Translation
Orig. German

Resolution by the Austrian Parliament

Security and Defence Doctrine

General Considerations

The expert draft of the analytic part of the Security and Defence Doctrine, which was approved by the Federal Government on 23 January 2001 and forwarded to the National Assembly for deliberation, has led to the following conclusions:

Security in all its dimensions is the basic pre-requisite for the existence and functioning of a democracy under the rule of law as well as for the economic welfare of the community and its citizens. Security policy is therefore a high-priority task for any government. Under the conditions existing today, it must be conceived and implemented as a “comprehensive security policy”.

Austria is committed to a policy of peace and undertakes everything possible to avoid outbreaks of violent conflicts. It therefore pursues a security policy designed to avoid war and to foster peaceful relations among nations based on the Charter of the United Nations and international agreements to protect fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The purpose of security policy is to ensure security as far as possible for all sectors of a community. The Security and Defence Doctrine particularly addresses those aspects of comprehensive security which relate to the protection of the system of government as a whole and to the protection of its citizens against large-scale threats. The importance of other areas of security is not diminished thereby. The Security and Defence Doctrine is the guideline for Austria’s security policy.

Austria’s vital security interests and the security interests pursued in common with the EU constitute the basis of our security policy. The politico-strategic objectives have been derived from this concept and are to be achieved through a national overall strategy and through appropriate sub-strategies in each policy sector.

The security situation of a European state today can no longer be considered in isolation. Instabilities and dangers in Europe or at the European periphery affect the security situation of all European states. The new challenges and risks to security policy cannot be dealt with by individual states alone, but only through international co-operation in the spirit of solidarity.

The security of Austria and that of the EU are inseparably linked. Austria today implements its security policy essentially within the framework of the EU.

One important aspect of a comprehensive perception of security is the fact that security is not only one of the responsibilities of the state, but of the entire population. Therefore, great attention must be paid to developing a general security awareness.

Paradigm shift in security policy in Europe

The changes in global politics after the end of the Cold War have led to a fundamental transformation of European security policy. There has been a paradigm shift in security policy in Europe. This process, which started with the end of the Cold War (1989), has initiated a transition from thinking in terms of military balance and deterrence to an understanding of comprehensive and co-operative security.

The bipolar world order with a relatively constant and hence transparent constellation of power and threats has been replaced by a new lack of transparency of the world order and new challenges to security policy. The global security policy situation is marked by a growing number of global players, government and above all non-government, some of whom remain outside the traditional political system and act outside accepted norms of law. Hence the security situation is becoming less and less transparent and predictable.

Geographical distance from areas of conflict no longer guarantees sufficient protection.

At present, no aggressive political intentions are perceivable in Europe, nor are there sufficient military capabilities for strategic offensives. Any responsible security policy must, however, be prepared for an eventual change in political intentions and constellations.

A modern and forward looking security policy seeks to prevent emerging risks and threats through preventive action. It is primarily led by considerations of how Europe can and must be shaped, so that threats do not arise in the first place.

The instruments of security policy action have received a new weighting. In particular, the following instruments of co-operation and policy-making are employed today: political, military, police, intelligence, economic, social, educational, cultural, informational and communicational, ecological and internal security instruments.

Peace and stability in Europe are based on the co-operation among European states in the framework of various security organisations. In this context, the zone of high stability already formed by the EU and NATO is being extended through the enlargement process step by step to those states which meet the requirements to become members of these two organisations.

For the future of Europe, the evolution of the EU and of NATO in terms of security policy will specifically be of vital significance. Other important factors will be the engagement of the US in Europe and the development of Russia’s security relations with the EU and NATO.

The individual states are the decision makers and the central actors of security policy. The ultimate decision in questions of security policy lies with the democratically legitimated national political institutions.

Security Risks and Dangers replace clear Threat Scenarios

The clearly perceivable threat scenario of the Cold War era has been replaced by a complex mix of dangers and risks. Its origins may lie in the political, economic, military, social, ecological, cultural-religious and information technology areas.

