



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Common Security and Defence Policy

*3130th FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 1 December 2011*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. In the context of a growing demand for the European Union to become a more capable, coherent and strategic global actor, the Council reiterates the continuing need for a comprehensive approach that increasingly mobilises the different tools at the EU's disposal as part of a coherent and effective strategy to achieve the EU's objectives.
2. The Council underlines the importance of CSDP as an essential element for such a comprehensive approach. Effective CSDP needs to be underpinned by sufficient and adequate capabilities – in terms of personnel, assets and intelligence analytical support. Against the backdrop of current financial constraints, the challenge for Europe is to do better with less and to deliver on its responsibilities. In this regard, the Council stresses the importance of fully exploiting the wide variety of existing national and EU resources, maximising synergies and strengthening cooperation.
3. The Council emphasizes that further progress in CSDP is necessary, and remains fully committed to the comprehensive civil-military level of ambition of 2008, as set out in the Declaration on Strengthening Capabilities.
4. In this regard, the Council welcomes the work carried out by the High Representative and the EEAS in line with the Council Conclusions on CSDP of 31 January 2011 and of 21 March 2011, and following the Weimar initiative joined by Italy and Spain, the High Representative's report on CSDP of 11 July 2011 and subsequent contributions by Member States.

CSDP Missions and Operations

5. CSDP missions and operations are the tangible expression of CSDP in action. Over the past eight years, the EU has deployed 24 missions and operations under CSDP, deploying 80.000 personnel.

P R E S S

6. The Council remains fully committed to contributing to security and stability in regions where the EU is operationally engaged. While considering new CSDP actions, the Council underlines its full commitment to maintain the current engagement to the ongoing CSDP missions and operations.
7. The Council notes with concern that several missions and operations face considerable challenges in generating sufficient resources to fulfil their key objectives. The Council, renewing its call on Member States to provide the necessary resources, undertakes to make every effort to address these gaps.
8. The Council also recognises the need to continuously improve the performance of CSDP missions and operations, including through evaluation of outcomes, benchmarking, impact assessment, identifying and implementing lessons learned and developing best practices for effective and efficient CSDP action.

The Council recalls the importance of a continued and systematic consideration of aspects relating to human rights, gender and children affected by armed conflict from the early planning of CSDP missions and operations, during their conduct as well as in the subsequent lessons learned processes.

9. In line with the ambition to fulfil the EU's potential in promoting and preserving peace and stability, the EU will actively and effectively use the full spectrum of instruments at its disposal for crisis management and conflict prevention. The EU will act through CSDP missions and operations to add value, on the basis of identified needs, with clear objectives and exit strategies to deliver and sustain results.
10. The Council welcomes the concrete steps by the High Representative to counter interconnected security threats in the Horn of Africa, particularly piracy, in the context of the EU strategic framework for the Horn of Africa and in view of establishing further synergies amongst the various CSDP initiatives in the region. To underpin this effort, the Council has agreed to revert in early 2012 to the issue of extending the mandate of EUNAVFOR Atalanta until the end of 2014, and will approve the Crisis Management Concept for a civilian CSDP mission with military expertise to strengthen regional maritime capacities in Somalia and in the wider Horn of Africa region. The Council notes ongoing work for a CSDP mission in South Sudan, with a focus on airport security.
11. The Council also remains committed to addressing the security challenges in the Sahel, and encourages the High Representative to take forward preparatory work for further consideration by the end of the year with a view to a CSDP engagement to reinforce regional security capabilities in the region, in close cooperation with the African Union.
12. The Council reaffirms the EU's readiness to provide further assistance to Libya across a range of possible sectors, including inter alia security sector reform and border management. Options for possible CSDP action should be elaborated in early 2012 in full respect of the principle of Libyan ownership and priorities and in cooperation with the UN.

Capability development

13. Recalling its December 2010 decision to extend the implementation of the Headline Goals beyond 2010, the Council emphasizes that further civilian and military capability development for CSDP remains a key objective in order to respond both to existing gaps and growing needs in the field. The Council recognises progress achieved in promoting synergies between the EU civilian and military capability development, and encourages further work.

