

EU MILITARY FORUM



EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE – EUMC#1/2022



**European Defence:
The Full Package**

P4

**EU-NATO
Maritime Perspective**

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**Lessons for European
Defence:
Seize the Moment
and Work Together**

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Lex Building, Rue de la Loi 145, 1048 Bruxelles, BELGIUM
email: ceumc.secretariat@eeas.europa.eu

Chief Editor: Captain (IT Navy) Giovanni M. Galoforo

Executive Editors: Colonel Dominik Horn,
Captain Tiziana Giannuzzi

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear comrades and friends,

It is with great pleasure that we launch the number “one” of the new EU Military Forum, a place to discuss and share ideas and perspectives on military matters related to the European Union, and not only.

As announced in the last edition of the previous Newsletter, this is more than a name change or a different appearance. It is about opening a forum (hence the name) where readers at different levels will find the EU military perspective at the strategic level. The overall objective remains to involve the enlarged military and civilian community serving Europe’s security and defence, in building up and consolidating a most needed common European Defence culture. Especially today, when we sail together through the uncharted waters of a worrying security scenario... In this way, we believe our efforts will complement the excellent job that the Impetus, the Magazine edited by the EU Military Staff, continues to provide.

The EU Military Forum is intended to be more than a one-way expression of ideas and thoughts in the context of security and defence. Each edition will gather contributions from partners inside and outside the EU Institutions, covering current affairs and looking at the future, always from a military perspective, or with a military interest. At the same time, the Q&A section at the end of the magazine will provide an opportunity for the readers to interact with us. The questions you will find in this edition come from the personnel in my cabinet, to break the ice.

Last, but not least, I shall express my sincere thanks to the team that has made this Forum real, and to the first contributors, who have answered promptly and enthusiastically to our requests.

In conclusion, I will not hide it: this is a challenging, ambitious endeavor. For the staff we can count on, but also for the Forum itself, in finding and consolidating its position in an already crowded information environment. The success of this initiative depends on several factors, but the most relevant one will be your support. For our part, we promise to remain committed. As Leonardo da Vinci used to say: “Not the one who begins, but the one who perseveres!”, also the motto of a most inspiring school ship I recently visited, the Amerigo Vespucci.

Enjoy the read!

Yours,
Gen Robert Brieger
Chairman of the EU Military Committee



General Robert Brieger
Chairman of EU Military Committee

EUROPEAN DEFENCE: THE FULL PACKAGE

COORDINATING THE EFFORTS TO MAXIMISE THE RESULT

By Prof. Dr. Sven Biscop



Prof. Dr. Sven Biscop

is Director of the Europe in the World programme at the Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations in Brussels, and a professor at Ghent University.

As EU Member States are increasing defence spending and strengthening their armed forces, the role of the EU institutions is to push for those efforts to be coordinated, so that the additional means generate the maximum additional force.

The European Defence Fund (EDF) already enables Member States to collectively design and build new arms and equipment. The newly announced instrument for joint procurement, EDIRPA, will enable Member States to collectively acquire what they have built together (or off-the-shelf).

But coordination can and should go further and eye the capabilities themselves: the actual military units that will

be equipped with the new weapon systems. **The key to maximise the efficiency, but also the interoperability and employability of Europe's armed forces, lies in the creation of permanent multinational force packages, with national units as building-blocks.**

How would this work?

Taking the army as an example, the building-blocks would be national brigades, to be permanently anchored in a multinational army corps or division. Today, most Member States still operate at least one brigade in their armies, but often these are incomplete, lacking key capabilities, such as air defence or combat engineers. A three-pronged approach would be followed.



Firstly, in the framework of a multinational army corps or division, a combination of integration and specialisation would be organised in the various support functions. In areas where some, or all, of the Member States contributing a brigade had only limited capabilities, these would be integrated into a single multinational support unit. In areas where some contributing Member States had no capabilities at all, a division of labour would be established, with the national support units of some countries supporting the brigades of the others. Thus, all brigades would be more useable, in more scenarios, than in cases where they had to rely on national support only. This approach would also be much more cost-effective.

A second element of this approach is that, in the framework of a multinational corps or division, the participating Member States would harmonise doctrine as well as weapons and equipment. This would allow for deep interoperability between all constitutive units, make integration or a division of labour much more feasible, and generate synergies and effects of scale. If all brigades were to use the same vehicles, for example, that would drastically reduce the logistics tail on operations, while making procurement simpler and more cost-effective.

Thirdly, the multinational corps or divisions would serve as the benchmark to quantify the need for strategic enablers. The Member States that made up a multinational formation would acquire

the necessary strategic enablers without having recourse to the assets of others. The same approach could be applied to navies, with national ships as the building-block of multinational squadrons, and to air forces, with multinational wings made up of national squadrons. One could also imagine a European drone command, cyber command, air defence command, etc., operating national assets as if they constituted a single fleet or force, under one commander, and with a single multinational structure for training, exercises, and logistics.

Creating such permanent multinational force packages would allow European states to greatly improve the readiness of their forces and increase their capacity to generate larger-scale deployments, be it for expeditionary operations or for the forward deployment of troops in the



context of territorial defence. It would be the model on which to construct both the EU's Rapid Deployment Capacity (RDC) and NATO's New Force Model (NFM).

This model actually has been on the EU's drawing board for some time: the Crisis Response Operation Core (CROC), one of the projects under Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). But even as this remains a mostly conceptual exercise, it has been watered down already. It is not too late to resurrect the approach, however.

At a time when all EU Member States are stepping up their defence efforts, and when many are entering new capability areas, **it would be an absolute waste if all would remain locked up in a purely national approach which would yield a lot less new capability than a coordinated and indeed integrated scheme.** The EU has been advocating for comprehensive force packages for years; NATO has now taken up the call too in its NFM. Perhaps we should simply do it now. ✖

For more details, see:

Sven Biscop, Battalions to Brigades: The Future of European Defence. In: Survival, Vol. 62, 2020, No. 5.
Sven Biscop, The New Force Model: NATO's European Army? Policy Brief No. 285., Egmont Institute, 9/2022.

EU – NATO INTEGRATED MARITIME PERSPECTIVE

A HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY OF INTERCONNECTED DOMAINS IS BECOMING MORE RELEVANT EVERY DAY. NOBODY CAN ACT ALONE – TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER.

By Admiral Cavo Dragone



Admiral Cavo Dragone was the Chief of the Italian Navy from 22 June 2019 until 5 November 2021. Since 6 November 2021, he is the Chief of the Italian Defence.

The world's oceans can be considered a domain that connects all of us. Our oceans cover 70% of the earth's surface and account for 97% of the hydrosphere. Our oceans offer huge opportunities and resources, yet to be fully explored or exploited. Our oceans form an inter-connecting element between the land, air, and sea domains as oceans are the largest global connection and communication means. Of growing importance are also the Arctic waters, long thought to be out of the reach of many, but in fact today becoming a very active frontier, still little known ...

The sea supports the global economy and economic trade through a strategic network of sea lines of communication, ports, coastal and offshore infrastructure, as well underwater cables and pipelines. Bottom line, oceans are essential to global commerce and our way of life. Ship-

ping makes up 90% of all international trade in raw material and manufactured goods, and tankers carry more than half of the world's oil across the high seas. Most relevant, our maritime forces play a critical role in preserving the sea lines of communication for the benefit of all.

The maritime domain is of strategic importance for the EU as well as NATO, and both organizations are determined to protect their countries and interests from any possible threats, at sea or emanating from the sea.

The 2011 NATO Maritime Strategy highlights four maritime roles for Alliance forces: deterrence and collective defence, crisis management, cooperative security, and maritime security. Since 2014, the Alliance's adaptation to the changed security environment has been pursued along two essential tracks: strengthening the Alliance's deterrence and defensive posture



Courtesy of Italian Navy

and enhancing NATO's contribution to projecting stability. Reinforcement of the Alliance Maritime Posture is an integral part of the dual track approach, and was again validated in the 2022 Strategic Concept. To recall, the maritime domain of reference encompasses oceans and seas, on, above and below the surface, in all directions.