From today's point of view, wars among states can be ruled out in Western Europe for the foreseeable future. In the unstable regions of Europe, however, or on its periphery, the danger of conflicts being fought out by force of arms continues to exist. Especially in case of a failure of economic and political stabilisation measures, the possibility of the escalation of political disputes even into armed conflicts must be reckoned with. In the medium and long term perspective, threats through the spillover of armed conflicts from the regions bordering on Europe cannot be excluded either.

In case of radically changed political intentions, a residual military risk should also be taken into account. This can be considered small at present, in view of the deterrent effect exerted by NATO.

On the other hand, other forms of threats are on the increase. The most important global challenges to security policy are the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism controlled by governments or certain interest groups and operating internationally, organised crime, destabilising developments in armaments, ethnic conflicts, phenomena of political fragmentation, totalitarian ideologies and fundamentalist religions, demographic trends and migration, problems of energy and resources, problems of food supply, and environmental hazards. Especially international terrorism in all its manifestations is a serious security problem for Western societies.

A comprehensive conception of security includes the following basic strategies: promotion, safeguarding and restoration of peace and stability as well as individual and/or collective self-defence under the following fundamental principle: "As much co-operative promotion of peace as possible and only as much force as necessary." The use of military force remains a measure of last resort and may only be applied in accordance with the principles of the United Nations.

Austria's security situation

Austria's current security situation is characterised by a number of positive factors. These include in particular its internal stability based on the rule of law, democracy and economic prosperity, the fact that Austria is embedded in the solidarity community of the EU, and the good relations with its neighbouring countries. The enlargement processes of the EU and NATO also have positive effects on Austria's geo-political situation.

An act of aggression with conventional forces against Austria, threatening its existence, is only conceivable in case of a radical strategic change in the political situation in Europe; for such a case, present military strategic assessments would expect a lead-time of 7 to 10 years. Notwithstanding its present low degree of probability, it cannot, however, be ruled out altogether.

With regard to internal security, it is safe to say that the stable economic, social and political conditions in Austria have in the past years spared Austria any extremist movements posing a serious threat to the State's security. The danger of domestically motivated political terrorism is non-existent in Austria at present.

Nevertheless, there are potential risks and dangers that might alter Austria's security policy situation quickly and decisively

As a result of complex and trans-border configurations of threats and risks, geographical distance from crisis regions no longer offers adequate protection. Hence, conflicts arising outside the consolidated part of Europe may have negative repercussions also on Austria. These include in particular international terrorism, trafficking in arms, drugs and human beings, migration flows caused by a variety of different motives, environmental disasters, and economic and financial crises. These risks can be countered by preventive on-the-scene measures, such as comprehensive political and economic support programmes, assistance in building democratic structures based on the rule of law and an international military presence on the spot.

Modern societies are particularly vulnerable in the area of information. This includes both the military and the civilian sector and increasingly business and industry as well (economic and technological espionage).

In view of the progressive development and availability of long-range air assets, especially ballistic missiles and cruise missiles, Austria may face a military threat even from regions outside Europe in a few years' time. Moreover, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction may lead to new threats also for Austria despite appropriate non-proliferation regimes.

Austria, too, is confronted with the negative effects of globalisation, especially in the shape of organised crime and international terror, but also illegal migration. Hazards like subversive aggression against strategically important infrastructures, terrorist attacks or threats of such attacks for blackmail purposes have become more serious owing to the availability of new operational means (especially weapons of mass destruction and information technologies). Such threats may originate either from governments or non-governmental actors such as terrorist movements, organised criminal groups, sects or even individual offenders. Characteristic of such threats is that they mostly appear quite unexpected and without previous warning.

Natural, technological or ecological disasters as well as epidemics may also be classified as major potential risks or dangers. They include especially accidents in nuclear power plants, which may have long-distance effects.

