

**EUNITY OF COMMAND - THE PLANNING AND CONDUCT
OF CSDP OPERATIONS**

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**EUNITY OF COMMAND - THE PLANNING AND
CONDUCT OF CSDP OPERATIONS**

Luis SIMÓN & Alexander MATTELAER



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INTRODUCTION

With the aim of contributing to the debate about the agenda of the forthcoming Polish Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2011, in November 2010 Egmont organized an international expert seminar in Brussels with its sister institute from Warsaw, PISM – the Polish Institute of International Affairs, under the heading *Crisis Management Operations: European Lessons Learned*.

The EU has undeniably become an important actor in the field of crisis management. In view of its expertise and its capabilities, the demand for CSDP operations, both civilian and military, can only be expected to increase. The EU is also reshaping its institutional architecture and its procedures for crisis management. The establishment of the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD) and its integration into the External Action Service (EAS) are determining for the future shape of EU crisis management. As this re-engineering of the CSDP machinery is in full swing, the moment is right to take stock of crisis management operations so far and identify lessons learned, in order to inform decision-making in the very near future.

To that end, the seminar addressed three key dimensions of EU crisis management:

- The comprehensive approach: To which extent does the EU really implement a comprehensive or holistic approach both in theatre and at the Brussels level? Which conclusions can be drawn for the running of operations and for the training of relevant staff?
- Command & control: How effective have command & control arrangements proved, in the various stages of mounting and running operations, at the various levels of the chain of command?
- The Battlegroups: While they have so far never been deployed, as a rapid reaction capacity they do constitute an important part of the CSDP toolkit, of which the EU arguably could use more. How can the Battlegroups be adapted to current needs?

In this Egmont Paper, the Institute publishes two very thought-provoking contributions about command & control, based on the presentations by the two academics who addressed the seminar on that topic.¹ Dr. Luis Simón and Alexander Mattelaer focus respectively on the planning and the conduct of CSDP operations. Their creative thinking on these topics constitutes an important con-

1. The full report of the seminar is available at http://www.egmontinstitute.be/papers/10/sec-gov/101103-Crisis_Management_Operations_report.pdf.

tribution to a debate which will feature prominently on the EU agenda in 2011. Egmont is very proud and happy to be able to publish the work of two such fine colleagues.

Prof. Dr. Sven BISCOP
Series Editor

'CRISIS MANAGEMENT' JUST WON'T CUT IT ANYMORE: MILITARY PLANNING AND CSDP AFTER LISBON

LUIS SIMÓN²

With the post-Lisbon foreign policy structure still being fleshed out and the 2010 Headline Goal nearing its expiration date, the timing for a political reinvigoration of CSDP could not be riper. Crucially, such reinvigoration requires making definite headway on the highly political question of EU military planning. Meagre progress in the area of military planning is the best barometer of the level of procrastination that has marked CSDP since its very inception. And just as CSDP is an accurate barometer of CFSP's lack of punch, so does CFSP vividly illustrates the many troubles that loom over the EU as a political project.

So far, the EU has had it easy, having largely prospered under the auspices of America's military fist. During the Cold War, the US-NATO connection hedged against a potential Soviet run on Western Europe, creating the conditions for European economic growth, political stability and economic integration. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s the US underwrote Europe's post-Cold War geopolitical map, bringing about developments that would set the agenda of the new EU, chiefly German reunification, the stabilisation of the Western Balkans and the expansion of Western economic and political rules to Central and Eastern Europe. Beyond Europe, both during the Cold War and post-Cold War periods, US military power guarded a global economic system in which Europe's economies were plugged in and upon which their prosperity largely depended. Even if Europeans had lost their command of the international system after WWII, America's global strength and geostrategic fixation with the old continent covered their basic economic and security needs. Today, in the post-Iraq, post-financial crunch world, things do not look quite so bright. The geopolitical and geoeconomic rise of Asia goes hand in hand with America's shift of geostrategic attention eastwards, away from Europe. As the fulcrum of the world's economic and military power shifts East, historians speak of the rise of China as the last nail in the coffin of Europe's five-hundred-years' long party.³

2. Dr. Luis Simón is a Research Fellow at the Institute for European Studies (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) and coordinator of security and defence at OPEX (Fundacion Alternativas). Many thanks to Sven Biscop, Jo Coelmont, Alexander Mattelaer and James Rogers for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

3. Ian Morris, *Why the West Rules - For Now: The Patterns of History, and What they Reveal About the Future*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010. See also: Niall Ferguson, *Power, Money and American Security Today and Tomorrow*. Keynote Address, Sixth Annual Benjamin Franklin Public Service Award, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Philadelphia, 15 November 2010.

Not least, change in the global tectonic plates bears important implications in and around Europe. Animated by Russia's comeback in the East, the rise of Turkey in the south-East and the acceleration of patterns of competition among EU member states, the emergence of an increasingly multipolar Europe looms over a potential economic and political de-structuration of the broader European neighbourhood and the EU itself. With the global and regional balances in flux, the sinews of European power are under threat from within and from without. In other words, this is crunch time for European integration.

With different faces and manifestations, the daunting challenges Europeans face today all originate from the same cause: their own weakness and lack of political determination. Two phenomena, Europeans' resistance to political integration and their reticence to the use of military force, are particularly responsible for such weakness. Given the relatively small size of individual European countries (if compared to the continent-sized giants of China, India, Russia or the United States), the mounting costs of military technology and the ongoing surge in defence spending elsewhere in the world, Euroscepticism and de-militarisation are two deeply intertwined and equally worrying phenomena. Both are heavily projected into debates over the EU's military planning capability.

