison d'être* is to support the Member States in their collective effort to strengthen the ESDP'.[4] The functions of the agency are seen as: (*a*) to improve coherence and remedy fragmentation in the European defence capability-generation process, and (*b*) to provide longer-term strategic direction as the basis for making decisions about future ESDP capability requirements.

In general, the agency should provide a measure of 'top-down' political support for defence transformation for the member states and, importantly, their defence ministers (who will meet in the agency framework). The intention is to move from identifying EU-level capability targets to strengthening the links with national defence establishments and ensuring that the resources and commitments to make up the targets are built into national planning systems.

The European Commission will be one of the key stakeholders in the agency and as such it is 'fully associated' with the work of the agency.[5] The preparatory report of the Establishment Team stated that 'The Commission's work on Research and Technology, market regulation and defence industrial policy issues require, and offer beneficial potential for, a fruitful partnership between Agency and Commission'.[6] This is a major understatement, because the Commission is

[1] Council of the European Union, 'Council Joint Action 2004/551/CFSP of 12 July 2004 on the establishment of the European Defence Agency', *Official Journal of the European Union*, vol. L245 (17 July 2004), URL <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/>, pp. 17–28.
[2] Council of the European Union (note 38), p. 17.
[3] It will take time to get the agency up and running at full speed, and this will be in the context of ongoing developments under the Headline Goal 2010, ECAP Project Groups and the Commission's work on security research (Preparatory Action). Nevertheless, already in 2005 its has reached its initial core-staff quota of 80 people in its 4 directorates (including experts seconded from national administrations) and it has a budget of €25 million for 2005 (including €10 million for non-recurring set-up costs).
[4] Interview by author with Establishment Team Official.
[5] 'Fully associated' means in particular that the Commission can exchange information, assessments and advice, as appropriate, on matters where its own activities and strategies have a bearing on the agency's missions.
[6] See note 41.

fast developing its role in this area and will have a major impact on the investment strategies of the European defence and security research industry and their patterns of procurement through its work in promoting key European capacities in research and high technology, many of them relevant also to developing weapons and defence-related capabilities for Europe's military. The agency can assist 'joined up' capability generation by linking up with these Commission efforts.

Key questions remain about the EDA, not least concerning the ease with which it can either become the focus for capability discussions and take over the ECAP process from the EUMC or be wedded with the latter in some other coherent fashion. The Commission's role will provide a different challenge as it moves from its present association with the agency to a more developed dialogue on setting future research priorities that help produce technologies for the future armed forces of Europe.

In the early stages of the ESDP, the relationship of the capability-building process to operational demands, set out notably in the Helsinki Headline Goal, was often criticized as weak in institutional and substantial terms, with each aspect associated with different champions. The latest structural creations, including the EDA, are designed to help manage more effectively the short- and longer-term process of acquiring the necessary capabilities to meet operational demands and security priorities. That said, the structural limits of defence budgets and national defence-industrial policies remain as a serious barrier to achieving cooperative and collective solutions at the EU level and will remain as a constant problem during the early years of the EDA and the Helsinki Headline Goal 2010.

5. What are the operational demands and planning requirements?

There are four main points of reference for understanding the operational demands evolving from the ESDP that have affected defence planning and concepts: (*a*) the original Helsinki Headline Goal (including the Rapid Reaction Force) and the Petersberg Tasks; (*b*) the operational realities of early ESDP missions; (*c*) the Headline Goal 2010 and the Battlegroups; and (*d*) EU–UN cooperation on military crisis management.

5.1 The Petersberg Tasks

The Petersberg Tasks—as included in the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam—provide both an immediate point of departure and an obstacle to understanding military roles in EU crisis management. The treaty defines the tasks as including 'humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace making'.[1] These broad formulations were unhelpful as incorporated in the Helsinki Headline Goal and equally unhelpful when developed in such working documents as the 'Food for thought paper' on the 'Elaboration of the Headline Goal'[2] and in subsequent steps to agree a strategic context, key planning assumptions, illustrative scenarios and eventually potential force packages. The Helsinki Headline Goal, the Petersberg Tasks and the Elaboration of the Headline Goal have all been described as carrying limited value for planning purposes and for rooting work on the Helsinki Headline Goal in the reality of national defence planning.[3] For instance, the illustrative

[1] Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties Establishing The European Communities and related acts, 2 Oct. 1997, URL <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/treaties/dat/amsterdam.html>, Article J.7(2).
[2] Meeting of European Union Defence Ministers (note 26).
[3] Garden , Clarke and Quille (note 16).

scenarios based on the Helsinki Headline Goal envisaged three main operations: conflict prevention, assistance to civilians and separation of warring parties by force. The elaboration of, for example, 'separation of warring parties' remained ambiguous and the details of force requirements were limited to generic lists of capabilities (early-warning surveillance, control of air movement and sea control), with no precise details of requirements for types of units or capabilities or the size of the force envisaged (the text referred to a minimum of two brigades and possibly more than one division). Not surprisingly, differences soon emerged among EU states in their interpretation, especially of the upper end of the scale of operation.[1]

As shown in table 7.1, countries such as France took an ambitious interpretation of the scale of force—seeing Operation Desert Storm as a possible Petersberg Task; others, such as the UK, referred specifically to the concept of crisis management, citing Operation Allied Force. For other countries, such as Italy and Sweden, it was the existence of a legal mandate, specifically a United Nations mandate, that mattered more than the scale and demands of the operation. The constructive ambiguity which was a strength of the Petersberg Tasks as originally defined by the Western European Union (where they were understood in the context of the Balkans crises of the 1990s as peace-support or robust peacekeeping operations at the higher end of operational demand) had become unhelpful in the context of the ESDP and under the new Helsinki Headline Goal process.