The EU Strategic Compass, on the other hand, extensively highlights the need to invest in maritime security while recalling the importance of our basins, endorsing the current EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) revision process, upholding ongoing initiatives such as the Coordinated Maritime Presence (CMP), and proposing new objectives to further assert our maritime interests and to enhance the EU and Member States' maritime security. In fact, the strategic environment has considerably changed since the adoption of the first EUMSS by the Council. Maritime security risks and threats have multiplied, particularly in EU waters.

Any new strategy, therefore, should address new and emerging maritime global challenges together, particularly those surrounding us (along the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean and the North Sea, as well as the Arctic waters). These regions can be thought of as the maritime circle around Europe, and thus of vital strategic importance for our security and stability. Hence, the need to urgently adopt specific regional security

strategies. In particular, to adapt to the evolution of the security environment following the Russian aggression to Ukraine, the increased presence of Russian naval assets in the Mediterranean, as well as the consolidation of Russian bases in Syria. These factors demonstrate that a comprehensive security strategy for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea has become a priority for both the EU and NATO.

For Italy and other bordering countries, **the Mediterranean Sea holds a deep heritage and a high strategic value. It is estimated that 20% of the global maritime traffic transits through the Mediterranean, with the Strait of Sicily forming an unavoidable choke point.** The Mediterranean is still the most advantageous route connecting the Atlantic to the Indian and Pacific oceans; furthermore, the underwater communication ridges, connecting Europe to Asia and Africa, lie on its seabed.

The Mediterranean region represents the "Southern Flank" of both organizations, thus, it is critical for Nations to focus on it by continually updating and acting in accordance with the evolving strategic guidelines of the two International Organizations. In the above-mentioned context, a holistic defense and security strategy should define the policies and the macro-level political-military posture necessary to guide the strategic operational actions, including how to plan and use

soft and hard power in the most coherent way, perhaps through two dimensions:

The cooperative dimension, where interaction and Military Diplomacy towards partner countries of the region play out within the framework of multilateral initiatives.

The operational dimension, a show of presence and deterrence, developed in a multi-domain environment.

The central position and vulnerability of the Mediterranean are important elements of the NATO concept regarding the Defense and Security of the EURO-Atlantic area (DDA), which divides the areas of responsibility in seven parts, including the Mediterranean. This works for better responsiveness in case of need. Specifically concerning the "Southern Flank".

The "Southern Flank" will also need to become a stronger strategic priority for the European Union. This position is reflected in the "Strategic Compass" that, among priorities, highlights the need to provide consistency to the Security and Defense initiatives of the Union, as well as ensuring their compatibility with NATO.

The European Union and NATO are the main regional references, in regard to Security and Defense. We should promote any opportunity to mainstream maritime security in the agenda of NATO/EU-led international fora. At the same time, we should keep track of, explore deeper participation/involvement in and, eventually, sponsor the organization of regional and international maritime security initiatives. We are making progress towards this end with initiatives like the "5+5 Defence initiative", the Venice Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium, the SHADE MED/SHADE HOA, the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, as well as DECI, QUAD and ADRION initiatives.

In the same spirit of cooperation, maritime situational awareness is essential to prevent crises and to ensure timely and adequate intervention. Therefore, we should foster the creation of a coordination mechanism between the various EU



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National Maritime Operations Centres. This will also facilitate the execution of specific Maritime Security Operations (MSO) tasks, including the assurance of the unimpeded access to the rapidly evolving underwater domain, in the near future surely increasingly contested. At the same time we are ensuring access to underwater resources, we should also enhance the protection of Sea Lines of Communication, EU borders, Fishery and Energy lines. With a special emphasis on critical infrastructures (including those lying on seabed, such as underwater cables and pipelines), which are key for energy security, access to maritime resources, and submarine data cables (our “underwater internet”).

The IMS will equally benefit from the integration of different national surveillance systems, also linked to the land, air, space and underwater domain. This way, we could work more efficiently, with a holistic approach, based on a more reliable situational awareness.

That said, hybrid and cyber threats, the contested underwater space, and the seabed present already enough challenges. But when combined together, with the need for environmental protection and adjusting to climate change impacts,

as well as the so-called Non-Traditional Security Threats, we see an all-encompassing and profound impact on maritime security we cannot under estimate, both for civilian and military stakeholders.

A comprehensive analysis and assessment of the risks should therefore be conducted regularly, while establishing regional maritime security strategies focusing on the European maritime hot spots and flash points, in order to consistently and coherently address relevant threats and challenges. In this vein, intelligence and information sharing between agencies and Member States is crucial.

Summing up, in order to achieve the above strategic goals, we must:

- strengthen the cooperation among all stakeholders of the maritime operating environment towards a safe, secure, and sustainable sea;
- establish a widespread awareness of the oceans and the seabed through continued technological progress;
- encourage sustainable usage and development of the marine ecosystem;
- promote an ever increasing and active stance of the International Organizations towards our Southern Flank,

and which should be reflected in the ongoing review of NATO and EU strategic documents;

- further consolidate and develop the security architecture of the area through cooperation and participation in ongoing missions/operations;
- develop our situational awareness to support decisional superiority, particularly regarding the maritime domain;
- promote the technological development of the military instrument, also through finding synergies with industry, as well as research and innovation, for our Defence to remain effective.

In conclusion, the maritime domain security and rules-based order, in particular for the Mediterranean Sea, remain central for the economic and social dynamics directly affecting Europe and its partners. A multi-domain, multidimensional, and comprehensive approach is urgently required. As recently reinforced during the Venice Trans-Regional Sea Power Symposium, modern maritime power must be founded on international cooperation. **The tighter are the bonds of our alliances and partnerships, the more reliable, effective and powerful will be our actions.** ✕

LESSONS FOR EUROPEAN DEFENCE: SEIZE THE MOMENT AND WORK TOGETHER

ONLY BY COOPERATING, EUROPE CAN FACE THIS MOMENT AND BE STRONGER THAN EVER

By Mr. Jiří Šedivý

When I became Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency, in May 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was at its height, much of Europe was in lockdown and I found myself driving from Prague to Brussels across an almost empty landscape to take up my post in an almost empty headquarters. But if the coronavirus pandemic took so many of us by surprise, Russia’s war of aggression in Ukraine came as an even bigger shock. I believe both experiences, especially Moscow’s invasion, hold indispensable lessons for European defence cooperation.

Despite the progress led by the European Defence Agency in our collaborative planning since 2017, it is clearer than ever that our work must be delivered at the speed of relevance. Global shocks

such as a pandemic or a war in Europe are no longer theoretical distractions. They are real and Europe must have the capacity to act, as EDA head Josep Borrell has often said. We must also be able to act together for European defence and security, and security of supply. We can no longer accept that joint procurement is only 11% of total equipment orders in the European Union, or that joint research and development is only 6% of the total spending of EU defence research and technology, according to EDA data.

Of course, this is not about replacing NATO. I know as well as anyone the value of the transatlantic alliance, as a former ambassador to NATO and a former NATO assistance secretary general for defence policy and planning. Yet what is NATO



David Plas Photography

Jiří Šedivý

is the Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency (EDA) since May 2020. He was appointed by the Steering Board on 5 March 2020 following a recommendation by the Head of the Agency, Josep Borrell.



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without a strong European pillar? As defence spending among EU Member States rises again, what good is it if we continue to duplicate our efforts? That is why the EDA – with the active contributions of the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) - has launched a revision of the Capability Development Plan to address long-term security and defence challenges, scheduled to be completed by next year. The need to revise the CDP stems not only from the new guidelines provided by the Strategic Compass, but also from the EU's changed security environment including the Russian war in Ukraine.

All those developments have implications for the four strands which will nurture the new CDP: two short-term strands provided by the EU Military Committee with the support of the EU Military Staff, a mid-term strand based on the latest Coordinated Annual Review of Defence (CARD) findings and Member States' current defence plans and acquisition programmes, and a long-term strand for warfare in 2040 and beyond.

