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From 1991-1994 he was a military strategy researcher at the Clingendael Institute. At that time his main focus was on the developments in Central and Eastern Europe. One of his international publications was about the NATO enlargement.

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Without no doubt the European Union has become a global player. As of the 1st of May, the EU consists of 25 member states with over 450 million people and is producing a quarter of the world GDP. But at the same time the EU is often characterised as a lame duck. There is a gap, between economic strength and military capabilities. The defence spending of the EU countries is more than 160 billion euros, but is not used in an effective way. The development of the foreign, security and defence policy (FSDP) however is boosting. This process is firmly supported by the Constitution, which one expects will be accepted ultimately in the second half of this year. But as a former politician I would say that there is difference between the resolutions of the Council meetings and the practice of today. An approval of the Constitution does not change the defence operational capabilities overnight. First of all the EU-members have to improve their capabilities. The ECAP is a vehicle to reach that goal. But there is still a long and difficult way to go.

The theme for this panel is deciding factors for successful operations. What kinds of other elements are important besides the military capabilities? I like to start to mention the fact that nation states are very reluctant to transfer their authority about the military to other institutions like the EU. I can hardly imagine that in the next decade's national governments and parliaments will transfer their authority over military to the Commission and the European Parliament here in Brussels. It is even hardly to imagine that there will be Minister of Defence of the Union in the near future. So the reality is that the national decision-making about the military contribution can limit the possibilities of the EU and its ambitions. Without no doubt, I like to underline that the non-military aspects are a prerequisite for the success of the military operation.

The first key factor for success is that the political mission should be a very clear one. Even the military cannot make bread from stones. It seems to be logic and simple but in a Union with 25 member states to formulate a clear political goal; it will be a complex process. There must be unanimity about the political goal of the mission. Different messages or explanations in the respective Member States can damage the mission. The strategy has to be clear and should not be formulate vaguely in order to satisfy all the participating countries. We can learn from recent experience. The main political goal of the US Administration to start the war in Iraq was a regime change. To persuade the international community, gathering international support and to serve the public debate, the main goal was transferred into the imminent threat of weapons of mass destruction to US citizens and the international community as a whole. All information to support that goal was welcomed by the US. All the information that did not support the thesis was more or less rejected. The US Administration however kept their focus in their military planning on regime change and did not really think about the future of Iraq. There was no grand design what should happen when the political mission was completed. Some politicians and policymakers in the US thought that after the defeat of Saddam Hussein, they simply could leave the country. They expected that the European countries should take care of the country after the US did its job. We can conclude that there was a big gap between the

initial political goal of the American Administration and the military mission of today. Nevertheless, within the EU we saw many different political views about Iraq. The EU was split up. Not a split up between smaller states but a split up of the major players in the EU, Germany, France and the UK. This kind of horror scenario must be avoided when the EU takes the lead in a major military operation. When there is no political agreement among the major players, the EU should not start or better to say cannot start a military operation. The major powers in the EU will formulate the political goal of the mission. The smaller states can accept this and join the mission or they stay outside.

Strictly related to the political goal of the military mission is the **public support**. This is a main factor that can influence the decision making process. In general the EU is not very popular among the citizens in the respective member states. There are many reasons for it. The bureaucracy of the EU is well known. The guidelines of Brussels are often judged negatively. In the Netherlands, the debate is often concentrated on the financial aspects, which balance is negative for the country, instead of the benefits of the co-operation within the Union. The military record of the EU is a very modest one. In the EU countries, which can be viewed more or less as pro-American, citizens have more confidence in NATO as a military organisation than in the EU. Public support is very crucial for a military mission. If there is a lack of a broad public support, politicians take more risks when they agree with the mission. It is first of all the responsibility of the politicians in the Member States to convince their own people of the necessity of the military contribution. But besides that the EU itself has also a responsibility in gathering public support for their decisions. This instrument is hardly developed and therefore until now not very effective. The instrument in gaining public support should get more attendance. We all now that the media can play a decisive role in it. From recent history we are all familiar with the daily Nato briefings during the Kosovo war. These briefings serve as input for the public debate and were of crucial importance for NATO to counter Serbian propaganda. It is therefore necessary that the media get enough access to information about the military operation in order to prevent a picture, which is not in line with the daily practice. A policy about gaining public support and providing the media with timely and appropriate information is of great importance and should be part of the planning process of each mission.