This ambiguity is less problematic at the lower level of the operational scale, although an increased emphasis on policing roles within the ESDP may stretch some states' understanding of what constitutes a lower-level action—perhaps explaining why the European Gendarmerie Force, established in September 2004 by France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain, was launched as a multilateral initiative outside the EU framework. At the high end of the scale, while the ambiguity of the Petersberg Tasks and the targets set by the member states in the Helsinki Headline Goal may help to mask political differences, it is a problem for planning purposes, in particular for those working in the EUMC and the EUMS. The latter came to hope that the issue would be more effectively addressed by the new Headline Goal 2010 (see below).

5.2 The operational reality: 'ESDP goes live'

Reality on the ground provided the first indication of the type of concrete operations the EU might conduct under ESDP, and it also helped to speed up agreement between the EU and NATO on access to NATO assets. On 31 March 2003 the EU launched the EU Military Operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (EUFOR Concordia). European Union forces took over from NATO's Operation Allied Harmony with the aim of contributing further to a stable, secure environment in FYROM and ensuring the implementation of the August 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement, which settled the conflict between Macedonian Slavs and Albanians. The EU force patrolled the ethnic Albanian-populated regions of FYROM that border Albania, Serbia and Kosovo.

The operation, requested by FYROM and endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 1371,[2] was conducted by personnel from 13 EU member states (all member states other than Denmark and Ireland) and 14 non-member states. The total forces were a modest 400 lightly armed military personnel, and the budget for the first six months of the operation was €6.2 million. The EU drew on NATO assets and capabilities under the Berlin Plus arrangements, thus providing

[1] Garden, Clarke and Quille (note 16).
[2] UN Security Council Resolution 1371, 26 Sep. 2001, URL <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>.

the first test case for the strategic EU–NATO partnership for crisis management embodied in the agreement of December 2002.[1]

The EU's second military operation, Operation Artemis, highlighted a second operational concept available to the Union, that of the 'framework nation'. The aim of Operation Artemis was to prevent a large-scale humanitarian and civil crisis in Ituri, a region in the north-east of the DRC. The EU responded to an appeal by the UN Secretary-General and launched a military operation on 12 June 2003, under a mandate set out in UN Security Council Resolution 1484.[2] Operation Artemis sought to contribute to the stabilization of security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Bunia, the capital of Ituri, with a force of about 1800 soldiers, mostly French, under the Operational Command of Major General Neveux. Artemis was the EU's first military operation outside Europe as well as the first not to rely on NATO assistance.

Operation Artemis showed that the 'framework nation' concept—initially elaborated within the Western European Union—can be useful for achieving some semblance of 'rapidity' in an EU multinational operation. Certain member states have the necessary structures to lead rapid response operations, and in a Union of 25 members it will not always be possible to include every member in every operation, as was attempted with EUFOR Concordia.[3]

A third EU military operation, EUFOR Althea, took over from NATO's Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) on 2 December 2004. While the model being employed draws on the Berlin Plus arrangements, the scale of the operation is much larger (about 7000 troops). The model is also interesting because the operation is being closely associated with the Comprehensive Policy for Bosnia and Herzegovina and is being tabled by the EU as an innovative approach to improving civil–military coordination in the field (specifically, with the EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has been running a police operation since January 2003).[4]

The reality of operational demands has somewhat bypassed previous rhetorical questions, such as what the ESDP was for and where it might be used. While they illustrate the EU's strategic ambitions, both in its neighbourhood and in sub-Saharan Africa, there is no ground for complacency about a multiplication of these actions because the capability-building process underpinning the operations remains a much longer-term effort. Ongoing conflicts in such places as Darfur, Sudan, and the reactions of different European states to recent operational demands in Afghanistan and Iraq have provided reminders of the political and material limits to collective European action.

5.3 The Headline Goal 2010 and the Battlegroups

The limitations of the Petersberg Tasks as a guiding concept[5] were finally recognized in the European Security Strategy, and in November 2003 the EU member states endorsed a plan to 'define' the presently opaque operational demands for the EU by June 2004, in a planning

[1] NATO, 'EU–NATO declaration on ESDP', Press release (2002)142, 16 Dec. 2002, URL <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/>.
[2] UN Security Council Resolution 1484, 30 May 2003, URL <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>.
[3] Quille and Missiroli (note 3).
[4] 'Comprehensive Policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina,' adopted by EU General Affairs and External Relations Council on 14-15 June 2004. For a critical analysis see Keane, R, 'EUFOR Mission for Bosnia by the end of 2004', *ESR*, No 23 2004.
[5] Garden, Clarke and Quille (note 16).

framework extending to 2010. The hopes that might have been attached to this new start were, however, soon to be disappointed. Rather than being 'defined', the Petersberg Tasks were loosely expanded under the new Headline Goal 2010.