The Role of International Organisations and Austria's Participation

Security and stability can be best guaranteed today through co-operation among functionally complementary and mutually supportive institutions. These include the United Nations and, at the European and Transatlantic level, especially the EU, NATO with its Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council as well as the OSCE and the Council of Europe. Active participation in international measures of conflict prevention and crisis management is an important element of Austria's security policy. This is why Austria constantly strives to improve its crisis management capabilities in the civilian and military areas.

Austria accords central significance to the role of the United Nations in safeguarding world peace and international security. Participation in the UN's peacekeeping operations has been among the key areas of Austria's commitment in the World Organisation ever since the Congo Mission in 1960. Since 1960, about 40,000 soldiers of the Austrian Armed Forces have taken part in UN-authorised operations.

Austria's role in the UN's peace missions continued to develop in the nineties. Since then, Austria has also taken part in peace-making operations, since 1999 also with combat units. These are UN-authorised missions conducted under the operative direction of NATO or of a "lead nation".

Austria plays a similar active role in the OSCE as it did in the predecessor organisation CSCE. In the era of the Cold War, Austria was particularly committed to promoting understanding and co-operation between East and West, given its geographical situation. Now that the Iron Curtain has been dismantled, Austria has a natural interest in the stabilisation of conditions in the East of the European Continent.

The OSCE, which is based on a comprehensive co-operative security concept, at present provides 55 states in Europe, North America and Central Asia with a forum for co-operation on an equal footing. It renders an important contribution to stability in Europe and thereby to Austria's security. Austria advocates a further strengthening of the OSCE, especially in the areas of early warning, conflict prevention, civilian crisis management and post-conflict management.

One essential motivation for Austria's joining the EU was that this meant belonging to the European stability zone. From its beginnings, the European integration perceived itself as a work of peace and thus as a security concept. Hence, the EU's current enlargement process may also yield benefits in terms of security policy.

Austria joined the EU without a reservation regarding its neutrality. Upon ratification of the Austrian Accession Treaty, Article 23f was inserted in the Federal Constitution, which states that participation in the CFSP is not restricted by the Neutrality Act in terms of constitutional law. At the Helsinki European Council in December 1999, it was decided that the EU should be given credible military capabilities and efficient decision-making structures so that it can autonomously conduct crisis management operations in the future.

The dynamic development of the ESDP is wholeheartedly supported by Austria. Austria thereby proves its determination to co-operate on an equal footing and in solidarity in all spheres of European security and defence. Austria will make an adequate contribution to the military and civilian capabilities of the EU. Europe's security primarily depends on the effective functioning of the EU and NATO.

Today, NATO constitutes not just a classical military alliance but a comprehensive security community which is based on democratic values and which renders a crucial contribution to peace and security worldwide through its stability-oriented policies. Austria advocates close and trustful co-operation between the EU and NATO.

In a framework document signed in February 1995, Austria has expressed its intention to work for the achievement of the aims underlying the Partnership for Peace (PfP). According to the "Austrian introductory document" of May 1995, co-operation with NATO and the PfP participants comprises, in particular, joint work in peacekeeping missions, humanitarian and disaster relief, and search and rescue operations. From 1995 to 2001, Austria took part in the NATO-led multinational peace operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (IFOR/SFOR) as a PfP partner. Since the autumn of 1999, Austria has been participating in the Kosovo operation (KFOR).

Since 1997, the framework of "enhanced PfP" has made provision for all partners to achieve interoperability for the whole spectrum of peace support operations – i.e., including peace enforcement through combat missions. Thereby the spectrum of PfP peace support operations has been aligned with that of the Petersberg Missions.

Austria is also actively involved in the work of the European Partnership Council (EAPC), PfP's political consultation forum. The EAPC's purpose is to discuss a wide variety of political and security-relevant issues. Under a tailored co-operation programme, Austria has opened a bilateral dialogue on security policy themes with NATO and has intensified its co-operation with NATO in the civilian and military area.