Next month, the EDA Steering Board will meet in Brussels to consider the Agency's final report on the second CARD process. Member States have already signalled their general support for this second report, and I see there is a consensus to cooperate more. Many want to hear more from the EDA about how we can develop more proposals on potential projects. As I told national armament directors last month in Brussels, there might be merit in extending the cycle of CARD to give it more time to mature its systems into

national ones. We at the Agency want to find ways to make national directors and the CARD process work better together, to propose concrete projects and make a stronger link to the European Defence Fund. We have also already implemented the first measures of the Strategic Compass, with the establishment of the Hub for EU Defence Innovation (HEDI) within the EDA, and the first European Defence Innovation Day, this past May.

If we are to maintain the spirit of the Versailles Declaration and the Strategic



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Compass, we must intensify our collaboration still further. The European Commission, in coordination with EDA, put forward an analysis of European defence investment gaps in May. The analysis boils down to three lines of action, across three different time horizons but to be implemented in parallel.

The first step should be to work on the combat-readiness of forces, including replenishing stockpiles of arms and ammunition, and training and rapid joint procurement. This is one of the biggest shifts in many years. By defining, coordinating, and supporting joint defence procurement from Brussels, we can help national armies resupply their depleted stocks of weapons sent to Ukraine. We can also make profound changes for the longer term, preparing our European Defence Technology Industrial Base (EDTIB) for future conflicts.

Secondly, within the next five years, the focus should be on augmenting existing capabilities, qualitatively and quantitatively, including their mass and volume. This implies focusing on certain areas and enablers, which were neglected in the past but would certainly be required in large-scale, high intensity scenarios while also useful for most kinds of operations. I am of course thinking of enablers such as strategic

airlift or provisions for the project of Military Mobility, the modernisation of air defences, and cyber and space-based capabilities. Thirdly, looking to the next 10 years and beyond, the focus should be on reinforcement and modernisation, developing the next generation of strategic capabilities for Member States, stepping up toward large-scale, high-intensity operations. This third strand should indeed build on the Focus Areas of the first CARD report of 2020 to address jointly future key capabilities such as Main Battle Tank, Countering drones and A2/AD and Air Defences, as well as Military Mobility.

There are many other ways to bolster our defence capacities, as set out in the Versailles Declaration, such as reducing our energy dependencies. But if Russian President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine was a rude awakening for many of us, decades of underinvestment were already a concern, and so it is essential that through defence cooperation we strengthen our efforts in overcoming fragmentation and inefficiencies.

Some two decades ago, when we were still enjoying the "peace dividend" earned from the end of the Cold War in 1989, I recall how senior NATO military leaders warned European allies about the failure to invest in force modernisation and how they were alarmed by the downward trend in defence spending. For those of us in the defence sphere, we are relieved to see the reversal of such policies and a greater awareness in increasing investment in our military and our equipment. But I insist that we must work closely together. If anyone still doubts why that is so, I can do no better than remind you of the words in the Versailles Declaration: *"Russia's war of aggression constitutes a tectonic shift in European history."* And so, only by cooperating, can Europe successfully address this and any future conflicts. 



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EUTM MALI

REFLECTIONS OF THE MFCDR

By Brigadier General Christian Riener



BMLV/Daniel Trippolt

Brigadier General Christian Riener served at various levels in staff and command functions both national and international. Among other assignments, he was Commander of a mechanized Infantry Brigade and Head of the Operations Command and Control Division in the Austrian MoD as well as DCOM KFOR in Kosovo. After his tour as MFCdr EUTM Mali he is now back in the Austrian MoD.

On Tuesday 21 June, after a six-month assignment as the 17th Mission Force Commander of EUTM Mali, I handed over to my successor Brigadier General Radek Hasala from the Army of the Czech Republic. With the formal act of the hand-over-takeover ceremony, presided by the Director MPCC, Vice Admiral Hervé Bléjean, and attended by numerous distinguished guests representing EU and security actors, partners and organizations in Mali and from G5 Sahel, a challenging, decisive and personally unforgettable period of time has ended.

Still inspired and motivated by this extraordinary experience, I appreciate to have the possibility to contribute to the EUMC Forum with some personal thoughts. Our mission succeeded to carry out its tasks despite an accumulation of all kinds of complicated circumstances. Today, my intent is not to emphasize the various challenges but to highlight the numerous positive aspects I was able to experience.



EUTM Mali – together with EUCAP Sahel Mali, EUCAP Sahel Niger, the Regional Advisory and Coordination Cell and EU Delegations – represents a main pillar of the EU commitment to Mali and G5 Sahel. In line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2071 and 2085 (2012), the subsequent UNSC Resolutions and the guidance received by EU Member States and the MPCC, my force, my staff and I executed the mission with high motivation and always in a positive spirit. **Within means and capabilities, we contributed persistently to improve the operational capacity of the Malian Armed Forces and to support the operationalization of the G5 Sahel Joint Force.** Beyond that, we coordinated permanently with neighboring missions and operations such as Minusma, Barkhane, and Takuba as well as with the Humanitarian/Aid Community. All this happened in the framework of the current Mandate 5, valid until 18 May 2024.



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Our strategic advice to the General Staff, the wide spectrum of Training and Education for officers, noncommissioned officers and recruits on international standards (always with regard to Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law), the protection of civilians, gender equality as well as children and armed conflicts, was needed, accepted and appreciated. Key Leader Engagement was based on personal interaction at all levels, good cooperation, mutual respect and a well-established (most of the time even cordial) relationship between MFCdr, CHODs, Military Region Commanders and other representatives of Malian Armed Forces and of G5 Sahel Joint Force was. In my perception, the entire mission with its non-executive Mandate was highly appealing to our partners and meeting their high expectations was paramount for me, from the start.

In the light of this endeavor, it was essential for me to receive focused directive and guidance from my superior command, especially in times of crisis. In this respect, I want to thank the Director MPCC and Deputy Director MPCC for clear decisions and orders and the MPCC staff for the personal and constructive interaction with my staff in all domains. They helped us to translate the political will in effective military action.

In the introductory document to my Six Monthly Report, the Director MPCC states the following: "Despite the fact, that EUTM Mali's endeavors were negatively influenced and hampered by the political developments and security situation, progress could be achieved in all Lines of Operation and Military Strategic Objectives. The Mission operated fully committed to effective Mandate implementation and adapted flexibly in face of changing and challenging conditions."

This paragraph together with other positive feedback I have received during and after my debriefing to the EUMC, allows me to conclude that under the given conditions my force, my staff and I have accomplished the mission.

Keywords "force and staff". It was essential for me to have an instrument at hand, which gave me the optimal precondition to fulfill my mission. Regarding the nature of an EU Training Mission, as a former Brigade Commander I always perceived it as a Brigade. What do I mean? I had a "role-model" deputy commander at my side and a skilled and effective staff with an experienced chief of staff. I had "maneuver elements" such as an Advisory Task Force and Education and Training Task Force and, finally yet importantly, a number of supporting/enabling elements such as force protection, air transport, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR), medical assets



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Tillia similar to that from Brussels to Lviv, and the Niamey - Bamako - Nouakchot flight takes you longer than a flight from Brussels to Kyiv. However, not only space and distances but also the beauty of the nature as well as the diversity of people, religions and culture, from the Atlantic (near Nouakchot) via the River Niger to the deserts of Sahara, have been something special and unique for me.

Looking back, I am convinced, that key for our mission accomplishment has been professionalism and total commitment of all contributors as well as well understood and thoroughly executed Integrated Approach at all levels in Mali, in the G5 Sahel and in Brussels, and last not least a good dose of "soldier's luck".

Apart from all challenges, personal experience and impressions there is finally one major aspect, which is paramount for me to mention. Thanks God, we did not suffer losses neither KIA (killed in action) nor WIA (wounded in action). A look at Minusma and Barkhane shows that, in this region, this is not a given, on the contrary.