The Headline Goal 2010 was adopted at the June 2004 Brussels European Council, and its essence may be captured in the following statement:

> Building on the Helsinki Headline and capability goals and recognising that existing shortfalls still need to be addressed, Member States have decided to commit themselves to be able by 2010 to respond with rapid and decisive action applying a fully coherent approach to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations covered by the Treaty on the European Union. This includes humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. As indicated by the European Security Strategy this might also include joint disarmament operations, the support for third countries in combating terrorism and security sector reform. The EU must be able to act before a crisis occurs and preventive engagement can avoid that a situation deteriorates. The EU must retain the ability to conduct concurrent operations thus sustaining several operations simultaneously at different levels of engagement.[1]

In order to achieve this new Headline Goal and add further details, a programme with some specific milestones was identified. The objectives were: (*a*) to establish during the second half of 2004 a civil–military cell within the EUMS, as well as the capacity to rapidly set up an operation centre should the need arise for certain operations; (*b*) to establish the European Defence Agency during 2004, to work *inter alia* on correcting the ECAP capability shortfalls; (*c*) to implement by 2005 EU joint coordination in strategic lift (air, land and sea) as a step towards achieving full capacity and efficiency in strategic lift by 2010; (*d*) to transform (in particular for airlift) the European Airlift Co-ordination Cell into the European Airlift Centre by 2004 and to develop (between some member states) a European airlift command by 2010; (*e*) to complete by 2007 the establishment of EU Battlegroups, including the identification of appropriate strategic lift, sustainability and disembarkation assets; (*f*) to acquire the availability of an aircraft carrier with its associated air wing and escort by 2008; (*g*) to improve communications at all levels of EU operations by developing appropriate compatibility and network linkage for all communications equipment and assets (both terrestrial and space) by 2010; and (*h*) to develop quantitative benchmarks and criteria for national forces committed to the Headline Goal in the field of deployability and in the field of multinational training.

The Headline Goal 2010 attempts to link the capability-development process with a new framework reflecting recent operational and institutional innovations. However, it does not define the Petersberg Tasks more precisely, nor does it clarify ambiguities such as whether there is an agreed limit to the high end of EU military intervention, or what precise targets in terms of capacity for concurrent operations and sustainability the EU should use in its planning. Further ambiguity is added by references to 'joint disarmament operations', which could include anything from providing personal security for UN inspectors to a full-scale invasion such as that in Iraq. The same vagueness affects references to issues that are critically important to defence planning, such as: 'Interoperability but also deployability and sustainability will be at the core of Member States efforts and will be the driving factors of this goal 2010.'[2]

[1] Council of the European Union (note 23), p. 1.
[2] Council of the European Union (note 23), p. 2.

It is still early days in the process of elaborating the new Headline Goal, and serious effort is being invested in trying to respond to some of these remaining ambiguities. The fluid institutional setting may slow this process down since efforts to establish a civil–military planning cell and the EDA will overlap with the timetable to agree illustrative scenarios. Simultaneously, ongoing operations are highlighting new lessons learned such as with Operation Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, launched in December 2004.

5.4. Origins of the Battlegroup Concept

The new Battlegroup concept is regarded as an important part of the implemtation of the defence aspects of the 2003 European Security Strategy and as an integral part of the new Headline Goal 2010 (that follows on from the 1999 Helsinki Headline Goal).

The idea of developing such a concept was initially floated at a bi-lateral Franco-British summit in Le Touquet on 4 February 2003 and was made more explicit in the 24 November 2003 meeting, in London. At that meeting the two countries referred to the need, building upon the precedent of the French-led autonomous EU Operation *Artemis*, for "credible Battlegroup sized forces" – of about 1,500 soldiers each with appropriate transport and sustainability– to be created so as to strengthen the EU rapid reaction capability to support United Nations' operations.[1]

Historically, the military instruments (such as the previous Rapid Reaction Force outlined in the original 1999 Helsinki Headline Goal) of the EU were firmly anchored to the goals advanced in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). France and the UK, first at St Malo in 1998 and then at Le Touquet in February 2003, have highlighted the close relationship between the values of the CFSP and the objectives of its military instrument, by agreeing that:

"the potential scope of ESDP should match the world-wide ambition of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy and should be able to support effectively the EU's wider external policy objectives to promote democracy, human rights, good governance and reform.

In London on 24 November they further stated:
"Our two countries now wish to build on these first steps in crisis management operations in two areas: the relationship between the EU and the UN in the field of crisis management; and further work on capability development. … we now propose that the EU should build on this [operation Artemis] precedent so that it is able to respond through ESDP to future similar requests from the United Nations, whether in Africa or elsewhere."[2]

Indeed the November 2004 summit confirmed that the experience of Operation Artemis in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – the first autonomous EU-led military operation launched in June 2003 at the request of the UN Security Council – would be the benchmark for developing the Battlegroups for EU missions.