This contribution provides an overall assessment of the EU's planning capability needs. It posits that there exists a manifest disconnect between the EU's foreign and security policy objectives, its military strategic objectives and its military capabilities, particularly in the area of planning. The EU's current military planning capability is insufficient to deliver existing military strategic objectives, as contained in the *Headline Goal*. These are, in turn, insufficient to deliver the Union's wider foreign policy objectives as contained in the *European Security Strategy*. The underlying deficiency of the Union's military planning capability, and that of CSDP more broadly, is its emphasis on reactivity. This reactivity derives from CSDP's narrow focus on crisis management. Such focus is incompatible with the EU's strategic objectives, namely the exercise of global power and a leadership role in promoting security and prosperity in the broader European neighbourhood. A reactive mentality does no service to such laudable objectives. Global power and regional leadership in the greater European neighbourhood demand foresight, anticipation and pro-activeness.⁴ They demand, in other words, a truly comprehensive approach to foreign policy. In terms of planning, this means that the Union needs to equip itself with a fully fledged contingency

4. In this regard see: James Rogers and Luis Simón, *The Status and Location of the Military Installations of the Member States of the European Union and Their Potential Role for the European Security and Defence Policy*. Brussels, European Parliament, 2009. See also: James Rogers, 'The Geography of European Power'. In: Sven Biscop and Richard Whitman. (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of European Security*. Abingdon, Routledge, forthcoming.

planning capability, one geared not only to intervention, but also to knowledge and anticipation, prevention and deterrence. Such a comprehensive contingency planning capability will facilitate Europeans' command and control (in a political sense) of their greater neighbourhood and other areas of geostrategic interest.

The first part of this contribution briefly assesses the performance of the EU's planning capability in the light of the objectives contained in the Headline Goal and CSDP operations undertaken so far. The second part offers a broader assessment of the EU's foreign policy objectives and inquires into the kind of planning capability needed to deliver such objectives. The third and final part identifies those concepts responsible for CSDP's reactive focus, namely the comprehensive approach, civ-mil integration and crisis management.

Military planning, the 2010 Headline Goal and past CSDP operations

The EU's capability for the planning and conduct of military CSDP operations is divided into the so-called 'politico-strategic' and 'operational' phases. This artificial division is nothing but a by-product of the lack of political agreement among member states on the need to set up a permanent EU operational planning capability.⁵

At the politico-strategic level, planning includes an analysis of the implications of political objectives, the desired end-state, restraints, constraints, and capabilities needed for a particular operation.⁶ The EU has an in-house permanent strategic planning capability in the EU Military Staff and, since recently, in the Crisis Management Planning Directorate (CMPD). Operational planning is concerned with the translation of an operation's politico-strategic objectives into specific military objectives. This bridging is managed by an Operational Headquarters (OHQ) which is in charge of drafting the Operation Plan (OPLAN) as well as the conduct phase (command and control) of the operation. Due to political resistance the EU lacks a permanent OHQ or military strategic level of command. Instead, its operational planning capability or OHQ is set up ad-hoc for the purposes of a particular operation, only to be dismantled once the operation in question has been completed. There are three different ways for the EU to generate an OHQ: by invoking the so-called Berlin Plus agreements (which

5. Luis Simón, *Command and Control? Planning for EU Military Operations*. Occasional Paper 81. Paris, EU Institute for Security Studies, 2010.

6. *European Union Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level*. Council Doc. 10687/08, Brussels, 16 June 2008.

guarantee the EU access to NATO's command chain), via the framework nation track (which allows the EU to lean on the planning and conduct structures of five of its member states) or through the activation of a small Operations Centre placed within the Operations Directorate in the EU Military Staff.

At this stage, it is no secret to anyone that the lack of a permanent operational planning capability and the artificial compartmentalisation of planning which derives from it result in a notably dysfunctional EU military planning capability.⁷ For one thing, the Union's existing military planning capability is insufficient to guarantee the general military objectives the EU Council has set itself in the Headline Goal process. Military rapid reaction in particular (the flagship of the 2010 Headline Goal) demands substantial advance planning and a degree of response that an ad-hoc operational planning structure cannot achieve in emergency situations. Furthermore, the EU's patchy planning capability has proven insufficient to satisfactorily deliver the planning leg of the military CSDP operations launched to date. Operations EUFOR Althea in Bosnia Herzegovina (since 2004), EUFOR RD Congo (2006) and EUFOR Tchad/RCA (2008/2009) illustrate only some of the many problems that surround the EU's military planning capability.

The operational planning and conduct aspects of Althea are widely praised among EU military officials as a job well done. However, political disagreements led to a six-month long procrastination in the politico-strategic planning process.⁸ Given SHAPE's outstanding resources, Berlin Plus is theoretically the EU's best planning and conduct option. The problem is that due to political disagreements, hardened since Cyprus' entry into the EU in 2004, Berlin Plus is hardly a realisable option.⁹ EUFOR RD Congo is another case in point. Uncertainty as to which Member State would provide the OHQ resulted in a paralysis of the planning process once the Crisis Management Concept was adopted in February 2006. The paralysis lasted for one month and jeopardised the EU's ability to deploy in Congo before the elections. Most officials involved in the planning of the operation assert that EUFOR RD Congo's timely deployment was only possible due to a delay in Congo's electoral process.¹⁰ Finally, EUFOR Tchad/RCA

7. Sven Biscop, *NATO, ESDP and the Riga Summit: No Transformation Without Re-Equilibration*. Egmont Paper 11. Brussels, Egmont, 2006. Eric Hochleitner, *Permanent Planning and Command Structures for Autonomous EU Operations: A Capacity Deficit to be Addressed*. Baden-bei-Wien, Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, 2008. Alexander Mattelaer, 'The CSDP Mission Planning Process of the European Union: Innovations and Shortfalls'. In: *European Integration Online Papers*, 2010, 14 (9). Luis Simón, op. cit.

8. Simón, op. cit, p. 29.

9. Author's personal interviews at the EU Military Staff in Brussels (November 2010). This said, the Berlin Plus framework still offers comparative advantages particularly in handover scenarios. In this regard, the use of Berlin Plus for a potential CSDP operation in Kosovo should not be excluded.