I am thankful I had the chance to be MFCdr of EUTM Mali. Referring again to General Barrera – what he said Serval was for him has become EUTM Mali for me: **"The mission of my life"**. 🇪🇺

and combat service support. With a total strength of about 1100 PAX contributed by 23 nations, high value civil and military assets and specialists, EUTM Mali was a small but fine combined and joint force. **To make it short: in every aspect, I had everything needed to fulfill my mission.**

Therefore, I want to say a big "thank you" to EU member states, contributors and superiors for this highly developed, effective, well-planned, manned and organized instrument reflecting a combined-forces mission-approach, designed to accomplish the FCdr's mission.

During my individual mission preparation, I visited Mali, Brussels and CPCO in Paris and read a lot of documents and scripts. I also came across a book with the title "Opération Serval" written by the French General Barrera. Without exaggerating, this book has become my "military bible" for Mali and accompanied me through the whole tour. For example, General Barrera stated "Serval est une mission hors norm," and indeed, I made the same experience. In many aspects, EUTM Mali is also a mission beyond the



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AFRICA AND EUROPE, TWO CONTINENTS IN SEARCH OF EACH OTHER

RETHINKING OUR MODEL OF RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR NEIGHBOURS IS NECESSARY TO HELP THE AFRICANS TO BUILD THE KIND OF SOCIETY THAT THEY DESERVE.

By Ambassador Jose Fernando Alves da Costa Pereira

Neighbours are bound by their own circumstances to define the best possible way they relate with each other.

When History – and consequently memories – is added to geographic proximity, as well as different interests and objectives the room for misunderstandings and conflict grows steadily.

However, it is possible to overcome those differences. It happened in Europe with the creation of the European Union and to a certain extent also in Africa where first the Organization of African States and then the African Union (AU) were tools built to replace confronta-

tion by collaboration, irrespective of a violence-ridden past on both cases. In Africa, the creation of sub-regional organizations like IGAD, SADC, ECCAS or ECOWAS reflected at a lower level the same path and willingness for integration and cooperation.

Though the two processes can be seen as similar in objectives, they correspond in fact to different historical times and diverse contexts, and we should not be tempted to believe that the most recent shall mirror the ancient one as we will argue later (of course, influences and lessons learned cannot be dismissed,



Ambassador Jose Fernando Alves da Costa Pereira

is the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the Political and Security Committee of the EU. He is an expert of Africa since he covered crucial positions at the European Commission, at the Africa Unit, and in the EEAS, at the Africa Department.



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as the inter-action naturally produces closeness of processes).

The two continents were able, thus, to internally heal wounds coming from afar in time. However, externally they have not so far mustered the kind of relationship that would gradually increase the trust and like-mindedness that should permeate their interactions. At least, they have not been able to translate into practice pious rhetoric reaffirming close ties and solid parallel worldviews. The reaction to the Russian aggression against Ukraine is sufficient evidence of different takes concerning the situation.

Notwithstanding, several attempts have been made in the last twenty years to reset the relationship. After independence was achieved by the African countries, their main target was the development of the new nations. Europe obliged by providing generous programmes of development destined to collaborate in eradicating poverty and build democratic institutions. Although it is impossible to say whether the situation might have been worse in case the EU contribution had not been forthcoming, we must admit that millions of Africans still live under the poverty line.

It was this reality that laid the ground to a different approach. Realizing that the donor-recipient relation did not cover other important areas that could be explored in the relationship and would leave Africa always in a secondary or dependent position, as well as not solving the poverty issue, the EU and AU tried to reshape the dialogue as a conversation between partners. The bilateral Summits since 2000 have been insisting that trade and investment should guide the partnership without, though, interrupting the grants that continue to be poured into African economies through instruments like the European Development Fund or the rebaptized NDICI/Global Europe.

Several different tools have been designed to help that objective. From blending to the “Global Gateway”, the EU has been trying to motivate the private sector to invest in Africa with so far mitigated success. There is acknowledgement in many African capitals that the path to development and subsequent creation of employment implies an active participation of small and medium-size enterprises, local and international, indispensable to absorb a galloping demography into the labour market. State-led investment is just not

enough. Unfortunately, the response by the private sector has been lackadaisical. The need to improve governance which will provide the predictability and stability which are key to investment has not grown as fast as it would be desirable, and the business community has stayed away from long-term commitments.

The assistance model that the EU has followed consists of mainly providing support to improve the quality of the public service in order that trust between those who govern and those who are governed increases, with the former providing the latter with the kind of services a population is entitled to expect from those selected to take the reins of the administration. At least, that’s the European perspective that has served us good in our continent and that we seem to believe is of universal application. Humanitarian support and peace and security initiatives are added to the package that through the years has been known as comprehensive, integrated or inclusive approach.

I suppose we should engage in some form of balance and evaluate if this effort, which has been permanent and systemic, one must recognise, has produced the desired results. When we look at a civil

war in Ethiopia, military coups in West Africa and Sahel, internal conflict in Somalia or the jihadist activities in Mozambique, when we see 28 African countries located in the bottom 32 of the Human Development Index, it is difficult not to think that neither economically nor politically were we able to contribute to lift African countries out of poverty and conflict.

Political will, continuous and dedicated efforts by generations of well-intended people keen to provide help were not sufficient to have African countries trekking the path of sustainable development. Perhaps we should look, then, at the abovementioned model and rethink to which extent it is adequate to the endgame it pursues.

I would argue, thus, that we might consider changing track. Instead of concentrating all our energy in helping state-run projects, **why not focusing in supporting directly, whenever feasible, the civil society, the communities, the families, the religious institutes, in a nutshell the people instead of the rulers?** Privileging a bottom-up approach based on the several different layers of the traditional African societies will be, of course, at first glance a much slower process than a top-down alternative. However, this last one has not proven successful till now and there is a legitimate doubt that things will change (and the latest events in the Continent only feed my scepticism). I am not defending this alternative vision as a universal panacea and for sure there are also stories of success in a few African countries where the usual approach might meet indeed intended targets. In reality, a one size fits all is not surely the best solution. All things considered, a steady grid of small-scale projects might not look grandiose but would have a lasting impression and preserve a communality of efforts which might bring original and African-led political and organizational frameworks. Even different from ours. And why not?



In these times of instant communication and a strong desire for visibility what I’m suggesting might look odd or old-fashioned. No doubt it will be a mostly invisible work in the backstage, won’t provide too many photo-ops and it is probably anathema to spin doctors (though I dare to say even at this level it is possible to promote it if we think outside the box about the way we do it). I am not, and cannot, be sure it will function perfectly. There might be drawbacks and, most probably, the progress will be anything but linear. **However, I would think a reflection concerning our models by the EU institutions and the member-states would be welcome and justified, with a serious discussion about alternatives instead of granting almost religious and sanctimonious fidelity to a way of doing business.**

Peace and prosperity in our neighbourhood are not just important for the Africans but also to ourselves. I’m

perfectly aware that development and governance don’t exhaust the catalogue of problems that Africa has to deal with, from peace and security threats by non-state actors to irregular migration, to match adaptability to a greener world with a justifiable intention to develop its industrial dimension, to avoid being depleted of their best brains, to be able to stop corruption at all levels. None of this is unrelated to what is said in the previous paragraphs, and I do condone the need to think inclusively. What is at stake is how to find the right route to be effective as a friendly and interested continent in Africa’s continuous progress. If we retool the model, we might have a better chance to help the Africans build the kind of society that they deserve, freer, fairer and wealthier.

Note: the author is expressing his own opinions that in no way can be taken as representing his country’s policies. ✖

THE EUMS CLEARING HOUSE CELL IN SUPPORT OF THE UKRAINIAN ARMED FORCES

AN INSTRUMENT TO ENSURE THAT MEMBER STATES ARE AWARE OF THE MOST RECENT UKRAINIAN NEEDS AND PLAN THEIR PURCHASES AND DELIVERIES IN ACCORDANCE.

By Brigadier General Bart Laurent



Brigadier General Bart Laurent (Belgian Army) is the Director of Operations within the European Union Military Staff in Brussels, since 2019. His main operational engagements were in former Yugoslavia, Lebanon, twice in Afghanistan and Mali. He commanded the EUTM Mali in 2017-2018, followed by a tour in JFC Brunssum as ACOS J5 (planning).