The Council of Europe, by now comprising nearly all European states as members, is the central institution to safeguard human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and democracy. All its member countries are obliged to conform to the European Convention of Human Rights; the provisions of the Convention are enforceable at the European Court of Human Rights. The Council of Europe assumes a direct security policy function in crisis prevention and post-conflict management.

All efforts to bring the new Eastern European member states of the Council of Europe up to the Organisation's high standards are strongly supported by Austria, as they serve stability in Europe.

From neutrality to solidarity

When the Austrian National Assembly on 26 October 1955 passed the Federal Constitutional Law on Austria's neutrality, it was taken for granted that Austrian neutrality would be modeled on that of Switzerland. But very soon, Austria's neutrality differed from that of Switzerland: as early as December 1955, Austria joined the United Nations.

In relation to the United Nations, Austria's understanding until 1990 was that the organisation was under an obligation to respect Austria's permanent neutrality and would therefore never call on Austria to take coercive measures in a military conflict between third countries. But in the course of the Gulf War of 1991, the legal view came to prevail in Austria that obligations under the Statute of the United Nations take precedence over obligations under neutrality. Thereby, the Swiss model of classical neutrality had lost its relevance.

Upon joining the European Union in 1995, Austria adopted the Union's entire legal and political "acquis", which then already comprised the Maastricht Treaty and its provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Article J.4 of the Treaty opened the perspective of a common defence policy which in due time could lead to a common defence. A special provision (Article 23f) was added to the Austrian Federal Constitution to ensure that participation in the CFSP would not be restricted by the Neutrality Act. The Neutrality Act was thereby further limited in its effect.

After ratification of the Amsterdam Treaty, the Austrian National Assembly in 1998 adopted another constitutional amendment, under which Austria may take part in the whole spectrum of what is known as the Petersberg Tasks, which include combat missions in the context of crisis management, including peace-making measures. Such participation is possible under a EU decision.

This development demonstrates that Austria – at the latest by its unreserved participation in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy - has radically changed its status of permanent neutrality in international law. Hence, on an international comparison, Austria's status in international law corresponds to that of a non-allied state rather than a neutral state.

Austria is sovereign to decide on the future development of its security policy. However, the better Austria is integrated into the international security architecture, the more efficiently will it be able to safeguard its security interests and peace policy objectives and to contribute to shaping a stable and peaceful environment.

Resolution

The Federal Government is requested to shape Austria's security policy especially in accordance with the following principles:

General Recommendations

Austria's comprehensive security policy should be shaped in accordance with the following general principles:

1. The people of Austria should be informed comprehensively and continuously about the security situation in Austria and abroad. This is a vital prerequisite for developing and sustaining a broad awareness of the necessities in matters of security.

2. A National Security Council should advise the Federal Government and the individual Federal Ministers on all fundamental matters of foreign, security and defence policy. To support the National Security Council, a Secretariat, conjointly with liaison persons in the relevant Ministries, should evaluate and advise on these matters and prepare the Council's sessions.

3. European co-operation already initiated in the field of intelligence sharing should be intensified. At the same time, effective parliamentary control should be ensured to protect the citizens' privacy and their democratic achievements and rights.

4. Development of the existing Comprehensive National Defence programme into a system of Comprehensive Security Provision by focusing on the new risks and threats and by amending the legal provisions.

5. Disaster relief in the international framework is of traditional historical importance for Austria. Austria has been an internationally respected pioneer in this field and should further develop this role. In order to improve interoperability between national and international relief and operative organisations, an integrated and co-ordinated training programme should be created, building on existing civilian and military training facilities.

6. The range of research on security policy should be expanded in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of security and defence matters. For this purpose, close co-operation and networking between relevant organisations and institutions in Austria and abroad should especially be sought.

7. In order to gain and communicate comprehensive security policy expertise, a strategic leadership course for decision-makers in politics, business, administration and the military should be introduced on a postgraduate level.