Civilian capabilities

14. The Council stresses the importance of strengthening and sustaining the efforts for the civilian capability development, in particular in the context of current financial constraints, building on the work conducted under the two Civilian Headline Goals and in synergy with other EU instruments, with a view to responding more rapidly and effectively to crisis management tasks, and invites the HR to propose a multi-annual work programme in this regard.
15. The Council calls for a more effective use of national strategies in facilitating the deployment of civilian personnel. The Council stresses the need for increased efforts involving in particular national ministries of foreign affairs, defence, interior, justice and finance, as well as through dedicated high level meetings at EU level. The Council also stresses the importance of building on the ongoing developments in strengthening ties between the Common Security and Defence Policy and the area of Freedom, Security and Justice in line with the competences of the bodies concerned and underlines the need to improve the cooperation between these actors as part of a broader effort in developing synergies between the internal and external dimensions of security.
16. The Council stresses the need for better use of the existing resources, calling for more effective recruitment processes, including for management positions, and more efficient use of the expertise developed by the mission personnel for civilian missions. More training and, as appropriate, national career incentives will help equip the CSDP missions with qualified and motivated personnel.
17. The Council also invites the High Representative and the Commission to examine improved ways of force generation based on a sound regulatory framework in order to make proposals in the first half of 2012 for consideration by the Council.

Military capabilities

18. The Council stresses the urgent necessity to strengthen European cooperation in the area of military capability development for sustaining and enhancing CSDP in order to improve operational effectiveness and in the context of increasingly constrained defence budgets. Concrete progress in the implementation of pooling and sharing requires a continuous political impetus and a change of mindset. In this context, the Council stresses the need to fill the critical gaps, including those identified in recent operations.

19. The Council welcomes Member States' commitments in specific concrete projects, facilitated by the European Defence Agency (EDA) in the fields of: Air to Air Refuelling; Smart Munitions; Aircrew Training; Naval Training and Logistics; European Transport Hubs; Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance including Space Situational Awareness; Medical Support; Military Satellite Communications, and looks forward to the concrete definition of these projects as soon as possible, as well as the development of other pooling projects on the basis of existing initiatives, such as: maritime surveillance, Helicopter Training, Satellite Communication (Procurement Cell). The Council welcomes the promising areas for pooling and sharing identified by the EU Chiefs of Defence (CHODs) which will provide further impetus to EDA's ongoing work and define new opportunities.
20. While welcoming the significant initial efforts, the Council recalls the need to develop cooperation on military capabilities on a longer term and more systematic basis. It encourages intensified work on enablers for increased cooperation (in particular best practices, models for cooperation, lessons learned) and incentives (including the exchange of national experiences on reinvesting savings in defense) which will facilitate commitments of the Member States. The Council stresses the need to further examine the impact of reduced defence spending on capabilities, including its possible impact on key industrial and technological capacities to be maintained and developed in Europe. The Council encourages further synergies between EDA and the European Commission, in particular in the field of Research and Technology, in particular regarding the new European Framework Programme for Research and Technology (Horizon 2020).
21. The Council welcomes the existing bilateral and multilateral initiatives among Member States, such as the ongoing cooperation between France and the UK as well as numerous other ongoing and emerging regional initiatives, which through innovative methods of pooling and sharing contribute to improving overall military capabilities. These initiatives contribute to the dynamic for stimulating further opportunities for cooperation between the Member States.
22. The Council invites the EDA to take forward work on all strands above including proposals for new areas of cooperation and concrete projects as well as for longer term pooling and sharing. The Council also recalls the commitment of the EU Chiefs of Defence to establish or widen collaborative projects by mid-2012. The Council urges Member States to take on the role of lead nation for concrete projects, and will assess the progress made in April 2012.
23. The Council also underlines the need to further analyse and address the constraints related to the availability, usability, and deployability of existing military capabilities in CSDP operations and missions. In this respect, the Council also recalls its Conclusions on ESDP of 17 November 2009.

Civilian and military rapid reaction

24. The Council stresses the importance of further developing and using the necessary tools for facilitating civilian rapid reaction, e.g. through enhanced use of the Civilian Response Teams and Security Sector Reform expert pools. The establishment of a CSDP permanent warehouse for civilian assets in 2012 and refined procedures will, among other functions, also improve rapid reaction.

25. The Council confirms its full commitment to the level of ambition as agreed in the Battlegroup concept. It recalls that Battlegroups provide the EU with a specific rapid reaction capability and underlines the importance of further facilitating their use in CSDP operations. Battlegroups contribute to increasing inter-operability among Member States and remain a vehicle for the transformation of their armed forces towards more mobile and rapidly deployable forces.
26. The Council noted that in the first semester of 2012 only one Battlegroup will be on stand-by, and urges enhanced efforts in order to remedy such shortfalls in the future.
27. The Council encourages further work relating to Battlegroups such as enhancing the cooperation between Member States on strategic enablers and niche capabilities, enhancing the interaction between Battlegroups and the EU level and the possibilities for Battlegroup interaction with civilian actors. The Council invites the High Representative to present the results of these various work strands in the course of the first semester of 2012.
28. The Council notes the ongoing work on the review of the Athena mechanism for financing military operations with a view to an agreement by the end of this year.