The EUMS Clearing House Cell (CHC) was established on the 26 February 2022, two days after the unprovoked Russian attack on Ukraine. It is a non-permanent structure manned with about 10 Staff Officers from EUMS OPS and LOG Directorates, who perform this task in combination with their normal EUMS-duties. The CHC's aim is to provide a coordination-platform to EU Member States and like-minded partners for the deliveries of weapon systems and military equipment to the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) according to the list of needs from the UAF. In the same

vein, the CHC plays a key role in the assessment of Member States' (and Partner Countries') offers in relation to the Ukrainian list of military needs. The implementation of this assistance is being carried out in constant and very close coordination with the Ukrainian Representation in Brussels, but also with all other partners in the CHC regular meetings. The Ukrainian representatives' participation in the CHC meetings, but especially our daily contacts with them ensure the Ukrainian priority needs are accurately known and updated for all EU MS and partners.



The CHC therefore works with a single list of requirements updated by the Ukrainian authorities and shared with all CHC meeting members. The priority task is to ensure that Member States are aware of the most recent Ukrainian needs and plan their purchases and deliveries in accordance.

The second task of the CHC – and surely the most demanding one – lies in the detailed process of clearing requests by Member States for reimbursement through the European Peace Facility mechanism (EPF). Equipment, delivered to the Ukrainian Armed Forces in accordance with the Ukrainian identified URGENT PRIORITIES can be assessed eligible for reimbursement. This process is – for understandable reasons – very closely monitored by all EU MS. The CHC then proposes the eligibility assessment to the EPF-committee, where MS decide on the reimbursement rates and levels. So far, **the Clearing House Cell has processed over EUR 4,5 billion as potentially eligible deliveries of both lethal and non-lethal military equipment for reimbursement through the EPF;** on the basis of two main conditions: a/ military equipment needs to have been delivered and b/ the equipment needs to respond to the priorities set by the Ukrainian authorities

Further, as the EU is not the only organisation supporting the UAF in their

war against the Russian aggression, the CHC (with support of EU MS) has put in place a liaison element in the International Donor Coordination Centre (IDCC) in Wiesbaden. This allows us to work closely together with the US and UK in their support measures to the UAF and coordination of deliveries of military equipment at the end-to-end operational level.

Over the past seven months, EU Member States have already delivered a wide variety of equipment and armament. Member States have closely followed the priorities of UAF in order to ship the weapon systems that match the needs, which have been changing due to the situation on the ground. As national stocks are slinking, we notice an obvious

decrease in deliveries of heavy weapons system after a surge in tanks and classic artillery and Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS). Artillery, both classic and rockets, tanks and combat vehicles, combat aircrafts, and unmanned aerial systems remain Ukraine's urgent needs. We cannot stress enough how critical and vital their needs are and urge all Member States to continue deliveries.

Moreover, Member States are encouraged to take a comprehensive system approach and make efforts to provide complete heavy weapon systems, including all equipment and assets organically belonging to the unit and even spare parts of the system and fuel.

Outside of the CHC, it is equally under study whether military equipment can be purchased by MS directly or indirectly for the benefit of the UAF.

The main success of the functioning of the CHC lies in our close coordination with the Ukrainian representatives and their direct link to the UAF command and MOD, but also with a large number of partners, allowing EU MS to remain updated on all changes in the list of urgent priority needs. The CHC offers a wide platform of coordination and synchronisation between all nations who support the UAF with lethal and non-lethal military equipment, beyond the limits of our regular structures. ✕



THE EU AS A GLOBAL NAVAL ACTOR

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF A REINFORCED NAVAL PRESENCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN KEY MARITIME AREAS

By Mr. Brice de Schietere



Brice de Schietere

has been working at EEAS since 2020 as Head of Division of ISP.1 Integrated Approach: Methodology and Implementation (attached to the CSDP-Crisis Response Managing Directorate).

Since 16 September 2022 he is Acting Director for the Integrated Approach Security and Peace Directorate.

The EU has long been an important actor of the security of the maritime domain. However, **with the freedom of access and use of high seas being increasingly contested, either by foreign powers or by traffickers, a reinforced naval presence of the EU in key maritime areas is of crucial strategic interest.** In such context, better protecting our maritime interests and ensuring the respect for the international law of the sea are key objectives set by the Strategic Compass. The two naval operations of the EU, IRINI and ATALANTA, and the Coordinated Maritime Presence (CMP) concept contribute strongly to that effort.

Since its launch on 31 March 2020, Operation IRINI has been a concrete contributor of the EU to the Berlin

Process and to the return to security and stability in Libya. Over the past two and half years, the Operation has played an important deterrent role in the central Mediterranean and has effectively contributed to the implementation of the UN arms embargo on Libya. IRINI has notably conducted 24 inspections of suspect vessels bound to Libya – finding illicit materiel on two occasions –, 381 friendly approaches and more than 7,200 hailing. Operation IRINI has also shared 40 special reports with the UN Panel of Experts on Libya, covering arms embargo violations, oil smuggling and the human smuggling business model. The Operation's next Strategic Review will be presented to Member States at the end of 2022.




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Since 2020, Operation ATALANTA has evolved to become a maritime security provider of high relevance to the North West Indian Ocean. Ensuring Maritime Situational Awareness on illegal activities at sea remain of direct and vital interest to the whole region at a time when major security challenges are on the rise. After the end of the UN Resolution supporting the legal framework to fight against piracy in March 2022, the operation has successfully managed to shift its legal basis towards a broader and more ambitious framework. Now, not only can ATALANTA pursue its previous objectives in the high seas, but also it is entitled to execute other tasks such as fighting against arms and drugs trafficking to degrade criminal and terrorist revenues. As an example (and even as the EEAS is still working on an appropriate legal finish) notably with the Seychelles, ATALANTA ensured that 12 tons of drugs worth 200 million euros were taken out of the markets by the EU naval assets through a Catch and Release implemented by French assets. Alongside these executive tasks, ATALANTA maintains its ability to monitor several illicit trafficking and stands ready to provide support to the other European missions and initiatives. In accordance with the Strategic Compass, the Holistic Strategic Review for the Horn of Africa will propose to consolidate the EU's ability to act as a security provider in the region.

The CMP concept is successfully being implemented in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG), ensuring a continuous presence of EU Member States assets, under national chain of command, coordinated by the Maritime Area of Interest Coordination Cell (MAICC), which facilitates the exchange of information between Member States and Regional Maritime Surveillance Centers under the Yaoundé Architecture (YA). The CMP GoG contribution to maritime security, in support of ongoing efforts by the countries in the region and YA, was



recognised in the UN Security Council Resolution 3624/2022 of 31 May 2022 on piracy and armed robbery in the GoG. The Senior Coordinator for Maritime Security in the GoG facilitates the overall coherence and coordination between the activities of EU actors, and actively leads the EU outreach promoting CMP events in selected port visits during the first half of 2022. In 2023, contributions from Member States are expected to be at the same level as in 2022. Current planned projects to further strengthen the CMP in the GoG include 1) a preparatory measure on European Peace Facility (EPF) support for military actors and navies of coastal states involved in maritime security operations in the Gulf of Guinea and 2) a Foreign Policy Needs action called "Enhanced Maritime Action in the GoG" to enhance the EU's political engagement, coordination and strategic communication.

Finally, the EU is making good progress with the roll out of the CMP concept in the North Western Indian Ocean (NWIO). On 13 September 2022, the PSC endorsed the implementation plan for the CMP NWIO. A Senior Coordinator for Maritime Security in the NWIO, reporting to MD ASIAPAC, has been identified and will assume office on 5 October 2022. Work is ongoing to ensure the implementation is put on a solid footing including adequate resourcing. In full synergy with Operation ATALANTA, the CMP NWIO will contribute to enhancing the regional maritime security architecture in an area that is strategic for the EU and that continues to be troubled by ongoing threats to the freedom of navigation and heightened tensions. In parallel, a framework for co-operation with third states in the CMP is also being prepared, at the request of Member States. 



