Audit of assets and capabilities for European crisis management operations

Recommendations for strengthening European capabilities for crisis management operations

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING EUROPEAN CAPABILITIES FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

At their meeting in Rome in November 1998, WEU Ministers expressed the wish that a process of informal reflection be initiated at WEU on the question of Europe’s security and defence. As part of this process, they decided to conduct a WEU audit of assets and capabilities for European crisis management operations. This audit included Member States, Associate Members and Observers.

The results of this audit show that Europeans, in principle, have the available force levels and resources needed to prepare and implement military operations over the whole range of Petersberg tasks, i.e. humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.

The general report prepared by the Luxembourg Presidency has identified a number of gaps and deficiencies, as well as areas where these European assets and capabilities should be strengthened to attain a higher level of operational effectiveness in crisis management.

Despite the measures which are already being examined by Europeans and the possibility of using Alliance assets and capabilities, considerable efforts are still needed to strengthen European capabilities.

Implementation of the recommendations presented in this document would contribute to overcoming gaps and deficiencies and to reinforcing European capabilities.

Whilst underlining the need to define priorities for the actions to be taken, the most urgent efforts should be focused:

- with regard to collective capabilities, on the following areas:
  - strategic intelligence;
  - strategic planning;

- with regard to forces and operational capabilities, on the following areas:
  - availability, deployability, strategic mobility, sustainability, survivability and interoperability and operational effectiveness;
  - multinational, joint Operation and Force HQs, with particular reference to C3 (command, control and communications) capabilities and deployability of Force HQs.
Strengthening collective capabilities for crisis management operations

With respect to the gathering and management of information and intelligence and the analysis of crisis situations, it is recommended to set up a more coherent strategic intelligence and information pooling and management policy. In a crisis situation, this policy should allow a careful in-depth analysis at strategic level to be made. Access to classified sources should be covered by more precise agreements. Improved WEU Satellite Centre access to commercial - and, above all, military - high resolution satellite imagery should be fostered. Procedures for cooperation between the Satellite Centre and other international organisations, particularly the European Union and NATO, should be clarified.

With respect to capabilities for the preparation and planning of crisis management operations, strategic planning capabilities should be considerably strengthened. Planning architecture, procedures and terminology should be harmonised with those used in NATO. Work should continue on the procedures and criteria for identifying and selecting national or multinational HQs capable of serving as Operation or Force HQs.

With respect to political control and strategic direction of crisis management operations, WEU should produce a single, consolidated crisis management manual containing all the various texts on crisis management procedures and replacing existing documents in this field. Clear and straightforward standard operating procedures should be developed. The force activation and generation procedures should be harmonised with the mechanisms currently used by NATO. WEU’s communications and information systems (CIS) should continue to be improved.

Reinforcement of force capabilities and operational capabilities

With regard to availability of forces, forces and force packages should be available at shorter notice. Thus, certain of these forces should be available for immediate reaction and rapid reaction.

With regard to the deployability and strategic mobility of forces, capabilities for projecting forces to theatres of operations, even distant ones, should be improved. For operations at the higher end of the Petersberg task spectrum, military air and sea transport assets and capabilities should be considerably reinforced. A common European approach could be adopted. A number of ideas have been raised in this regard, for example a “Eurolift” force or a structured European transport capability. Even for cases where recourse to civilian assets may be inevitable, the capability for strategic projection within short time-frames should be maintained. Coordination, designed to make optimum use of existing assets and capabilities, both military and civilian, should be stepped up. At the tactical level, mobility, particularly in-theatre helicopter transport capability, should be improved.
With regard to sustainability and survivability of forces, nations should reinforce their logistics capacity to support their forces once they have been deployed and should improve their capabilities for establishing supply lines. The capability for sustaining forces in the theatre of operations over a long period should be improved. In this respect, it may be beneficial to make greater use of task-sharing between nations in order to improve logistics and resupply capabilities.

With regard to interoperability of forces, WEU nations should continue to make efforts to improve interoperability between their forces, making use of all appropriate mechanisms.

With regard to communications and information systems (CIS), it is advisable to dispose of a consolidated, high-performance, strategic and tactical communications and information system for the rapid exchange of classified documents. The capacity to conduct electronic operations should be enhanced, particularly in the area of offensive operations and suppressive electronic countermeasures. This is particularly true for air forces. For special operations, search and rescue (SAR) capabilities should be capable of covering a hostile environment. Real combat capability should be built up in this area.

With regard to medical support to forces, efforts should be made in the field of long-haul medical evacuation and in the NBC area, particularly in the provision of aid to the civilian population. Capacities in the area of Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) should be improved. All nations should continue their efforts to develop or reinforce their capabilities, in the light of the EU’s work on the enhancement of non-military tools for crisis management.

The national and multinational HQs should be capable of operating in joint and/or combined configurations and be capable of serving as Operation or Force HQs for operations across the whole range of Petersberg tasks. Efforts should be envisaged on force build-up times, interaction with politico-military structures and on deployability of Force HQs.

As far as forces are concerned, the structure of land forces should be further adapted to allow operations in a non-static environment. The organic air assets of maritime forces should reinforce their air defence and offensive capability. Air forces need to strengthen their C3 (command, control and communications) and electronic operations capabilities. The capability to conduct integrated air defence and air operations using precision-guided munitions should be developed.

It may be useful to make wider use of the framework nation concept and of task-sharing between nations in order to enhance operational capabilities. Depending on their capabilities, nations could concentrate on providing specialised units.
Final remarks

In the context of the Cologne European Council, the German Presidency Report on strengthening of the common European policy on security and defence stated that the European Union Member States would "undertake efforts in line with the conclusions of the ongoing WEU Audit of European defence capabilities". In this connection, WEU, with its whole range of capabilities, remains at the European Union's disposal for any additional work should the EU consider that useful.

The strengthening of assets and capabilities for European crisis management operations depends on the continuation of sustained and structured defence efforts and the implementation of the necessary adaptations. Such a strengthening could be facilitated through flexible mechanisms which would identify common goals and criteria for these goals, encouraging nations to indicate how they could be fulfilled. Wherever possible, the nations concerned will also make full use of the NATO mechanisms and processes in which they already participate (defence planning, Defence Capabilities Initiative, Planning and Review Process (PARP)).

In pursuing their efforts to develop their military capabilities in the fields identified, the nations concerned will be able to contribute to the reinforcement of the European pillar of the Alliance.

In continuing its work, WEU will maintain full transparency and the necessary consultations with the Atlantic Alliance.

Follow-up

The WEU Military Staff, as part of its general responsibilities vis-à-vis national and multinational forces, is tasked with:

- taking advantage of the audit work to achieve better coverage of the issue of capabilities of forces answerable to WEU:

  using the audit work to assess the time constraints in the build-up of ad hoc Operation and Force HQs (immediate reaction and rapid reaction) based on relevant force packages;

- integrating the lessons learnt from recent military operations