The Franco-British proposal - referred to as 'Battlegroups' by the British or 'Tactical Groups' by the French - was endorsed by Germany in February 2004, and, on February 10, was submitted to the Political and Security Committee, which, in turn, asked for the Military Committee's opinion on the technical aspects of the concept (February 18 2004). It subsequently

[1] "FRANCO-BRITISH SUMMIT LONDON, 24 NOVEMBER 2003 STRENGTHENING EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SECURITY AND DEFENCE DECLARATION", see: http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/UKFrance_DefenceDeclaration,0.pdf
[2] Ibid

gained further support at the Brussels informal defence ministers and Chiefs of Defence Staff meeting, on 5/6 April 2004.[1] An initial target date of 2007 was set for achieving the first operational Battlegroups (and early expectations ranged from 6 to 10), although the EU could have two or three of them available much sooner based on existing capabilities and voluntary contributions under the Headline Goal Force Catalogue.

Endorsement of the Franco-British-German concept first took place at the 17-18 May Joint Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers' Council which then led to the concept being integrated into the new Headline Goal 2010 which was formally adopted at the June 2004 European Council.[2]

At the same European Council the Member States acknowledged that the original Helsinki Headline Goal "...." had not been achieved but adopted the new Headline Goal 2010 (which included the BG Concept).

5.4.1 What is a Battlegroup?

The Battlegroup Concept consists of highly trained, battalion-size formations (1,500 soldiers each)1 – including all combat and service support as well as deployability and sustainability assets. These should be available within 15 days notice and sustainable for at least 30 days (extendable to 120 days by rotation). They should be flexible enough to promptly undertake operations in distant crises areas (i.e. failing states), under, but not exclusively, a UN mandate, and to conduct combat missions in an extremely hostile environment (mountains, desert, jungle, etc). As such, they should prepare the ground for larger, more traditional peacekeeping forces, ideally provided by the UN or the Member States. Not surprisingly, the development of the battle group concept implies the availability of strategic lift and combat support capabilities. In this respect, the concept is linked to the Helsinki Headline Goal process and its ambitions to make up key identified capability shortfalls.

The Battlegroup concept is seen as a key 'mobilizing' tool. A battle group will consist of highly trained, battalion-size formations (1500 soldiers each)[3]—including all combat and service support as well as deployability and sustainability assets.

The Battlegroup has been described by officials as a specific form of rapid response whereby it is the minimum military effective, credible, rapidly deployable, coherent force package capable of stand-alone operations, or for the initial phase of larger operations.

According to the Headline Goal 2010, the Battlegroups should be rapidly deployable, sustainable and interoperable (when in multinational format). The November 2004 Declaration

[1] See: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/cfsp/intro/gac.htm#esdp260404

[2] Council of the European Union, ESDP Presidency Report, Annex I, 'Headline Goal 2010', Brussels, 17–18 June 2004, URL <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/2010 Headline Goal.pdf>. The Headline Goal 2010 was approved by the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 17 May 2004 and endorsed by the Brussels European Council of 17–18 June 2004. It was first introduced in a French 'Non-Paper' entitled 'Towards a 2010 Headline Goal'. This was further elaborated by an Italian Presidency Paper and again by a British 'Non-Paper' focusing on implementation and entitled 'The road to 2010'. See also: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/cfsp/intro/gac.htm#cfsp170504-02

[3] An official of the British Ministry of Defence, in an interview with the author, described a battle group as the smallest self-sufficient military operational formation that can be deployed and sustained in a theatre of operations. The concept draws on standard NATO doctrine: e.g., the NATO Response Force 'land component' is a land brigade configured tactically with 5 battle groups.

on European Military Capabilities reiterates this by adding an objective to achive "overarching standards and criteria". These were initially agreed in March 2005 and refer to "availability, employability and deployment, readiness, flexibility, connectivity, sustainability, survivability, medical force protection and interoperability." The overarching standards and criteria should also form the basis of Member States development of criteria for "evaluation/certification".[1]

5.4.2. Interoperability

Whilst interoperability is a complex technical subject, in its simplest meaning it refers to the ability of one set of forces (land, sea, air) to communicate and operate with another (this is equally important within a country (joint air, sea and maritime operations) and between countries). It has become a key objective for modern armed forces, it is crucial for multinational forces (such as within EU, NATO or UN) as well as for those Member States intending to take part in *ad hoc* coalitions of the willing (such as Desert Storm or more recently in Iraq). Interoperability is relevant to the Battlegroups because they can be formed by a Framework Nation or a multinational coalition of Member States**.**

NATO has led the way in overcoming European and Transatlantic difficulties of interoperability by developing agreements on military standards and procedures known as STANAGS. These will form the basis of EU Member States interoperability discussions. Nevertheless, there are expected to be significant challenges for the Battlegroups in particular for actual interaction of military units from different member states which might not be familiar with training and working together. Difficulties with interoperability of equipment may also arise. The Headline Goal 2010 also includes an objective to improve European interoperability in the areas of communications during this period. It states that to improve communications at all levels of EU operations by developing appropriate compatibility and network linkage for all communications equipment and assets (both terrestrial and space) by 2010.