8. Austria should make use of opportunities for regional security policy co-operation with neighbouring countries and other interested states.

9. The availability of vital resources (such as food, energy and raw materials) and the protection of strategic infrastructures (such as communications and transport) should be ensured.

Foreign Policy Aspects of Security Policy

Austria's foreign and security policy should be shaped in accordance with the following principles:

1. Consistently advocacy of worldwide respect for human rights and international law.

2. Active participation in international efforts towards arms control and disarmament, especially to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

3. Appropriate contribution to international efforts towards ensuring peace, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict management.

4. Continuation of Austria's traditional engagement in multilateral institutions such as the UN, UN affiliated organisations, OSCE, NATO-PfP/EAPC and Council of Europe.

5. Support for Third World countries in their efforts towards economic, social, democratic and ecological development.

6. Improvement in international environmental protection (Rio Process etc.).

7. Working effectively for Austria's interests at the bilateral and multilateral level as well within the framework of the EU.

8. Support of EU reforms, especially with a view to developing the CFSP/ESDP and safeguarding the Union's security policy interests.

9. Continuous coordination with our EU partners as the best way to promote Austrian national interests within the EU. Development of a partnership with likeminded states holding similar views which are linked by common regional interests (Regional Partnership Concept).

10. Fostering bilateral relations as a vital task of Austria's foreign policy, especially with a view to promoting Austria's economic interests.

11. Active participation in the ESDP in the spirit of solidarity; since ESDP is currently pursuing the aim of giving the EU the necessary means and capabilities as well as efficient decision-making structures for civil and military crisis management. Austria will make an appropriate contribution in terms of quantity as well as quality to the headline goal and capability goals of the EU.

12. Priority support to any future efforts to realize the possibility of a common European defence envisaged in Article 17 of the EU Treaty.

13. Consistent further development of Austria's relations with NATO within the framework of the tailored co-operation programme. Full usage of the possibilities for co-operation and dialogue offered within the framework of the Partnership for Peace program. Close co-operation between the EU and NATO in the spirit of a strategic partnership is regarded as a prerequisite for the success of the ESDP.

14. NATO's enlargement process is welcomed as a contribution to the strengthening of security and stability in Europe and is thereby also in Austria's interest. In light of the development within the field of security policy, Austria will continuously assess the value of NATO membership for its security and defence policy and the option of joining NATO will be kept open. Accession to NATO would only take place after prior consent of the Austrian people (referendum).

Defence Policy

Austria's defence policy should be shaped in accordance with the following principles:

1. Safeguarding Austria`s military defence capability as required by the concrete strategic situation. A conventional military attack on Austria threatening the country's existence is currently not foreseeable, whereas the capability of countering punctual attacks must be constantly maintained. This includes steps to maintain and develop all military core functions at a high technological level on a scale of forces operatively sustainable. This potential should ensure the growth capability of the country's armed forces, in case the security situation changes in the future. Ensuring constant air surveillance and air control as required, and defending against sub-conventional attacks and possible conventional threats.

2. Developing and maintaining the capability to participate in a common defence efforts in adequate strength, i.e., in today's perspective on a scale equivalent to a division.

3. Enabling the Austrian Armed Forces to take part in the entire spectrum of the Petersberg Tasks within a multinational framework up to the scale of a brigade or brigade equivalent.

4. Ensuring a maximum of protection for the health and lives of soldiers.

5. Achieving interoperability to carry out peace support operations abroad and for the defence of Austria.

6. Present conditions require coverage of the entire spectrum of military tasks; in terms of personnel this can only be achieved by maintaining universal conscription. However, the qualifications needed call for a gradual increase in the degree of professionalisation and in the share of volunteers.

7. Ensuring capacities for assistance operations to help in case of disasters, support the Federal Ministry of Interior in case of terrorist threats, to control the country's borders and to guard sensitive infrastructure.