10. Simón, op. cit, p. 34.

in 2008 eloquently illustrated the interdependence between planning and other aspects of CSDP, in this case the force generation process. Although EUFOR Tchad's force generation problem went well beyond the lack of a permanent OHQ, the absence of operational expertise damaged clarity during politico-strategic discussions, further hampering the process of force generation.¹¹

Past CSDP operations do demonstrate some important lessons regarding the kind of planning capability the EU needs for small crisis management operations. The need for greater flexibility in the planning process and a stronger advance planning capacity seem to be clear lessons. A modest increase in personnel in the Military Advance Planning (MAP) branch in the EUMS and a small OHQ skeleton with whom the MAP could share its advance planning products would serve to address these two shortfalls.¹² It would, furthermore, improve the conduct aspects of CSDP operations, particularly as it would imply the creation of a permanent Communication and Information System (CIS) and create CSDP corporate expertise.¹³ Such measures would also improve the Union's military rapid reaction capability. However, in order to determine what the EU's military planning needs are, one cannot stop at the lessons learned of past operations (i.e. 'past wars'): it is the future ones that need to be considered. This necessarily involves a careful reflection on the EU's strategic objectives in the light of the geopolitical environment (globally and regionally). Both the EU's external (foreign policy) and internal objectives (fostering political cohesion and a common strategic culture among member states) must be taken into account. The latter are often overlooked. However, as increasing financial and geopolitical frictions are testing the EU's resilience,¹⁴ the internal dimension of the EU (once the very rationale for European integration) must be factored in again. Both CFSP and CSDP, one must not forget, bear an important internal function too.

EU military planning and CSDP: the bigger picture

Given the intergovernmental nature of CFSP, it is inevitable that the formulation of the EU's foreign policy objectives is driven by politics, that is, by national

11. Alexander Mattelaer, 'The Strategic Planning of EU Military Operations - The Case of EUFOR Tchad/RCA'. In: *IES Working Paper*, 5/2008.

12. Author's personal interview at the EU Military Staff in Brussels (November 2010).

13. For more on this see Alexander Mattelaer's contribution to this Egmont Paper.

14. On the consequences of the financial crisis upon European integration see: Charles Kupchan, *The Potential Twilight of the European Union*. Working Paper. New York, Council on Foreign Relations, 2010. Kathleen R. McNamara, *The Eurocrisis and the Uncertain Future of European Integration*. Working Paper. New York, Council on Foreign Relations, 2010. For an analysis of geopolitical change in Europe see: Luis Simón and James Rogers, 'The Return of European Geopolitics: All Roads Lead Through London'. In: *RUSI Journal*, 2010, 155 (3), pp. 58-64.

horse trading in the Council. However, coherence between such objectives, the EU's military strategic objectives and its military capabilities is the least one should expect. The key questions for us are: what do the EU's foreign policy objectives entail for CSDP¹⁵ and what do they imply in terms of military planning more specifically?

The EU's chief foreign policy ambitions have been reflected in the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS), the 2008 review on its implementation, repeated Council communications, and the Lisbon Treaty itself. They include the will to make an effective contribution to global governance and international security as well as the promotion of security, stability and good governance in Europe's greater neighbourhood.¹⁶ The EU is, in other words, committed to global power and regional power. It goes without saying that such commitments imply the possession of a military capability or CSDP. Indeed, the existence of a causal correlation between a CFSP (let alone one of global power aspirations) and a CSDP has been repeatedly acknowledged by numerous Council communications, the ESS, and the Lisbon Treaty.¹⁷ Furthermore, military logic dictates that the existence of a permanent military capability (in this case CSDP) must, regardless of its specific objectives and ambitions, be accompanied by a corresponding permanent military planning capability. It is only political eccentricity that has broken such natural link in the case of the EU.¹⁸ The only plausible counterargument here would be to sustain that CSDP is not in fact a permanent military capability, but only a 'part time' one, which can be activated for the purpose of a particular crisis only to be switched off again. This argument resonates with the widespread assumption that it is only Member States that have a permanent military capability.

Such a minimalist understanding, though, does not seem to be what the European Council intended when it decided to launch ESDP (now CSDP) back in late 1999. The decision to explicitly link CSDP to CFSP (ratified by the Lisbon Treaty) assumes that, by its mere existence, a military capability reinforces the Union's external action. Insofar as 'external action' is a permanent feature of the Union, so is the possession of a permanent military capability. Whether such a reinforcement comes via direct intervention or, for that matter, the Union's military capability is permanently deployed is besides the point here. The point of a military capability is not just to actually intervene, but to be in a position to

15. On this matter see: Sven Biscop and Jo Coelmont, *A Strategy for CSDP: Europe's Ambitions as a Global Security Provider*. Egmont Paper 37. Brussels, Egmont, 2010.

16. *A Secure Europe in a Better World, European Security Strategy*. European Council, Brussels, 12 December 2003.

17. Annex III, Presidency Conclusions, Cologne European Council, 3-4 June 1999.

18. Simón, *op. cit*

do so and have everyone else know one is in a position to do so. This sends a sign around the EU's greater neighbourhood and other geographical areas of interest, strengthening the EU's diplomatic position, often without the need to resort to direct military intervention, which usually bears huge financial and political costs. It is in this broadest (and permanent) sense that one must understand CSDP, as an instrument in support of CFSP. The Council's decision to set up permanent institutions to oversee the CSDP process (i.e. the PSC, EUMC, EUMS, EDA, etc.) and the development of permanent capabilities (notably the Battlegroups) leave no doubt about this. This makes perfect sense, for without a permanent (supporting) military instrument there can be no foreign policy worthy of its name, and without a foreign policy there can be no trade policy or, for that matter, no single market.

Just as CFSP pre-supposes CSDP, so does CSDP pre-suppose a permanent military planning capability. Another question is what specific features such capability must have in the case of the EU. Here we need to ask ourselves what is the nature of the Union's foreign policy objectives. In this regard, an EU which aspires to exercise regional leadership and global power must necessarily possess a strong contingency planning capability.

There are different opinions within EU circles regarding when one needs to start doing operational planning proper, that is, planning that is theatre acquainted.¹⁹ This, however, is a phoney debate; one that someone who aspires to be a regional leader, let alone a global power, cannot afford. One does not just start or stop planning: planning (military or otherwise) is an inherently continuous, permanent, activity. If it wants to be a serious power, the EU must have detailed plans for tackling all kinds of likely operations in or around its greater neighbourhood and key geostrategic areas of interest. And it needs to continue planning once it has completed a particular operation, not least to assess the impact that such operation has had upon its planning assumptions in a particular area or region. The more one plans, the more contingencies one envisions. The quicker one plans, the harder it gets.