A further key element in overcoming interoperability problems for deployment of multinational forces will be the pre-deployment training. Whilst the Member States have not been able to agree an EU level Standard of Training for Multinational Battlegroups, they have agreed to improve inter-operability within each individual multinational Battlegroup through training at the national level. The HG 2010 adds that the Member States are committed to develop quantitative benchmarks and criteria for national forces committed to the Headline Goal in the field of deployability and in the field of multinational training.

5.4.3 Deployability and S*ustainability*

In order to meet the criteria to be deployed within 10 days of a Council decision to launch an operation this requires pre-identified and committed forces and assets. The BGs must also be sustainable for 30 days with sufficient assets identified to extend the initial intervention to 120 days. Therefore the BGs must have "pre-identified operational and strategic enablers such as strategic lift and logistics.".[2] Although there are shortfalls in the availability of key enablers, in particular strategic air lift, the Member States are committed to finding the necessary enablers for each Battlegroup in order for it to be ready for use from 1 January 2007.

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[1] Capability Commitments Conference, Brussels 22 November 2004. see: http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/MILITARY%20CAPABILITY%20COMMITMENT%20CONFERENCE%2022.11.04.pdf#search=%22november%202004%20capability%20commitments%20conference%22

[2] *Ibid.*

The Headline Goal 2010 includes objectives to improve the situation regarding the shortfall of enablers during this period whereby the Member States are committed :

- to implement by 2005 EU joint coordination in strategic lift (air, land and sea) as a step towards achieving full capacity and efficiency in strategic lift by 2010;
- to transform (in particular for airlift) the European Airlift Co-ordination Cell into the European Airlift Centre by 2004 and to develop (between some member states) a European airlift command by 2010;
- ***to complete by 2007 the establishment of EU battle groups, including the identification of appropriate strategic lift, sustainability and disembarkation assets;***
- to acquire the availability of an aircraft carrier with its associated air wing and escort by 2008;

For those Member States not able to contribute to a Battlegroup, or that wish to make additional contributions, a database will be developed for niche capabilities that provide added value to the Battlegroups.

5.4.4 Decisions-making

The Battlegroup concept includes an ambition to have a decision on the launch of an operation within 5 days of approval by the Council of the Crisis Management Concept. Following a Council decision to launch an operation the aim is to have forces deployed on the ground within 10 days of the decision. The concept implies that the Battlegroups will be made up of assets and capabilities held at 5 to 10 days readiness. The initial requirement is for the forces to be sustainable for at least 30 days (extendable to 120 days by rotation). They should be flexible enough to promptly undertake operations in distant crisis areas, under—but not exclusively—a UN mandate, and to conduct combat missions in an extremely hostile environment (mountains, desert, jungle, and so on). As such, they should prepare the ground for larger, more traditional peacekeeping forces, ideally provided by the UN or member states.

5.4.5 Current Status of Member States Commitments to the Battlegroups

At the 22 November 2004 Military Commitments Conference the Member States made a "Declaration on European Military Capabilities" which set out priories for the Battlegroups. The declaration included:

In May 2004 the GAERC concluded that commitments would be sought from Member States in order to achieve an initial Battlegroup capability in early 2005 and complete availability in 2007. This commitment was met with "Initial Operational Capability" provided for by the UK, France and Italy in 2005, followed by a combined Germany-French capability, a collaborative Spanish, Italian, Greek and Portuguese capability as well as a collaborative French, Dutch and Belgian capability in 2006.[1]

[1] The exact make up of the Battle Groups during the "Initial Operational Capability" is described as "The United Kingdom and France have each committed to providing a Battlegroup during first half of 2005, and Italy will provide a Battlegroup for the second half of 2005. Germany and France will commit joint Battlegroups for the whole of 2006, with alternating leadership, supported by Member States such as Belgium. Also in the first half of 2006, a multinational Battlegroup, based on the framework of the Spanish-Italian amphibious and landing forces (SIAF) with Portuguese and Greek capabilities, will be available."

From 2007 the Member States committed themselves to a "Full Operational Capability'" with "the capacity to undertake two concurrent single-Battlegroup-size rapid response operations, including the ability to launch both such operations nearly simultaneously". The process of generating the Battlegroups for the Full Operational Capability took place through Battlegroup Coordination Conferences, which took place in May 2005 and November 2005. The table below details the current contributions of the Member States, which have committed to providing 4 Battlegroups per year i.e. two for each period of half a year.

Table on the current status of Member states contributions to the Battlegroups

Initial Operational Capability	1st half 2005		2nd half 2005		1st half 2006		2nd half 2006	
	UK	FR	IT	Nil	DE + FR	ES + IT, EL and PT	FR + DE and BE	Nil
Full Operational Capability	1st half 2007		2nd half 2007		1st half 2008		2nd half 2008	
	DE + NL and FI	FR + BE and LU	IT + HU and SI	EL + RO, BG & CY	SE + FI, EE and NO	ES + DE, FR and PT	DE and FR + BE, LU and ES	UK
Full Operational Capability	1st half 2009		2nd half 2009		1st half 2010		2nd half 2010	
	IT + ES, PT and EL	NIL	CZ + SK	FR + BE (TBC)	PL + DE, SK, LV, and LT	UK + NL	IT + RO and TR	NIL

Key to Country Code: UK - United Kingdom, FR-France, IT-Italy, DE-Germany, ES-Spain, EL-Greece, PT-Portugal, BE-Belgium, NL-Netherlands, LU-Luxembourg, HU-Hungary, SI-Slovenia, RO-Romania, BG-Bulgaria, CY-Cyprus, SE-Sweden, FI-Finland, EE-Estonia, NO-Norway, CZ-Czech Republic, SL-Slovakia, PL-Poland, LV-Latvia, LT-Lithuania, and TR-Turkey. NIL-means no BG has been committed and TBC-to be confirmed.