8. The objectives set for the country's armed forces and their achievements should be subject to continuous review.

9. Promoting armament co-operation, especially within the framework of the WEAG, should enable Austria to achieve synergies, make armament procurement less costly and get access to latest key technologies.

10. In order to be able to fulfill the predetermined national and international tasks, the Austrian Armed Forces should receive the necessary budgetary, personnel and infrastructure resources.

11. The Federal Ministry of Defence should publish a White Paper every two years with a ten-year perspective, detailing the tasks, state and requirements of the Austrian Armed Forces, considering the prevailing situation.

12. The Federal Ministry of Defence should seek opportunities for regional co-operation projects with a view to achieving synergies in various areas (e.g. CENCOOP, joint armament projects etc.).

13. Opportunities for co-operation within the framework of PfP should be fully exploited, and in addition to exercises and training, they should also embrace all aspects of research, especially in the field of security policy.

Internal Security

Austria's internal security policy should be shaped in accordance with following principles:

1. Performing tasks in relation to internal security in conformity with the principles of freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, and fundamental freedoms as well as the rule of law, taking into account the statutory division of powers and responsibilities.

2. Maintaining and increasing internal security which serves to guarantee continued functioning of public services, as well as the security of the individual.

3. Fight against international terrorism, especially by intensifying internal co-operation at national level as well as co-operation at bilateral and multilateral level and within the EU; enhancing collection of intelligence at national level and exchange of information with partner countries.

4. Combating organised crime in all its varieties (people trafficking and smuggling, arms and drugs trafficking, money laundering etc.) within Austria on the one hand, and through international co-operation on the other hand, especially with Central and Eastern European governments, and with Russia.

5. Enhancing international co-operation with special emphasis on prevention of people smuggling, traffic in human beings and illegal migration.

6. Supply of human resources and technical equipment to combat crime and terrorism and to protect the national borders.

7. Ensuring effective protection of the Austrian part of the EU's external border and strengthening co-operation with neighbouring countries.

8. Enhancing exchange of information on migration at EU level, and in particular also with the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

9. Active contribution to strengthening the EU's non-military capabilities for conflict prevention and crisis management, and join international activities serving this purpose.

10. Assigning the necessary security forces (police, gendarmerie) for international civilian crisis management, as far as feasible in terms of financial resources, especially budgetary appropriations, including required training and setting of

framework conditions for their deployment, as well as providing basic and advanced training for local police forces from crisis regions.

11. Preparing, training, and, if necessary, sending on assignment civilian specialists (administration officials, judges, public prosecutors, etc.) within the framework of international civilian crisis management to help establish the rule of law and democratic conditions.

12. Ensuring co-operation between federal and provincial civil defence authorities as well as with the local operational units on the basis of existing legal provisions (Governmental Disaster Protection Management).

13. Intensifying and optimising training and exchange of information at national and international level, especially to prevent and fight terrorism, international organised crime and illegal migration on the one hand, and with a view to comprehensive disaster protection on the other hand.

14. Improving public information on self-protection measures, and optimising warning systems.

15. Supporting ongoing efforts in the EU to implement a common migration policy, thereby safeguarding the special national interests of the member states and upholding the principle of burden sharing.

SUB-STRATEGIES

The implementation of Austria's security policy in the framework of the Comprehensive Security Provision relies on systematic co-operation among various policy areas on the basis of appropriate sub-strategies.

The National Assembly therefore requests the Federal Government to work out sub-strategies for all areas relevant to security policy based on the present recommendations on security and defence policy. These sub-strategies should in particular contain those measures necessary to implement the recommendations.

The sub-strategies should be continuously reviewed, coordinated and, if necessary, adjusted in accordance with the international framework conditions.

The sub-strategies should in particular relate to the areas of foreign policy, defence policy and internal security. In addition, similar sub-strategies should be worked out for the areas of economic, agricultural, transport, infrastructural and financial policy as well as educational and information policy.

Vienna, 12 December 2001