A theatre acquainted planning capability is necessary not just to write the Crisis Management Concept, i.e. the document defining the parameters of a given CSDP operation.²⁰ It is necessary to guide political decision makers in Brussels; to help them decide whether an operation is viable in the first place. Before deciding whether operational engagement is appropriate, the EU needs to know

19. Author's interviews at the EU Military Staff in Brussels, April 2009 and November 2010.

20. *European Union Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level*. Council Doc. 10687/08, Brussels, 16 June 2008.

what is happening in the field, what is needed to fix it, and whether it has what it takes (in terms of capabilities) to fix it. In order to answer those questions with the standard of quality that a regional and global power demands, developed contingency planning products are needed, as well as someone that monitors them. That can only be achieved with the possession of a permanent, theatre-acquainted, planning capability. A permanent military planning capability is about being coherent with the objectives the EU has set itself, namely its decision to have a CFSP and a CSDP. A lack of it sends a clear sign that CSDP and CFSP are not backed up by the capabilities needed to match the EU's political ambitions. This eats into the EU's diplomatic reach and influence today. Worse still, it will eat into Europeans' economic prosperity, political stability and security (including that of their values) tomorrow.

Beyond the damage that the lack of a permanent planning capability causes to the EU's external action, it also has negative implications for intra-European cohesion, insofar as the external and internal dimensions of the EU can be separated. The lack of a permanent military planning capability only adds to the existing disappointment with CSDP.²¹ This atrophy adds to European's two most worrying handicaps: their resistance to political integration and reluctance to use military force. For one, the procrastination on the debate over the EU's military capability further exacerbates mounting frustrations among member states. It thereby hampers the political consistency of the EU at a time when its very rationale is being called into question by financial uncertainty and a shift in Europe's geopolitical balances. Secondly, and just as importantly, the lack of a permanent military planning capability acts as an obstacle against a much-needed common European strategic culture and further animates the impending de-militarisation of the European mindset. Aside from the fact that it would substantially power up CSDP and CFSP, the establishment of a permanent military planning capability would act as an alibi for intra-EU political cohesion and help underpin a common European strategic culture. Greater political cohesion and a common strategic culture are key for dissipating intra-European disarray and exercising European power abroad, both regionally and globally.

The recent creation of the CMPD is meant to improve the EU's advance planning capability. But the CMPD will still need a grasp of reality, which it can only have if supported by a body that is theatre acquainted. Right now the EU's military planning capability is split up between some in-house expertise within the CMPD (whose actual task is to provide integrated strategic planning) and some 11 military planners at the MAP in the EUMS. Both their political mandate and

21. On this see: Jolyon Howorth, 'The Case for an EU Grand Strategy'. In: Biscop et. al, *Europe: A Time for Strategy*. Egmont Paper 27. Brussels, Egmont, 2009.

their limited staff imply that the kind of planning they are capable of is characteristically generic. Indeed, the little contingency planning that is done should in fact be characterised as ‘pre-crisis’ response planning, under ad-hoc requests from the PSC.²²

The lack of political flexibility insofar as advance planning is concerned and shortages in terms of staff amount to an EU military instrument which is characteristically reactive and add up to a reactive strategic culture. Reactiveness is incompatible with regional hegemony, let alone global power. These demand initiative. As argued above, a strong contingency planning capability is tantamount to the EU’s knowledge, command and control (in a broad sense) of those geopolitical regions crucial to its security and economic prosperity, both in its greater neighbourhood and beyond. If it is to fulfil its self-proclaimed objectives of ensuring regional stability and exercising global power the EU needs a permanent contingency planning capability. To be sure, political resistance to the very concrete concept of an OHQ is far from being the only obstacle to a proper EU contingency planning capability. The heart of the problem is the reactive mentality that characterises Europeans and the EU’s external action, immortalised in CSDP’s fixation with the (rather outdated) notion of crisis management.

EU Military Planning After Lisbon: Beyond crisis management (or towards a truly comprehensive approach to foreign and security policy)

A reactive attitude towards the world around them is, arguably, Europeans’ greatest handicap. Europeans seem prone to wait for a crisis to erupt rather than anticipating and preventing problems through the formulation of a comprehensive strategy – be the subject at hand financial-economic, politico-military or other. This reactive mentality generates a lack of foresight and a strategic laziness that dramatically curtails their power or ability to act. If unabated, reactivity will bring negative consequences for Europeans’ security and economic prosperity.

Europeans’ reactive mentality is hardwired into CSDP, as well illustrated by the flagship concepts that steer its development, namely the ‘comprehensive approach’, the notion of ‘civ-mil integration’ or that of ‘crisis management’.²³ While positive in theory, the comprehensive approach and civ-mil integration

22. Author’s interviews at the EUMS and CMPD in Brussels, November 2010.

23. See e.g.: *Suggestions for Procedures for Coherent, Comprehensive EU Crisis Management*. Council Doc 11127/03, Brussels, 3 July 2003.

are effectively crippling military CSDP and, with it, the EU's ability to shape its greater neighbourhood and other areas of geostrategic interest. Reactiveness is perhaps evidenced in the extreme by the absurd idea that CSDP's sole purpose must be to effectively react to external crises, that is, to be an effective instrument of crisis management. All these problems are dragged onto planning debates via the push of concepts such as comprehensive or 'integrated' civ/mil planning and crisis response planning.²⁴ A comprehensive military contingency planning capability is needed to break this suicidal spiral and put CSDP in a position to perform all the functions of a military instrument, adding to its intervention tasks knowledge and anticipation, prevention and deterrence.

If one is faithful to their semantic roots, both the idea of a comprehensive approach to security and the notion of civ/mil integration include a military component. Looking at security comprehensively and aspiring to tackling crises through co-ordinated civ/mil responses is not only positive in itself, but indeed necessary. The problem, however, is that Europeans' de facto fall-out with the military instrument changes entirely the meaning of the comprehensive approach and the whole notion of providing 'integrated' civ-mil solutions to crisis management, including in the area of planning. Because of that fallout with military force, both the comprehensive approach and the notion of 'civ-mil' integration are liabilities, and not assets in support of a more effective EU foreign policy. Their rise is not only underpinned by Europeans' hostility to military force: it further animates it.