The current state of play on the number of Battlegroups as of August 2006 indicates a strong commitment by the Member States to have a Full Operational Capability by 1 January 2007. Currently, there remain shortfalls, to achieve two Battlegroups per 6-month period, for the second BG during the first half of 2006, and for the second BG during the second half of 2010. We are still awaiting confirmation from the French and Belgian led BG in the second half of 2009. The overall picture highlights a strong commitment by the Member States to meet their original objective of 2 BGs on standby per-six-month period between 2007 and 2013.

The table shows that whilst BGs can be formed from a single nations contributions including its Operational Headquarters (such as UK in 2005 and 2006 or France and Italy in 2005), the majority of Battlegroups are based upon a lead nation (known in the EU as a Framework Nation) that either draw upon that same nations OHQ (such as UK, France, Italy, Germany or Greece) or from one of the 5 multinational OHQs made available to the EU (provided by UK, France, Germany, Italy and Greece) for ESDP missions. An example of the latter is the first BG

in the first half of 2008 whereby Sweden is the Framework Nation with troops from Finland, Estonia and Norway (known as the NORDIC BG) and whereby the UK provides the Multinational OHQ.

To-date 21 Member States have volunteered to lead or be part of a BG. Denmark does not take part in EU actions which have defence implication due to its opt out under (Article 6 of the Protocol on the position of Denmark annexed to) the TEU. Ireland and Austria have so far not confirmed their role in any EU Battlegroup, however discussions continue at the national level about how such a role might affect their traditional status as neutral countries. Malta is also absent from a BG. Four non-EU countries will take part in the BGs, including Norway as a member of the so-called NORDIC BG, and three EU candidate countries Romania, Bulgaria (in the 2005 Spanish-led and 2010 Italian-led BG) and Turkey (in the 2010 Italian-led BG). It remains unclear if the inclusion of Cyprus in the Greek-led Battlegroup in the second half of 2007 will be able, if needed, to draw upon the EU-NATO 'Berlin Plus' arrangements.

5.4.6 Outstanding issues for the Battlegroups

The battle group is not a completely flawless concept: in particular, it leaves open the question of follow-on forces. The battle group is sustainable for 120 days, while the UN force-generation process (the most likely source of follow-on forces) takes six months, creating an obvious gap. However, the Headline Goal handles this by linking its specific references to the battle group concept (also more moderately described as 'minimum force packages') with a more comprehensive concept of intervention whereby the EU has the ability 'to deploy force packages at high readiness as a response to a crisis either as a stand-alone force or as part of a larger operation enabling follow-on phases'.[1] This provides a critical point of departure for further work to aid force planning for EU crisis management, but the text of the Headline Goal 2010 leaves the details incomplete.

Another major addition is the statement that 'Procedures to assess and certify these high readiness joint packages will require to be developed'.[2] Such procedures will potentially add a qualitative and quantitative breakthrough in allowing forces assigned to the EU not only to be committed and counted in "catalogues" but also to be verified and vetted in order to substantially improve defence planning processes.

Whether the BGs will be "paper armies" for discussing "catalogues" or become actual capabilities that can be deployed for crisis management was the focus of much discussion between 2003-2006. However, the Member States have dismissed earlier criticism by stepping forward and volunteering firm commitments for the period 2007-2013. Of course the final analysis on the success of the Member States will be made during the operational period between 2007 and 2013 when the BGs will be deployed and perhaps even used. The initial analysis indicates that the Member States have already improved on the original Headline Goal RRF commitment (of 60, 000 troops) by volunteering the smaller but real and deployable capabilities of the BGs.

[1] Council of the European Union see footnote 1 page 5.
[2] Ibid.

5.5 EU–UN cooperation on military crisis management

Some of the missing links between the EU Battlegroup's intervention period (up to 120 days) and the UN's force-generation process are touched upon in Ireland's June 2004 ESDP Presidency Report.[1] The document provides an ambitious framework to take forward substantial cooperation in EU–UN military crisis management operations.[2] After the experience of Operation Artemis, further analysis is being conducted on two specific models to meet the objective of 'an EU operation in answer to a request from the UN' either with a stand-alone force or as a component of a larger UN mission (a modular approach). The first model, known as the 'bridging model', reflects an Artemis-type operation whereby the EU intervenes rapidly for a short period in order to give the UN time to mount a new operation or reorganize an existing one. The key to success here is close coordination with the UN for a quick replacement and smooth transition. The second model, known as the 'standby model', has been described by the UN Secretariat as an 'over the horizon reserve' or an 'extraction force' provided by the EU in support of a UN operation. European experience also exists for such a model with the Danish-based multinational standby high readiness brigades (SHIRBRIGs). The Presidency Report states that this type of model would require 'complicated coordination' with the UN, 'could carry considerable associated risk' and will be analysed further during development of the Battlegroup concept.