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FIVE YEARS SERVING THE EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY MISSIONS

THE FORMER MILITARY PLANNING AND CONDUCT CAPABILITY DEPUTY DIRECTOR TALKS ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE WORKING FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION

By Major General Hermínio Teodoro Maio (PT)



Major General Hermínio Teodoro Maio (PT) was the Deputy Director/Chief of Staff of the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) from 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2022.

The last years of my military life were entirely devoted to the European Union. First as commander of European Union Training Mission (EUTM) in the Central African Republic (CAR) from 2018 to 2019, followed by three years as Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) Deputy Director/Chief of Staff in Brussels. Five extraordinary years of full dedication to the Union Colours, with demanding responsibilities in an exceptionally eventful and challenging period.

Pride and some frustration sum up my assessment of these five years.

Grateful to have been part of a cycle in which the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) advanced, and conse-

quently the Union progressed; frustration stemming from high expectations that have only partially materialized – both in terms of the Member States' ambition towards the MPCC, as well as the results achieved by the missions. Nothing that is unnatural when someone fully dedicates themselves to something they believe in.

I am proud of what we have achieved during the eighteen months that I led EUTM CAR.

Commanding troops from different cultures, in a particularly demanding and complex operational environment, was a permanent challenge, but also an extraordinary privilege. From different ways of “doing” yet aligned by a com-



Photo: Author



Photo: EUTM MAU

mon goal, it was possible to achieve one objective: advancing the reconstruction of the Defence and Armed Forces of the Central African Republic (Forces armées centrafricaines; FACA).

A great and lasting effort which, together with the authorities of CAR and the International Community, constitutes an important EU contribution to international peace and stability. The Peace Agreement signed between the Government and the Armed Groups on 06 February 2019, in Bangui, was a very promising event.

I am also proud of what the MPCC represents today. **Together with the Military Missions, the MPCC is now a key element in building a common strategic culture and an essential basis for the CSDP.**

When I started at the MPCC in 2019, I knew the challenge that awaited, but I was far from anticipating the considerable degree of responsibility entrusted to me in the EU's youngest military structure. I feel honoured for having had the privilege of working with an extraordinary MPCC

staff, outstanding Force Commanders, and Troops in different Missions under challenging circumstances.

Working directly with 15 Mission Force Commanders in Somalia, Mali, CAR, and Mozambique, from different Member States with centuries-old military cultures, and troops from all Member and Partner States, is in and of itself, extraordinarily rewarding. All of them carried out their missions putting into practice the EU's political-strategic guidance and operational directives – making a relevant path towards a CSDP and contributing to the stabilization and security of the host nations, in line with the EU priorities towards Africa.

Missions are the MPCC's raison d'être and its priority. That is why our responsibilities were extended, integrating the Military Assistance Task Force Gazelle in Niger and launching a new Mission, EUTM Mozambique.

Along with the command of the different EUTMs, the MPCC simultaneously led the Integrated Resolve 20 (IR20)

and MILEX 22 exercises as part of its progression.

It is very important to note that the mission was accomplished amid the Covid 19 pandemic. Despite the strong impact on the Troop Contributing Nations (TCN), it was possible to manage the continuity of the Missions in an orderly and coordinated way. First by reducing the presence of troops on the ground to those necessary for the execution of essential tasks, and subsequently resuming the training activities guaranteeing the health and safety of our troops and trainees. The action of the MPCC and the EUTMs during the pandemic furthered the prestige of the EU and was the origin of pride to everyone.

I also feel a sense of great accomplishment, because despite the pandemic increasing the complexity surrounding the several Theatre of Operations and events directly or indirectly affecting our troops, we managed to guarantee their safety and security. There were no serious incidents among thousands of men and women of the TCN Armed For-



Photo: Author

es deployed in the Missions during the last three years. However, expectations were not met in several areas, on which it is important to reflect and improve.

First and foremost, recognising that the adequate flow of resources is indispensable to the MPCC. In our western military cultural matrix, there are several basic rules that must be preserved. One of them refers to the nexus between the assigned Mission and available means. As the MPCC is a required structure for planning and conducting military missions (Operations soon), the EU is expected to allocate the necessary resources (personnel, infrastructure, technology) for the operationalization of a state-of-the-art Command.

Despite the need and credibility proven by the MPCC in planning and commanding military missions, and in carrying out the IR 20 and MILEX 22 exercises amid the pandemic, Member States and EU structures are still slow in providing the necessary conditions to achieve Operational Capability. It is ultimately a matter of will and proper planning, as the operational gaps are

known in advance, and the capacity to address them exists in both the EU and Members States. Member States are admittedly wise and thoughtful in their decisions. However, for those who deal with the challenging reality our men and women face on the ground, it is difficult to understand the reasons for such delays – especially when our competitors do not hesitate to advance.

Second, acknowledging that the manning of the CSDP Missions has always been below the agreed and approved Statement of Requirement (SOR), despite successive Force Generation Conferences (FGC). The lack of qualified personnel in some functions is recurrent, especially in the context of strategic advising. Also, crucial resources in the Missions' Medical and Strategic Air Medical Evacuation are lacking to fully comply with EU standards.

Third, accepting the difficulty in obtaining the desired results despite the full commitment of our ground troops. The example of CAR is paramount. A small and fragile country in the heart of Africa, struggling with a long stabilization process and where the EU played, and still

plays, a very important role. Regardless of an already substantial investment, the population remains in a serious humanitarian situation.

Sure, the international community, Central African authorities, and other opportunistic actors all bear responsibility. But we need to reflect deeply on what went wrong. We were unable to find the right balance between the reconstruction of Armed Forces capable of assuming their sovereign responsibilities and the development of other State Institutions.

It is thus necessary to think differently and consider innovative ways to support the country, particularly the vulnerable communities who matter the most. When the environment is hostile, we cannot simply withdraw, leaving room for others to act arbitrarily without any moral and ethical references. A political-strategic constancy is paramount to avoid capitulating in the face of difficulties imposed by volatile environments.

Finally, managing the expectations about the Integrated Approach. It is a fact that the Union has a wide array of policies and instruments at its disposal to

respond to different challenges, including defence. The Integrated Approach is something exceptionally as a concept. High expectations are placed on it as the framework for a more coherent and holistic engagement by the EU to external conflicts and crises. However, there are so many stakeholders in Brussels that it is almost impossible to justify the qualifier "integrated"; at most, we could argue for reasonably well coordinated.

The creation of the European Peace Facility (EPF) is an example to be improved upon. This instrument responds to a need that has long been identified by the military to guarantee the nexus Train & Equip, which is essential for the success of the Defence Sector Reform in the countries where the EU operates. The MPCC, as the entity responsible for the Training, must be integrated into the planning of the measures to be financed, unless the EPF is intended to be transformed into a purely political instrument.

Ultimately, three years dedicated to the MPCC in permanent contact with the commanders and troops on the ground, reporting to the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and the Military Committee, has given me a clear idea of what the chain of command should be. The MPCC was created to be responsible

at the military-strategic level for the operational planning and conduct of non-executive military missions, working under the political control and strategic guidance of the PSC.

Despite the military nature of both, the MPCC differs in essence from the European Union Military Staff (EUMS). The EUMS is a Staff that provides the necessary expertise to support the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS) decision-making, while the MPCC is a strategic planning and command structure for Military Missions (soon operations) responsible and accountable to the Member States through the PSC. Therefore, the latter must maintain a direct link with the political level.

With the assumption of responsibility for executive operations, the MPCC must separate from the EUMS. The imperative of a clear assumption of command responsibilities and full dedication to the chain of command, with subordinate commanders and their troops on the ground in difficult operational and security environments, enforces the end of the DGEUMS/DMPCC double hat through the appointment of a Director/Commander 100% dedicated to MPCC. In this way, the desirable and necessary



Photo: Author

simplicity of the chain of command is granted and the only military voice within the European institutions is preserved, which is simply the voice of the Chiefs of Defence (CHODs) — directly or through their Military Representatives in the Military Committee — with the key role of the Chairman.