Judging from its own discourse it seems as if the EU had invented the very concept of a comprehensive approach. However, the idea that a strategic or 'grand strategic' approach demands one's co-ordination of all the means at its disposal (military, diplomacy, trade, development, etc.) is as old as statecraft.²⁵ In reality, the EU's love affair with the comprehensive approach was spurred by European hostility against US unilateralism after 9/11, and animated by the idea that Washington's 'narrow-minded' military focus in Afghanistan and Iraq was much responsible for its inability to create stability in those countries. Whether America's calculations over Afghanistan or Iraq were overly optimistic is beside the point. The point is that many in Europe found a comfortable home around the vague idea that 'the military instrument is not enough': whether those who have reservations about the use of force in general, those who wanted to take advantage of unilateral America to build up CSDP or outright pacifists. Enter

24. The notion of comprehensive or 'civ-mil' planning presides over most CSDP planning documents. See e.g. the *Draft EU Concept for Comprehensive Planning*. Council doc. 13983/05.

25. Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Strategy*. London, Faber & Faber, 1967. Paul Kennedy (ed.), *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1991. Peter Paret et al., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986.

the comprehensive approach. The problem, of course, is that the comprehensive approach means many different things to many different people. And this is indeed why Europeans love it so much and have adopted it as CSDP's bumper sticker. Constructive ambiguity, some say; destructive ambiguity, it should be clarified.²⁶

Similarly, the notion of civ/mil integration seems to have proven a handy solution to European disagreements over the use of force. This has surely been the case in the area of planning. In 2003, an initial proposal by France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg to create an EU OHQ ended up with the creation of the Civ/Mil cell. In late 2008, the prospect of France's return to NATO and America's blessing to ESDP spurred hopes for an EU OHQ in some quarters.²⁷ Instead, a new body focusing on comprehensive planning, the CMPD, was created. Once more, Europeans resorted to 'comprehensive' solutions to their comprehensive disagreements.

This is not to dispute the utility of some sort of civilian planning capability or, for that matter, of mechanisms for comprehensive, civ/mil, coordination in the area of planning. However, we should not get carried away about the value for money of such assets. In any case, neither civilian CSDP nor greater civ-mil coordination should come at the expense of military CSDP. A retreat of military CSDP will weaken CFSP and the EU. Albeit the market for integrated civ/mil solutions was very much buoyant in the 1990s and early 2000s, it might easily die down with the return of great power competition. And not just civilian and civ/mil crisis management, but crisis management more broadly.²⁸ This finally leads us to the bottom of the problem: CSDP's 'constitutional' limitation to crisis management.

Back at the 1998 Saint Malo Summit, the Franco-British decision to focus CSDP on crisis management was cemented by their shared assumption that an emphasis on territorial defence could in fact contribute to protracting Europeans' 'introspectism'. However, and paradoxically, by restricting CSDP to the realm of crisis management, its promoters actually contributed to the perpetuation of the very problem they wanted to tackle in the first place: Europeans' reactivity, introspection and strategic laziness.

26. Jolyon Howorth, 'France, Britain and the Euro-Atlantic crisis'. In: *Survival*, 2003-4, 45(4), p. 175. On the downside of ambiguity see: François Heisbourg, 'Europe's Strategic Ambitions: The Limits of Ambiguity'. In: *Survival*, 2000, 42(2), pp. 5-15.

27. Asle Toje, *The EU, NATO and European Defence: A Slow Train Coming*. Occasional Paper 74. Paris, EU Institute for Security Studies, 2008.

28. Richard Gowan, 'The Strategic Context: Peace-Keeping in Crisis, 2006-2008'. In: *International Peacekeeping*, 2008, 15(4), pp. 453-469.

When thinking about the military instrument, a global power must go beyond the narrow function of crisis management or, broadly speaking, that of intervention. A comprehensive approach to crisis management is pointless without a comprehensive approach to foreign and security policy. A truly comprehensive approach cannot be restricted to crisis management, but must encompass other functions that complement crisis management. In fact, intervention, both in its internal (defence) and external (crisis management) variants, is the inferior function of the military instrument. It represents a failure of its other, crucial, three functions, namely knowledge and anticipation, prevention and deterrence. Intervention is the riskier and less effective of all the military's functions. Not only does it risk one's political objectives in one big gamble – with knowledge and anticipation, prevention and deterrence being one's first lines of defence. Furthermore, it is a much more costly approach for foreign and security policy; financially, politically, militarily. To be clear, just as crisis management is not restricted to the military realm (as the EU has recognised time and again), neither are knowledge and anticipation, prevention or deterrence. Their nature is political, and in order to work properly, the co-ordination of different instruments (trade, monetary, diplomatic, military, cultural, etc.) is needed.

Conclusion

The need to think more comprehensively about the military instrument is particularly urgent in an era in which financial pressure and mounting great power competition promise to make intervention increasingly costly, both financially and politically. The functions of the military instrument go well beyond the narrow realm of intervention. In terms of planning this means the Union must equip itself with a permanent contingency planning capability. By performing key knowledge and anticipation functions such capability will be the spearhead of a comprehensive EU military instrument able to prevent, deter and, when necessary, intervene. This will place the Union in a position of permanent command and control of its greater neighbourhood and other areas of vital geostrategic interest. Do Europeans want to wait for a crisis to erupt to assemble a bunch of planners from different capitals in an OHQ so they can figure out how to respond to that crisis? Does the EU want to be a reactive power? Or does it want to be a milieu-shaping power? These are, after all, false questions, for a reactive power cannot be a power at all. Power demands foresight and pro-activeness. Only political integration under the umbrella of a comprehensive military instrument offers Europeans the path to power in the 21st century. Do they want to be a power or not to be at all? That is the real question.

COMMAND AND CONTROL REQUIREMENTS FOR CSDP OPERATIONS

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The debate about command and control (C2) arrangements for CSDP operations is fraught with political controversy. The frequent clarion calls for a permanent EU operation headquarters are met with rebuttals based on the notion of avoiding duplication with the existing NATO command structure. This paper does not aim to take a position in institutional debates but rather seeks to identify the key requirements posed by modern operations in terms of command and control architecture.