Member states will also be able to continue long-standing bilateral or multinational commitments to the UN and may use the EU as a clearing house to which they can submit information on the capabilities they have committed to the UN and, if they wish, coordinate national contributions. The June 2004 ESDP Presidency Report states that these three issues (the clearing house, the bridging model and the standby model) will be developed further in the context of ongoing efforts to implement the Joint Declaration on EU–UN Cooperation in Crisis Management.

While EU support for UN crisis management operations is consistent with the European Security Strategy and with Franco-British visions, the standby model in particular raises interesting new issues. References in the June 2004 ESDP Presidency Report imply a need for a very rapidly deployable and robust standing force, but whether this can be developed for 'immediate reaction' without the need for forces to be pre-assigned to the EU (in order to comply with the EU's decision-making process) remains to be seen. Such an approach would be more demanding than the Artemis model, and the voluntary, trust-based commitments of the Rapid Reaction Force would not meet this requirement.

6. Conclusions

The Headline Goal 2010 calls for the realisation of an EU Civil–Military Cell, and the more demanding aspects of the EU–UN military crisis management framework would also require a central EU planning and operations facility. In the meantime, the further development of the Civil–Military Cell could usefully take up the less controversial role of fostering good working

[1] Council of the European Union, ESDP Presidency Report, Annex II, 'EU–UN co-operation in military crisis management operations: elements of implementation of the EU–UN Joint Declaration', Brussels, 17–18 June 2004, URL <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/EU-UN co-operation in Military Crisis Management Operations.pdf>

[2] Since Sep. 2003, when the Joint Declaration on EU–UN Cooperation in Crisis Management was signed, there has been a process whereby dialogue through the consultative 'steering committee' mechanism has been encouraging officials to get to know one another.

relations with the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations and overseeing analysis of lessons learned from Operation Althea.

These changes come at an interesting moment in the evolution of the EU's security and defence policy architecture. In addition to the new Civil–Military Cell, the Headline Goal 2010 and benchmarks, the European Defence Agency and the launch of the largest ESDP mission to date in Operation Althea provide a good moment to reflect upon the outstanding needs of the European Union in planning terms. The Battlegroup concept will need to be developed by the EUMS through realistic scenario-based work to promote readiness, sustainability, concurrency and follow-on forces, as well as cooperation with and transition to civilian operations, and this in turn should facilitate realistic categorization of capabilities for tasks. The EUMC, supported by the EUMS, will also be responsible for putting together lessons learned from the first six months of Operation Althea. That operation is starting to generate important civil–military concepts in the framework of the Comprehensive Policy for Bosnia and Herzegovina and of liaison work with the EU's Office of the Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as production of a new integrated police unit within the military operation. Such developments will combine with the new targets and planning capability to create a particular emphasis on the integration of civil and military planning. The Civil–Military Cell will be coming on-stream in parallel with these developments and would do well to structure its work around these real operational needs.

Regarding civil–military relations in general, it will be interesting to see how the expansion of EU structures to handle defence capability targets and operational demands alters the balance between the civilian and military aspects of crisis management. Both have traditionally been equally emphasized in the ESDP, but few would disagree that the civilian dimensions of the Headline Goal and institutional planning capacities have hitherto been neglected and so it will be interesting to see how the civil–military role of the Cell is approached. The emphasis on the civil–military nature of Operation Althea and the integration of the Integrated Police Unit in the military mission offer opportunities to explore these concepts further and to incorporate them into the analytical and planning capacity of the new cell.

The Dutch Presidency took the debate further, in particular on future steps for the EU planning process which has prepared the way for the development of the Civ-Mil Cell during 2005. With the creation and development of the new Civil–Military Cell during 2005 (and its Operational Centre planned for 2006) a key missing link in support of the EU's political authorities will be provided. This will be further strengthened by the UK, Austria and Finish Presidencies work on developing the conceptual framework for civilian crisis management and in particular on how to take forward comprehensive planning concepts.[1] Nevertheless, planning is just one element: an expanded mandate at the EU level that is not linked to the realities of national planning and decision making will not support the original goal, which is to help member states' defence establishments transform themselves in support of collective security policy objectives. There is a growing consensus that, with the new mechanisms provided by the EDA in place, the greatest challenge is now the gap between the policy and the planning of EU member states themselves.

Turning to the conclusions, it is argued above that capability targets and operational demands have been used as the two main drivers within ESDP, affecting defence concepts and planning.

[1] UK Presidency of the EU 2005, 'Key themes and Objectives for ESDP in the EU Military Committee'; this included a Civil-Military Coordination Seminar held at RUSI, London, October 17 and 18 2005. See: www.eu2005.gov.uk

The capability-generation process has benefited from the operational demands, which have also provided the conceptual framework for discussing capability shortfalls.