The third key factor is the responsibility and authority about the forces and the political and military control on conducting the mission. In other word the institutional guidance during the mission. In the Netherlands we make a difference between full command and operational command. Full command means that the government always will keep the authority, to withdraw at any time the military forces. When circumstances change, or other priorities are set, a military contribution can be finished before the mission has been completed. Governments will definitely keep that right. The only authority, which is transferred by the government to the international organisation, is the operational command. The Commander in Chief of the mission has the authority to use the troops within the limits of the given mandate. We all know from daily practice, that the military commander of a unit is in close contact with his national headquarter. That is not only for supporting the mission but also to look carefully if the mission is fulfilled according to the

mandate. Within the headquarters in the capitals, the military and civil servants at the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Affairs will watch closely the political implications of the mission. I am convinced that this is common practice. This will not change in the future. The question arises when the operational command has been transferred to the EU, which authority is political responsible for the daily operation? In regard to the draft Constitution a lot of questions can be put forward. When the mission is executed by a group of states Art III –211 stated clearly that this group would decide in what way the mission is conducted.

It seems that there is no interference of the EU at all. It is clear that those countries, which do not participate in the mission, have no say at all. The countries, which execute a mission under the agreement of permanent structured co-operation (art I-40 (6) are deciding among themselves. Not only in theory but also in practice it is possible that even the presidency of the EU, which is not participating in the mission, is on the sideline. Does that support the EU's credibility? I am afraid not.

The fourth key factor is a clear mandate and appropriate rules of engagement.

It is expected that the EU will only execute a military operation when there is a mandate from the UN. These mandates, as we learned from the past, are not always sufficient to do the job. It is important that the EU countries, which are represented in the UN Security Council, will take an active stand when the mandate for a possible military contribution of the EU is at stake. But as we know, the EU is not represented in the Security Council. Therefore it is necessary that France and the UK, which are Permanent Members in the Security Council do accept the wishes from the EU-members about the requirements of the mandate and that they are willing to negotiate about it in the SC. But, looking to the Iraq case, it is not excluded that France and the UK have different views in the SC. In that case, it is more likely that both countries give priority to their national point of view instead of the view of the EU. Therefore in my view, all the contributing EU-countries have to be consulted on beforehand. The EU-countries, which are not represented in the SC should not accept that only France and UK have a say in the mandate and Roe's.

Another factor of importance is the **single chain of command**. Double keys should be avoided in any case. This situation can also be come reality for the EU when they execute missions on behalf of the UN and in the circumstances when the EU is dependent on military assets for their mission for NATO. In the case of the UN we have bad experiences during the UNPROFOR mission during the Balkan war. The military were dependent on the approval of the UN representative who in most of the circumstances has to consult New York before military actions could be executed. The EU should not accept such a dominance of the UN. The UN should accept that the EU would execute the military mission according to the given mandate. There is no need for more UN bureaucracy. Another case is the need for military assets from NATO. If there is a mission executed by the EU and there is an agreement on the use of NATO assets, thresholds for the use of these assets should not be created. The chain of command should reflect simplicity and transparency. These are also factors for success.

The sixth key factor is the **necessity for an exit strategy**. It is not only a military aspect but also a political one, because it can have big political implications. In the Netherlands the exit strategy is one of the criteria and sometimes a political condition to contribute to a mission. Most of all small countries, which contribute to a mission with limited means, are not able to take care for themselves when the situation will drastically change. They do not have the required assets available. So, in this situation they are dependent on the major powers such as France and UK. These countries should be willing and able to support the exit strategy of the mission. This should also be part of the military planning of the EU. No entry without exit should be the leading principle of the EU military planners and a precondition for the politicians.

I like to conclude with the most deciding factor; namely the **political decision making** process and the approval of the parliament in the contributing member states. The political will and the democratic political approval for launching military missions are crucial. If the Union wants to respond quickly and effectively the EU cannot wait until 25 parliaments have discussed the proposal from Brussels. Therefore we have to look in what way we can harmonise the procedures between Brussels and the member states. This aspect becomes more and more relevant in the case that rapid response is required. The countries, which like to join the permanent structured co-operation commit themselves to a very rigid time frame. These forces have to be ready for deployment within 10 days. Not only the countries which need a final approval from their parliaments but also the decision making within the Union has to be reviewed in order to improve the quality of the process and to leave more time for the decision making within the member states.

To summarize

In this introduction I mentioned seven deciding factors for the success of a military operation. These key factors are political conditions, which have to be fulfilled before the EU Council will take a final decision for a military operation. The factors are:

1. A clear and achievable political goal for the mission. The military capabilities should be in line with the political goal.
2. Public support and a strategy how to inform the media.
3. Transfer of Authority and Conducting the mission
4. A clear mandate and appropriate Rules of Engagement
5. A clear chain of command
6. The availability of an Exit Strategy
7. The decision-making procedure, both within the Union and the member states has to be reviewed