A final thought of hope and confidence in the future of the Union. We are all Europeans, by geography, by treaty or by heart. **Despite our differences, we have common goals and values. We are bound by a matrix that holds us all together.** I experienced it during the past 5 years serving the EU. I am now, by conviction and by practice, a much better European citizen. But in the hope of a better future, we are all called to act for change. A call of action from Member States, evidently, but also from European institutions and ourselves collectively — and we should always strive to live up to our times' most consequential moments.


Today, we are living through one such historical moment, and our political and military leaders have a particular responsibility to assume a pivotal role in the process of change. We must work hard to contribute in making the Union safer. To do so, a proper military identity must be built at the service of European citizens. I am convinced the MPCC is threading on the right path. 



Photo: Author

NEWS FROM THE EUMC

FAC DEFENSE PRAGUE - 29-30/08/2022



General Brieger attended the Informal Meeting held in Prague by the EU Ministers of Defence and chaired by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell. The primary focus of the meeting was the Russian aggression against Ukraine and its impact on the security of EU Member States.

During his intervention, the Chairman of the EUMC highlighted the necessity of a close coordination between the po-

litical and military levels, as well as EU closest partners, especially NATO. General Brieger stressed that EU must be resilient to the Russian pressure and continue supporting Ukraine. In this regard, he affirmed that our support must adapt to the evolving situation, for example exploring the possibility of training the Ukrainians to use the more advanced western equipment they need. He also welcomed the proposal to establish a Military Assistance Mission to Ukraine.

The CEUMC affirmed that, since it is highly unlikely that either Ukraine or Russia gains operational military advantage within the next months, western support is the key to ensure that Ukrainian resistance continues. Member States have provided support from the first line equipment of their own Armed Forces. We need to be able to replace and augment these stocks, to ensure that we can continue supplying Ukraine, while making sure that Europe is not vulnerable.

OFFICIAL VISIT TO CZECH REPUBLIC - 30-31/08/2022

The Chairman of the EUMC paid an official visit to the Czech Republic. Gen. Brieger met the Chief of the General Staff of the Czech Armed Forces, Major General Karel Řehka, the Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr. Blažkovec, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Povejšil, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Defence

and Security Committee, Mr. Fischer, and the Chairman of the Defence Committee of the Parliament, Mr. Metnar, touching upon the main topics of the EU's security and defence agenda.

Talking about the dramatic events storming Ukraine, Gen Brieger reiterated that the EU asserts itself as a

credible security provider and partner. He affirmed that the ongoing discussion about a new assistance mission, which shall train the Ukrainian Armed Forces on modern western technologies and coordinate with relevant stakeholders (most of all NATO), goes exactly in this direction.



During the bilateral discussions, the CEUMC highlighted the support from Czech authorities towards the implementation of the Strategic Compass, the latest policy guide for a coherent EU Defence. He emphasised the importance of common EU defence projects and increased operationalisation. The EU needs to achieve several key objectives without delay, starting with the Rapid Deployment Capacity, to demonstrate its ability to intervene in near real-time and to project security where needed.

Other relevant topics of discussion were the urgent need for strategic unity

(also together with NATO), in particular with regard to coordinated defence spending, and for a true 360° degree approach to crisis management (especially looking at the security situation in Mali and the Sahel region).

Gen. Brieger took the occasion to thank the Czech Republic, on behalf of the EU Military Committee and EU authorities, for its unwavering commitment to the EU's Common and Security Defence Policy missions and operations, which are the most visible and tangible signs of EU engagement for peace and development, in our neighbourhood and beyond.

EUMC MINI AWAY DAYS - 08/09/2022

General Brieger attended the EUMC Mini away Days, an event organized by the Czech Presidency that gathered all the Military Representatives from the EU Member States and subject matter experts around the topic: "Security challenges at the EU's eastern border: what should be done about it?"

During the discussion, the Chairman highlighted how the war in Ukraine, although not involving a direct EU military response, is indeed a historical opportunity to leverage the procure-

ment – as Europeans – of what we need to safeguard our interests effectively, also as a stronger pillar of the North Atlantic Alliance.

The distinguished guest speakers (Prof Biscop from the Egmont Institute, Prof Riegl from the Czech Ministry of Defence, Col Husak from the Czech Army and Prof Prochazka, Director of the Czech Centre for Security and Military Studies), provided a truly stimulating, cross-domain perspective on the EU's integrated approach to crisis management.

Referring to the implementation of the Strategic Compass, the Chairman stressed that the EU owns (or is in the position to own) all necessary tools to handle security and defence challenges, in cooperation with NATO. "Maybe for the first time, our approach truly combines soft and hard power as the two sides of the EU coin for success. And the Military Committee has a key role to play in this endeavour. Anticipation is key: We must work towards the best, but also be prepared for the worst".



INTERVENTION TO THE 2ND HIGH LEVEL SEMINAR FOR OPERATIONAL NAVY'S COMMANDERS - 20/09/2022

The Chairman of the EUMC participated remotely in the 2nd High Level Seminar for Operational Navy Commanders, organized by the Italian Navy General Staff, in Rome. The seminar targeted Admirals (around 30) foreseen as Force Commanders or eligible for strategic positions. General Brieger presented his point of view on EU Defence and Security Policy, focusing on the implementation of the EU's Strategic Compass and linking it to the EU Maritime Security Strategy, which represents the framework for the EU's response to future

internal and external maritime security challenges. In line with the Strategic Compass and the security environment, the EU is now revising the EU Maritime Security Strategy in several areas.

For example, by 2025, the EU intends to strengthen its maritime security awareness mechanisms, such as the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) and Maritime Surveillance (MARSUR) to advance interoperability, facilitate decision-making and increase operational effectiveness. In addition, the EU will further increase its

naval presence (even beyond its borders) through port calls, training and exercises as well as capacity building. And most notably by expanding the latest initiative, the Coordinated Maritime Presences, from the Gulf of Guinea to other areas, starting with the Indo-Pacific.

The Chairman concluded that, despite the absence of a unified EU defence culture, the Strategic Compass represents a fundamental self-assertion of the EU, as a whole. The EU's integrated approach can be the true answer to crisis management.

EUMC AWAY DAYS (PRAGUE) - 21-23/09/2022

The Chairman of the EUMC participated in the EUMC Away Days, in Prague. On this occasion, the Military Committee informally discussed the way forward for the implementation of the Strategic Compass, analysing the priorities in terms of deliverables. Among them, the EU Rapid Deployment Capacity, including the operational scenarios and exercises, expected to provide the European Union with the ability to respond to imminent threats or quickly react to a crisis outside the Union at all stages of the conflict cycle.

Gen. Brieger emphasized that one of the most relevant enablers would be the availability of a coherent EU Command and Control structure that respects the principles of unity and clear chain of command, synergy of efforts, flexibility and integrated approach.

The EU Military Committee had also the opportunity to attend part of the Exercise Medical Man 22. The exercise is a common initiative by four EU Member



States to certify the Visegrad EU Battle-group medical team, as part of its third stand-by period, in the first semester of 2023. At the exercise site, Gen. Brieger also had an exchange views with Mrs Jana Cernochova, the Czech Minister of Defence.

EU-NATO RELATIONS AND COOPERATION, CSDP HIGH LEVEL COURSE, BRUSSELS 28/09/2022

During the CSDP High Level Course of the European Security and Defence College, General Brieger participated in an EU-NATO panel discussion together with the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Adm. Rob Bauer.

During the panel, General Brieger underlined the importance, for EU and NATO, to work together seamlessly in this historical moment in order to strengthen their position vis-à-vis potential adversaries. NATO and the EU must reorient themselves to deter further aggression, and, at the same time, effectively deal with existing threats and challenges.