The Petersberg Tasks and the Rapid Reaction Force were also useful for achieving political consensus on developments of the ESDP but soon became limited for planning purposes or as a guide to the future evolution of the ESDP. However, the realities of emerging crises in FYROM and the DRC in 2003 shed light on where the ESDP might concretely be applied, allowed a trial of the 'framework nation' concept, and drove forward the development of new ESDP concepts such as the Battlegroups, bridging forces and standby forces.

It remains to be seen how the EU member states will meet their commitments to have Battlegroups that are fully operational by 2007, after which it can be judged what capability the concept will provide in the short term. Nevertheless, it can be observed that such 'forces' (including the earlier Rapid Reaction Force) have also acted as an important driver in the capability-generation process, by providing at least some guide as to what level of intervention Europe would like to be able to provide for collective crisis management objectives.

These new concepts, in turn, are underpinning and framing the new capability-development process, such as with the Battlegroups. However, the new capability-development process is itself becoming more institutionalized, with the EDA and with the embryonic links it entails to the Commission's work on security research and defence-industrial market policy. These will be critical in meeting underlying structural challenges posed by national defence policy and planning and defence-industrial relations in Europe.

The success of the member states in developing capability targets and meeting operational demands, as well as in developing innovative concepts and planning arrangements, has so far been dependent on sustained political will. When that political will waned, as during the Iraq crisis, criticism of the ESDP welled up again and the capability-development process stalled. The tremendous positive will that has been shown since then to produce an agreed European Security Strategy, and to come to an agreement on defence clauses in the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty, should be acknowledged as important steps in getting Europe back on track: to focus on collective security ambitions and on the role which crisis management might have in supporting such policies.

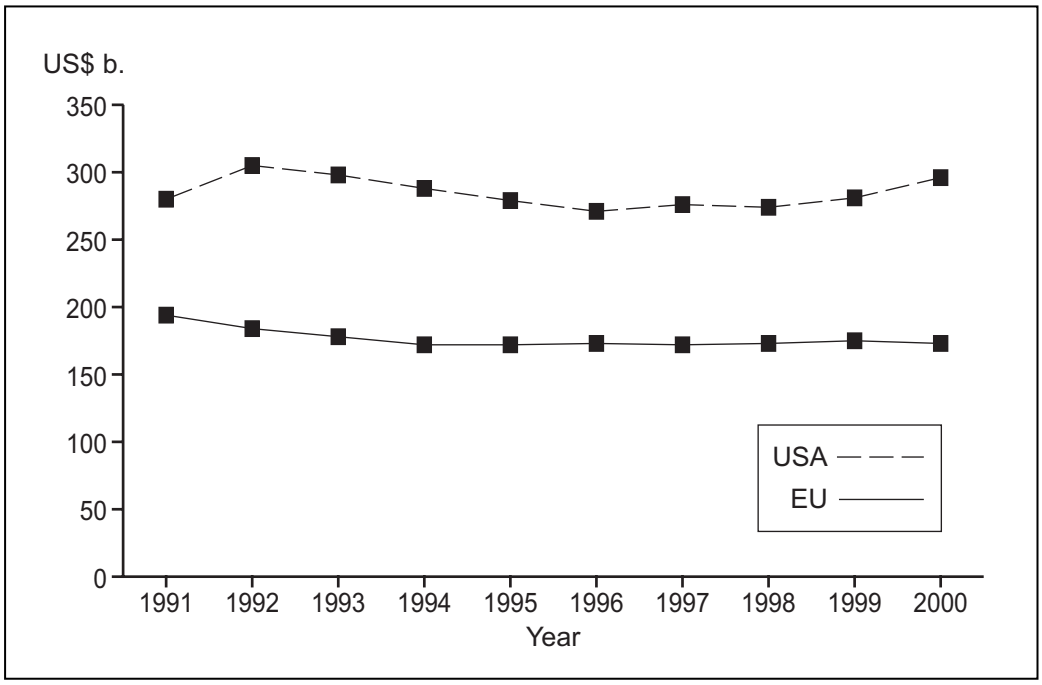

Figure 7.1. Total military expenditure of European Union member states and military expenditure by the USA, in constant (1998) US dollars, 1991–2000

Source: Sköns, E. *et al.*, 'Tables of military expenditure', *SIPRI Yearbook 2001: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2001), pp. 267–91.

Table 7.1. Indicative upper limits of the Petersberg Tasks, by analogy and description

Country	Analogy	Description
France	Desert Storm 1991, Deliberate Force 1995	'Restoring order'
Germany	IFOR/SFOR/KFOR 1995–2001	'Peace-keeping'
Italy	Desert Storm 1991	'Restoring order'
Netherlands	Allied Force 1999	'Crisis management'
Sweden	IFOR/SFOR/KFOR 1995–2001	'Peace-keeping'
UK	Allied Force 1999	'Crisis management'

Source: Garden, T., Clarke, M. Quille, G., 'Achieving the Helsinki Headline Goals: an analysis of European military capabilities in the light of the process of developing forces to serve the European Security and Defence Policy', Centre for Defence Studies, King's College London, Nov. 2001, URL <http://www.tgarden.demon.co.uk/>.