These requirements can be organised into three dimensions. On a *horizontal axis*, we find the debate over the merits of parallel vs. integrated command arrangements. In other words, what should be the conceptual underpinnings of a multinational C2 set-up? On the *vertical axis*, we encounter questions over the appropriate number of command levels and supporting/supported relationships. The classical functions of a command structure – to plan, control, support and review the conduct of operations – are constant, yet how to integrate these functions into an effective organisational set-up merits close attention. The norm guiding this debate is that form follows function. As any C2 system inevitably needs to be manned by people, the third dimension relates to *human resources*. This includes questions about training and common doctrine, but also mundane issues such as contracts and career prospects. On the basis of these three categories of requirements, this paper will take stock and put forward some key decision points for the future development of the CSDP.

Conceptual Underpinnings of Multinational Command and Control

Command and control has always been a contentious aspect of multinational operations. In conceptual terms, the spectrum of C2 arrangements ranges from parallel command to integrated command with a number of hybrid constructions falling in between the two ideal-types. In *parallel command*, nations retain full control over their armed forces, as multiple national command lines exist

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alongside one another. In *integrated (or unified) command*, nations yield control over their armed forces to a single multinational command chain. Along this horizontal spectrum, multiple intermediate positions are possible. One of these is lead nation command, where different nations participating in an operation plug their forces into the command chain of the leader of the coalition. Alternatively, integrated command can be limited by yielding only part of command and control authority.³⁰ Parallel command and integrated command are theoretical ideal types: in practice multinational operations always occupy some middle ground. Parallel lines of command and control will necessarily require some coordination in order to ensure unity of effort between different nations. Similarly, fully integrated command does not exist in the sense that the allegiance of armed forces at the fundamental level lies with the nation from which they spring. At the heart of the matter lie the competing requirements of national sovereignty and mission effectiveness. Maintaining command over armed forces is a constitutive aspect of national sovereignty. Nations will correspondingly be reluctant to bargain with this crown jewel of national prestige in a multinational environment. Yet any operation – multinational operations included – is ultimately designed to realise a mission and achieve a set of objectives. From the requirements of the mission follows the ancient principle of unity of command. This principle aims at ensuring the most cost-effective employment of scarce resources in function of the realisation of mission objectives.

In historical terms, most of the military history of the 20th century reads much like a drive towards increasing integration of command structures.³¹ The loose command arrangements in place at the western front in 1914 were gradually replaced by a more integrated model in which General Foch played a coordinating role. In WWII, a command model characterised by much deeper integration was developed by the Western Allies. The legacy of this successful Allied command was preserved in the design of the integrated NATO command structure. One can argue that in those cases where the criticality of mission success trumped concerns over loss of sovereignty, the choice for integrated command was clear. In the post-Cold War environment, however, the self-evident choice for integrated command arrangement receded as many crisis response operations qualified as operations of choice rather than necessity. In the case of the air campaign over Kosovo, for instance, multinational staff work was easily associ-

30. Command authority can be sliced into different levels of authority, ranging from full command over operational command, operational control and tactical command to tactical control. In terminological terms, *command* refers to authority vested in an individual whereas *control* refers to authority exercised by a commander. For practical purposes, command is therefore a question of degree. See: John Kiszely, *Coalition Command in Contemporary Operations*. Whitehall Report 1-08. London, Royal United Services Institute, 2008.

31. For a more extensive historical analysis see: Anthony J. Rice, 'Command and Control: The Essence of Coalition Warfare'. In: *Parameters*, 1997, 27(1), pp. 152-167.

ated with warfare by committee. The emergence of *unofficial* parallel command lines thus became one of the defining features of modern crisis response operations. Armed forces would operate under the banner of a nominally integrated command chain yet receive simultaneous instructions via unofficial national communication channels.

These observations also bear upon the state of affairs in the CSDP framework. As far as military CSDP operations are concerned, the command and control setup is largely copied from the NATO structure. Either a CSDP operation makes direct use of the NATO command chain via the Berlin Plus arrangement – as is the case for Operation Althea – or an ad hoc chain of command is created on the basis of a lead nation providing national headquarters. These headquarters, structured in terms of the classical strategic, operational and tactical levels, are subsequently multinationalised by means of augmentee personnel. While the formal outlook of integrated command is retained, in practice the command environment is never free from friction. For example, building up multinationalised integrated headquarters from the available skeletons is a time-consuming process. Information and expertise needs to be imported and all the personnel needs to learn to work together and familiarise themselves with EU procedures.³² Furthermore, the flow of intelligence is a traditional pitfall for multinationalised command structures and CSDP experiences are no exception in this regard. The disparity in intelligence collector assets between large and small member states is difficult to overcome, even in the name of integration. In more general terms, the existence of parallel national command lines may not be official, but is hardly disputed by practitioners.

The situation is somewhat different for civilian CSDP missions. As civilian crisis management constitutes much more of a policy laboratory, it is largely free from historical legacies, at least when compared to the military counterpart. In the current institutional set-up, civilian CSDP functions on the basis of a light and decentralised yet fairly integrated command and control set-up. The Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability in Brussels functions as a civilian headquarters where the concepts of operations are written and subsequently handed down to the Heads of Mission in theatre who develop the full operation plans. As missions tend to be small in size, the organisation is based on individuals rather than units. In practice, this implies that command and control is very ad hoc, with personalities mattering more than procedures. Civilian operational

32. For example, staff personnel active in the EUFOR Tchad/RCA OHQ in Mont Valerien estimated that it took about three months time to get the HQ properly up and running. Since CSDP operations are conceived as a crisis management instrument, this obviously hinders rapid reaction. For elaboration of this point see: Alexander Mattelaer, *The Strategic Planning of EU Military Operations – The Case of EUFOR Tchad/RCA*. IES Working Paper 5/2008. Brussels, Institute for European Studies, 2008.

doctrine is in many cases lacking entirely. Cases of unofficial parallel command (where national instructions interfere with instructions from Brussels) exist, but this occurs even more under the official radar screen as national civilian command lines do not necessarily exist in a formal sense.