The EUMC Chairman highlighted that discussions among militaries were too often centred on obstacles instead of opportunities for an unfettered and solution-oriented military advice to the



political level. Many activities – such as support measures for Ukraine or our common efforts in the Mediterranean Sea – could benefit from improved information sharing. The current circumstances remain a historic opportunity for the EU and NATO to join their forces, in full respect of their singularities but with due consideration for their com-

plementarity. The CSDP HLC deals with strategic aspects of the CSDP. The target audience are senior officials from EU Member States, institutions, agencies and CSDP missions/operations (among them high-ranking officers, ambassadors, directors), who have a clear potential to achieve leadership positions in the field of CFSP/CSDP.

XIII TRANS-REGIONAL SEAPOWER SYMPOSIUM VENICE - 05-07/11/2022

Gen Robert Brieger attended the XIII Trans-Regional SeaPower Symposium held in the premises of the ancient Italian Navy Arsenal in Venice.

This annual Symposium is the largest international meeting of this kind taking place alternatively either in Venice (Italy) or in the USA.

Gathering over two hundred representatives from navies (Navy Chiefs), academia and industries (CEO's), this year's event was titled "A blue cluster approach in the Ocean decade".

In their opening messages, the Italian Minister of Defence and the Chief of the Italian Navy highlighting the need to provide timely and effective answers to calls for enhanced security in the naval domain and related areas.

In a video message, High Representative Borrell recalled that the EU has

made great strides in gradually building up its maritime profile and portfolio and updated its approach following the approval of the Strategic Compass. As the 2nd largest exporter and the 3rd biggest importer in the world, the EU considers the respect of the international law of the sea as essential, especially in a degraded and heavily contested geopolitical environment. At the same time, he also underlined the need for strategic partnerships with NATO, and regional partners, including OSCE, AU and ASEAN.

Gen Brieger emphasised the indispensability of a Maritime Strategy for the EU's Security and Defence agenda, as also stated in the Strategic Compass. Furthermore, he elaborated on why the EU integrated approach to security and defence can be the answer, providing an ideal framework for crisis management in

and around the maritime domain. In this interconnected world, where no one can afford to deal with all security matters alone, our ability to cooperate will be the strongest asset to face common threats, the Chairman concluded.





How the war in Ukraine and the threats made by Russia could change the approach to European countries, and - in this regard - the functioning and work of the European Military Committee (EUMC)?

The ongoing war requires new and more robust approaches. In this context, there is more and more need of military expertise and advice.

The EUMC must be considered for what it is: the highest military level in EU Institutions ... and used as such!

The EUMC is the voice of the 27 CHODs and the Chairman of the EUMC acts as senior advisor to the High Representative. The consensus found in our Committee can be a lever and a booster for swift political decisions.

Coherently, I see the requirements in terms of additional personnel and CIS, but the main issue remains linked to the full acknowledgment of the role of the EUMC within a renovated defence culture and conscience.

Key for success will be an enhanced coordination among all stakeholders involved in the decision-making process: Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs in capitals, as well as military and political representatives in Brussels with EU Institutions.

Does the implementation of the Strategic Compass require adaptation in light of the War in Ukraine?

I would say no. It brings additional urgency to our endeavors but does not fundamentally change the vision and the requirements.

The Strategic Compass, always meant to be a living document, was released few days after the unjustified aggression of Russia. The drafters carefully reviewed the documents and added few considerations, last minute.

Nevertheless, the core of the document was there, because of two years of successful debates and constructive negotiations. This is why we are now fully engaged in its implementation, and – so far – on track with the timelines.

On the other hand, the War in Ukraine has brought together EU Member States, instead of dividing them, as Putin probably planned.

One example is the commitment to make full use of the European Peace Facility (EPF), a tool that is more than just financial. The EPF is the demonstration that European Union Member States (EU MS) can answer the call for security by Host Nations,

providing the essential tools, including lethal weapons, if that is considered necessary.

Again, this is really a cultural and historical shift for the EU, a mature approach in the use of the full toolbox of the Integrated Approach. In the same vein, we acknowledge that the next scheduled revision of our shared threat assessment in November, may lead to a further fine tuning of our Strategic Compass.

Without questioning the collective defence established in the framework of NATO what would be the necessary means to be developed by the EU to ensure its own security and defence, thereby reaching strategic autonomy?

In this regard, I would stress once again that after Finland and Sweden will join NATO, 23 out of 27 EU MS that are also part of the Alliance.

Therefore, the question relates to what these and other Member States can develop/procure in support of both the EU and NATO levels of ambition.

That said what EU MS would procure for the EU defense and security NATO benefits from this – de facto?

As an EU collective, if we are to act with certain, credible level of strategic autonomy, we need to develop rapidly certain capabilities.

Moreover, I will link this topic with the spearhead of our renovated level of ambition, the Rapid Deployment Capability.

In this regard, a joint force package of about 5,000 soldiers will be ready to project operational superiority for crisis management, equipped with all necessary enablers.

It is not only a matter of deploying soldiers (as a diplomatic symbol), it is about being serious in our business, and we have to be credible!

We are talking about logistic, strategic airlift, secure communications, medical support, satellite coverage, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), etc.

According to you, what should the EU and Member States do to spend more and better and to avoid further fragmentation?

The answer is rather simple: live up to our commitments as agreed in the Strategic Compass.

Starting by employing more wisely the increased defence budgets, grown from 216 billions in 2021 to 286 in 2022.

The EU, with the support of all MS, has created a number of coordination and financial mechanisms to spend together and better.

The current risk, with the new wave of funds made available in the wake of reduced security perception, is very clear: shifting from years of uncoordinated saving to a near future of uncoordinated spending.

How do you believe a concrete European “culture of defence” can be fostered?

We have definitely common challenges, as European citizens, but not only.

Fostering the European culture of defence goes through a multidimensional approach.

Definitely starting with enhanced communications with our citizens, but also responding to a growing demand of security, that has been able to build tools and mechanisms, which have successfully projected security.

I will recall over 30 missions and operations in the last two decades.

People often do not associate EU with defense, I understand, however we need to start by spreading the message that EU can be the answer even in this domain.

Our audiences must be the schools, military and civilians, think tanks, academia, and the public, internal and external. Awareness must be raised in all areas of society.

Our politicians, the representatives of the people must play a fundamental role and should act as an intermediary here.

As the War in Ukraine demonstrated that “classic” military capabilities play an important part on the battlefield, do you believe that an increase of “classic” defence capabilities is enough to face possible conflicts?

This, I believe, from a military point of view, was the most surprising – in a way – lesson identified.

This is why we are working hard to look how to replenish our stock that have been also severely depleted by the support to Ukraine. That said, future, but even current scenarios demand technologically advanced tools capable to perform in hybrid, multidimensional environments.

Artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, big data, hyper speed, sophisticated materials are just example of needed capabilities to succeed on future battlefields that could develop everywhere.

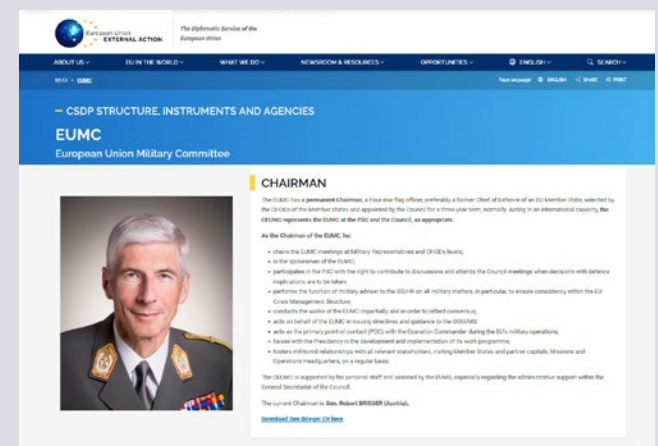
In this respect, the full potential of EU tools and initiatives can and must be game changers in support of Member States efforts, providing a much needed “leveraging effect” if we, as Europeans, are to remain “in the race” of new techs.

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EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

Lex Building, Rue de la Loi 145, 1048 Bruxelles, BELGIUM
ceumc.secretariat@eeas.europa.eu

www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eumc_en
Follow us on Twitter: @ChairmanEUMC