Improving the EU's performance in planning and conducting missions and operations

29. The Treaty of Lisbon offers a strong framework and a number of new instruments for the EU to act as an effective and coherent global actor. The creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS), and the integration of CSDP structures within it, in full respect of the specificities and particular functions of these structures, is a key step in ensuring a more coherent, strategic and synergetic use of all EU policy instruments. These opportunities should be used to their optimal extent for EU action in the field.
30. The Council stressed that improving CSDP will also require significant improvement in the EU's performance in planning and conducting CSDP civilian missions and military operations, inter alia by enhancing civilian expertise and by better integrating the civilian and military dimensions, which requires continuous efforts. The Council also calls for improvements to civilian and military planning, through ensuring clear mandates and enhanced capacities, taking into account cost-efficiency and resource implications, for the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate and the EU Military Staff to enable earlier and more effective advanced planning (up to the preparation of Concepts of Operations) to speed up decision-making at the political level, improve information exchange, identify civil-military synergies and strengthen close cooperation with other international organisations.
31. With a view to achieving greater efficiency and better synergies between civilian and military planning, and in order to adapt CSDP to the new institutional reality following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the Council invites the High Representative to propose a review of the procedures for EU crisis management, which date from 2003.
32. The Council calls for making optimal use of the existing structures. In this context, when the nature of the operation does not require a national HQ, the Council stands ready to activate on an ad hoc basis the Operations Centre in accordance with its terms of reference for a specific CSDP Operation. On this basis, the Council agrees to accelerate planning for the activation of the Operations Centre for the Horn of Africa operations, at the latest by the next Foreign Affairs Council.

33. The Council agrees to keep under review the efficiency of EU performance in planning and conducting CSDP civilian missions and military operations. Recalling the principles of unanimity and inclusiveness underpinning CSDP, the Council will decide on possible further improvements on this basis, without prejudice to the Treaties and in light of the High Representative's report on CSDP of July 2011.

Partnerships

34. The Council underlines the importance of strengthening EU-NATO cooperation in crisis management, in a spirit of mutual reinforcement and with due respect for each organisation's decision-making autonomy. In this regard, the Council welcomed the work done by the High Representative in implementing the mandate of the European Council of September 2010 by means of a pragmatic step-by-step approach, while keeping with the overall objective of building a true organisation-to-organisation relationship. The Council called on the High Representative to pursue efforts to further develop efficient and effective EU cooperation with NATO, in particular in the areas where both operate side by side.
35. The Council welcomes close cooperation between the EU and NATO on Pooling and Sharing and Smart Defence/Multinational Approaches initiatives, in order to ensure coherence, mutual reinforcement and non-duplication of these efforts. In this context, the Council encourages the close staff-to-staff contacts to continue in a transparent manner.
36. Reiterating the importance of the longstanding and wide-ranging cooperation between the EU and the UN in crisis management, the Council underlines the need for continued close cooperation and coordination including in operational theatres where both are engaged, in particular in Afghanistan, Somalia, Kosovo and DRC, or where future engagement is envisaged, notably in Libya. The Council welcomes the ongoing work with regard to strengthening EU-UN cooperation in crisis management and EU support to UN peacekeeping efforts through CSDP. In this respect the Council encourages the High Representative to pursue the current initiatives and to bring forward proposals for concrete actions to be taken in the first half of 2012.
37. The Council underlines the valuable practical contributions and political support to CSDP missions and operations offered by partner countries. The Council calls for further development in CSDP cooperation with Eastern and Mediterranean partners on a case-by-case basis, thus contributing to enhancing regional security and stability. Noting ongoing work on CSDP cooperation with partner countries, the Council welcomes the efforts of the High Representative to further pursue substantial dialogue and cooperation with all partner countries, including strategic partners, and to develop relations with new partners. In this context, the Council welcomes the important role of the European Security and Defence College in training and in particular its recent initiatives with partners such as training programmes and high-level training visits to partner countries. Work will continue to be taken forward within the existing framework, as defined by various European Councils and subsequent arrangement and in respect of the institutional framework and decision-making autonomy of the EU.

Way forward

38. The Council encouraged the High Representative to continue to take forward work on CSDP, in close cooperation with the Member States, and looked forward to reviewing progress made before the end of June 2012."