More important is the observation that civilian and military CSDP operations may occur simultaneously under parallel command. In Bosnia for example, two CSDP operations are deployed alongside one another – police and military – with two distinct command chains. At some points in time this led to a severe lack of coordination. At the origin of this situation lies the historical development of parallel stovepipe mechanisms for the civilian and military strands of CSDP. A recent innovation in this regard is the creation of the Crisis Management Planning Directorate (CMPD) as an integrated civil-military entity responsible for writing the Crisis Management Concepts of all CSDP operations. As the CMPD only became operational one year ago and more institutional changes are underway (e.g. setting up the External Action Service), it is in all likelihood too early to evaluate the new set-up. However, it seems reasonable to expect that the CSDP command and control structure will remain characterised by formal integration within individual operations with many informal caveats, combined with a formal limitation on the integration of civil and military chains of command.

Given the conceptual spectrum from parallel to integrated command, what are the requirements posed by CSDP operations? From the perspective of an individual operation, the desirability for maximally integrated command is beyond debate. Unified command structures allow for the most efficient use of resources and help to keep plans simple and straightforward. When decision-makers prioritise the end-state of the operation – assuming it can be defined in clear and unambiguous terms, that is – it is only a logical step to endow a single integrated structure with the responsibility to realise the mission objectives that constitute the end-state. Having said that, one must remain a realist as to what is politically feasible. Integrated command structures ultimately depend on trust between the participating nations. There needs to be sufficient confidence that all troop contributing nations are striving towards the same political goals. If any doubt remains as to what are the goals an operation is supposed to achieve, the emergence of parallel command structures in a formal or informal sense will be unavoidable. The requirement for unified command arrangements therefore ultimately flows from the clarity of the mission: if the mission is clear, then so is the need for integrated command. The same logic can be applied to the CSDP at large. When one conceives the CSDP as a platform for ad hoc crisis management, then the command arrangements will reflect this. This can already be said to be the case: the convoluted arrangements of the present day betray some

confusion about what the CSDP is really about. Should the CSDP developed into a genuinely strategic tool for expeditionary civil-military stabilisation operations or, alternatively, a means for common defence, the command and control arrangements will need to reflect this. This brings us to the second category of requirements, focussed on the norm that form should follow function.

Designing a Multinational C2 Architecture: Form Follows Function

The multilayered architecture of command and control relationships arguably qualifies as the most visible component of the debate. In functional terms, this is a straightforward affair. Most EU militaries have adopted some form of the continental staff system modelled on the image of the Prussian general staff.³³ Operations need to be *planned* on a basis of a clear understanding of the situation, *controlled* in real time and *supported* in terms of resources. In practical terms, this is usually developed using J-codes or a similar organisational approach on multiple levels (political, strategic, operational, component or tactical). For civilian CSDP operations, the organisational structure is substantially lighter, yet the basic terminology remains similar in terms of intent. From this set of functions naturally flows a set of formal requirements. The issue that will subsequently arise is that a wide range of functions and levels easily generates heavy and resource-intensive bureaucratic structures. At this point, political choices have to be made with a view to balancing resource allocation and crisis response preparedness.

The major complaint about multinational command and control arrangements is that they are heavy organisational structures containing plenty of redundancy and an associated waste of resources. This ‘weight’ is the result of three sources, namely their multinational nature itself, practical support requirements and the overall number of command levels. In comparison with national operations, firstly, one can argue that multinationality inherently compounds the weight of C2 structures. It can be observed as a matter of empirical fact that multiple states insist in inserting what they deem a sufficient number of personnel in key postings. Following from what was said earlier, the greater the trust in integrated command arrangements, the more this issue can be mitigated. Secondly, the discussion does not stop at purely theoretical organisational boundaries associated with national influence and flag posts. Organisational building blocks can be shifted around on paper but buildings and communication and

33. Unsurprisingly, this system also forms the core of NATO C2 doctrine.

information systems (CIS) cannot be moved around by the scrap of a diplomatic pen. In the case of the EUFOR Tchad/RCA operation, for example, the official EU command chain had to be complemented with a complete information network provided by France. This led some to question whether the key information hub lay within or outside the formal EU command chain.³⁴ A fully-fledged command structure needs to be supported by adequate infrastructural facilities and CIS resources in order to function effectively. Thirdly, there exists debate about the number and precise role of command levels. When a delegation of MEPs visited the EU's military operation in the DRC in 2006, for example, they expressed amazement at the sheer length of the command chain for what was, after all, a small military operation.³⁵

When discussing the number of command levels it is useful to consider historical legacies. Splitting up command chains over multiple levels made good sense in a context of major combat operations. The lower levels were closest to the action in temporal as well as spatial terms, with all the risk this entailed, while the higher levels focussed on longer term planning and allocating resources in function of where the operational emphasis lay. In the context of the Cold War, for example, a strategic headquarters was built around an atomic bunker whereas a tactical headquarters would need to remain mobile for manoeuvre warfare. Form followed function: the more challenging and dangerous the operations, the greater the need for redundancy and resilience. One sees this clearest when comparing the NATO command chain with the UN peacekeeping system. In the context of low-risk peacekeeping operations one can be satisfied with light and cheap command arrangements, whereas preparation for more challenging and robust operations entails a heavier structure.

A good case can of course be made that the CSDP structure should not unduly reflect Cold War legacies. Already, the role and function of military-strategic headquarters as a command level is occasionally disputed as these headquarters frequently play only a supporting function. In the conduct of modern crisis management operations, there is an ongoing trend to increasingly consider theatre headquarters as the key command hub. In this view, higher-level strategic headquarters are considered to play a supporting role. Initially, they are responsible for pre-deployment planning and force generation. Subsequently their task is narrowed down to shielding off the operational level from excessive intrusion by the political level and some long-term planning functions, as staff officers usually have longer rotation times in strategic than in theatre headquarters.

34. See Mattelaer, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

35. See: *Visit of the ad hoc Delegation to Kinshasa (DRC) – 06-09 November 2006 – Chairman's Report*. Brussels, European Parliament, SEDE meeting 19 December 2006.

While this may offer a way to construct lighter and more responsive command chains, it also opens up questions about political oversight. In the historical model, the higher level oversees the lower level and ideally all levels are well informed about the dynamics both higher up and lower down. When the strategic level would be circumvented, the ability of the political level to instruct and oversee the operational level needs to be reconsidered as well. Currently the political level only vets strategic level-documents, which are correspondingly vague and generalist in nature. Yet operational level documents need to be highly detailed, unambiguous and often specialised, making them poor candidates for approval in diplomatic councils.

A command structure composed of multiple layers offers the best prospects for fulfilling all functions adequately even in times of great stress. Expeditionary crisis management operations probably offer more potential to be commanded from the front – the in-theatre headquarters – than from the rear in Brussels or another capital. Having said that, the operational function of strategic headquarters – most notably long-term planning, force generation and acting as a buffer between the political and operational realms – needs to be fulfilled one way or another. On a conceptual level, this brings us back to the question of parallel vs integrated arrangements, where genuine integration offers the best prospects of cost-efficiency. On a practical level, the discussions about the architectural aspects of command and control can never hide the reality that command and control ultimately boils down to an interaction between individuals. No discussion can therefore forego the human dimension, to which we now turn.

Human Resources: The Ideal CSDP Staff Officer

No matter how an organisation is structured, its output will always remain critically dependent on the individual human talent and energy that resides within its ranks. Dwight Eisenhower, for example, was known to emphasise three key characteristics amongst staff officers – confidence, logic and loyalty – rather than set much store by organisational methods or structures.³⁶ These three characteristics remain valid in any sort of staff work. However, a multinational staff process is likely to pose additional requirements. The former head of the EU Military Staff, LtGen David Leakey, is on the record saying that member states should not treat the EUMS as a language school or a staff college.³⁷ Multinational staff work depends on people with good language skills and an apprecia-

36. Rice, *op. cit.*

37. 'Interview with DGEUMS – LT Gen Leakey'. In: *Impetus*, # 9, Spring/Summer 2010, pp. 2-4.

tion of cultural differences. Furthermore, they need to be well versed in common doctrine and standards. Taking all these requirements together sets a high standard. This subsequently implies that human resources management should be geared towards attracting the top talent in national administrations and rotating it flexibly back and forth between national and European settings.

There can be little doubt that basic qualities such as confidence, logic and loyalty remain of tremendous importance in the CSDP. In particular this implies a need for people able to balance their loyalties. One cannot ask people to leave their nationality behind when arriving in the EU environment. Yet one should also guard against the notion of integrated multinational staff work functioning as a façade for intergovernmental politics. Staff work needs to be evaluated in terms of professionalism rather than correspondence with national policies. In all likelihood, this will remain a delicate balance that cannot be resolved with procedures and will remain dependent on individual good judgement. Language and training requirements, in contrast, are skills that can be subjected to fairly rigorous testing. In the training realm, one promising way forward is to build upon and expand the programmes offered by the European Security and Defence College. A good knowledge of CSDP concepts and procedures would seem to be a precondition for quality staff work. In order to realise this in practice, however, a good argument can be made that there is a need for doctrinal consolidation and expansion. Operational doctrine for civilian crisis management, for example, is notoriously light. Many concepts overlap with one another and several documents prepared over the past years remain unapproved on the political level. Even in the case of military operations, where recourse can be had to the available NATO doctrine – a commonly accepted international standard – it is doubtful whether what is available is adequately tailored to the sort of operations European militaries undertake today.³⁸

The requirement for loyal, talented and well-trained people is clear. The question that remains is how to make these people available for service in the CSDP framework. A recent study on EU civilian crisis management provided a bleak assessment of the current state of affairs in terms of recruitment difficulties.³⁹ For military personnel, deployability may be less of a problem in itself, yet quality standards are unlikely to emerge out of the blue. Mundane issues such as administrative ease and flexibility in the sequential combination of national and European job postings, attractive contracts and long-term career prospects can

38. I have made this argument at greater length elsewhere. See: Alexander Mattelaer, *The Crisis in Operational Art*. ESDF Paper. London, Chatham House, 2009.

39. Daniel Korski and Richard Gowan, *Can the EU Rebuild Failing States? A Review of Europe's Civilian Capacities*. London, European Council on Foreign Relations, 2009, pp. 44-51.

also be expected to exercise a significant influence. In practical terms, the key to structuring the human resources dynamic seems to reside in recognising the value of expertise and operational experience on a national level. Simply put, when serving in CSDP operations is not sufficiently valued in the national administrations, a bi-directional flow of talent is unlikely to materialise.

Conclusion

Given all the preceding considerations, one may well wonder how an ideal command and control structure for CSDP operations would look like. In line with the three dimensions outlined above, one can argue it needs to be clear and parsimonious, integrated in function of the mission and staffed with adequate human resources. This would serve the planning and conduct of operations by minimising the need for ad hoc creativity and minimising the risk associated with unpreparedness for crisis. Clarity, parsimony and integration of command and control is closely related to the question *what the CSDP is really about*. In the face of lingering uncertainty about (a) the relative roles played by military and civilian instruments, (b) the future orientation of defence establishments and (c) the stable availability of financial resources, it may be impossible to provide any conclusive answer to the question of ideal command and control. Determining the future objectives of the CSDP and the resources allocated to it will therefore mark key decision points with profound implications in terms of command and control. However, if one takes recent CSDP operations as a guiding tool one can make a few practical recommendations.

First, given the number of past and ongoing operations and the need to rediscover the same lessons over and over again, there exists a clear need for greater permanence in the command and control chain in order to foster corporate expertise. A genuinely effective crisis management tool cannot rely on skeleton structures and earmarking arrangements but needs operating capability from day one. Second, given the EU's rhetorical love affair with the comprehensive approach and the fact that the CSDP covers both civilian and military instruments, the self-evident need of coordination must be fostered through greater integration of command lines. Genuine integration, furthermore, would need to go beyond the realm of EU structures proper, but would have to include the member states. A robust CSDP command chain can only be built if it is granted sufficient autonomy and responsibility, based on common EU interests and objectives defined by the Foreign Affairs Council. Thirdly, given the never-ending need for highly trained professionals, a well-functioning command and control system would be served by increased training efforts and ongoing doctrine development. Especially in the case where political disagreements may impede

the formulation of simple mandates and clear organisational responsibilities, there will be no command and control at all if one cannot resort to creatively skilled professionals.