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Delegations will find attached the Presidency Report on ESDP, as approved by the Council on 8 December 2008.

PRESIDENCY REPORT ON ESDP

In accordance with instructions from the European Council in December 2007, the Presidency hereby submits this report on ESDP.

In submitting this report, the Presidency noted that Denmark drew attention to Protocol No 5 on the position of Denmark, annexed to the Treaty of Amsterdam.

I. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Africa

The fight against piracy off the Somali coast: EU NAVCO coordination action and operation ATALANTA

EU NAVCO

With its adoption of a crisis management concept on 5 August 2008, the Council decided to contribute actively to the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1814 and 1816. The first measure to be taken was the establishment on 19 September 2008 of the **military coordination action EU NAVCO, to combat piracy and protect maritime trade**. Situated within the General Secretariat of the Council, the EU NAVCO cell, headed by naval captain Andrés Breijo Claur, consists of naval experts from several Member States. It has thus been possible to form a wide network of relationships with professionals in the maritime world.

This measure has facilitated coordination between the protection needs of vessels chartered by the World Food Programme (WFP) and other vulnerable vessels, and the presence of Member States' and third States' naval units operating in the region. Since October 2008 the action of EU NAVCO has facilitated the establishment of escort slots, to the benefit of many merchant and fishing vessels. This has enabled warships, operating under national command, to accompany merchant vessels. EU NAVCO has also contributed to increased mobilisation of the Member States, including the provision of continuous protection for vessels chartered by been invited to participate in operation ATALANTA, which is due to begin in early December 2008. The tasks of EU NAVCO will be taken over by operation ATALANTA once it is launched.

Operation ATALANTA

Increasing maritime security off the Somali coast is part of the European Union's overall action to stabilise Somalia. The task of the European Union's naval force (**operation ATALANTA**) will be to contribute to the protection of WFP vessels delivering food aid to displaced persons in Somalia, in accordance with the humanitarian objectives of UN Security Council Resolution 1814, the protection of vulnerable vessels cruising off the Somali coast and deterrence, prevention and intervention with a view to putting an end to acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast.

Planning work on operation ATALANTA has made rapid progress during the autumn of 2008, with the designation of the operational headquarters at Northwood (United Kingdom) and the appointment of the operation commander, Vice Admiral Philip Jones. The first on-board Force Commander, Commodore Antonios Papaioannou, has been appointed to command the naval force from the launch of the operation in December 2008.

For operational planning reasons in particular, a rotation of several on-board Force Commanders has been proposed, to cover the duration of the mandate which was set at one year by the Council Joint Action adopted on 10 November 2008. Activities will also have to be coordinated with other actors present in the operational area.

EUFOR Tchad/RCA

EUFOR Tchad/RCA, deployed in a remote theatre which is difficult to access, is making a significant contribution to the security of this area of Africa, containing regional tensions and supporting international efforts to protect civilians hit by the Darfur regional crisis. EUFOR is patrolling a very extensive area and is lending its support to the deployment of MINURCAT. EUFOR is also implementing protection measures for humanitarian organisations, thus highlighting the European Union's essential role in facilitating access to humanitarian aid.

The EUFOR Tchad/RCA operation forms part of the multidimensional support which the European Union is providing for the region. There is complementarity between the European force and the cooperation and development measures taken by the European Community on the ground, as well as the continuing provision of humanitarian aid by the latter. The Commission's effective implementation of the accompanying programme for the stabilisation of eastern Chad, whose purpose is to contribute to that region's rehabilitation and reconstruction, is worthy of note.

In the context of the mid-term review of EUFOR Tchad/RCA, the Council had emphasised that an international military presence would still be needed in the region after the European force had departed to ensure that the progress achieved would be lasting. The adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1834, which stated the United Nations' intention that a military component of MINURCAT should take over from EUFOR, is thus an important step.

The European Union has expressed its hope that the United Nations will be able to expedite the preparations for an efficient transition, together with the planning and force generation, with a view to effective transfer of authority to a United Nations military operation when the EUFOR mandate expires on 15 March 2009.

In this context, close cooperation has been established between the General Secretariat of the Council in Brussels, the operational headquarters at Mont Valérien (France) and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York.

Three non-Member States of the European Union are taking part in the operation: Albania, Croatia and Russia.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: EUSEC RD Congo and EUPOL RD Congo

The two ESDP missions, together with the European Community activities, have maintained their support for the Security Sector Reform (SSR) process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) through the provision to the local authorities of expertise and technical assistance in the various areas involved (police, justice and defence). These activities are continuing despite the serious developments in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in recent months.

The extension of the **EUSEC RD Congo Mission** by one year, until 30 June 2009, demonstrates the European Union's ongoing commitment to supporting SSR in the field of defence and to the stabilisation of the Great Lakes Region. The EUSEC RD Congo mission has continued to provide support to the European Union Special Representative.

As regards the renovation of the military administration, the EUSEC RD Congo mission has continued the biometric census of the Armed Forces personnel. At the request of the Congolese Minister for Defence, implementation of the chain-of-payments project has been extended to the whole of the Armed Forces.

EUPOL RD Congo has, since it was launched in July 2007, continued to support the efforts to reform the Congolese National Police (CNP), in particular through the Police Reform Monitoring Committee (CSRP). The Mission also continues to facilitate links between the police and the various stages of the judicial system with the help of its justice interface.

The Mission is pursuing preparations for deployment of its unit in the east of the country (Goma and Bukavu) and is closely following the way in which the security situation in the region is developing.

In addition, a study visit by two Council working parties, the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management and the Politico-Military Working Party, has been organised in December 2008. That visit should provide an opportunity to meet the EUSEC and EUPOL missions on the ground.

EUSSR Guinea-Bissau

The **EUSSR Guinea-Bissau** Mission to assist the local authorities in the process of Security Sector Reform with respect to police, justice and defence was launched on 16 June 2008 for an initial period of twelve months.

There has been progress albeit not at a uniform pace in all three sectors. Despite a change of government in August, the Mission has been able to establish good relations with the local authorities, in particular through workshops organised in cooperation with the local bodies responsible for the reform process. The Mission is seen as an important contribution by the international community to the reform process.

The Mission has established very good contacts with all the international actors involved in the reform process and in particular with the European Commission delegation, the representatives deployed under the Stability Instrument, United Nations sub-organisations and ECOWAS. A meeting of the "Friends of Guinea-Bissau" organised by the European Commission on 4 November in Brussels stressed that increased coordination between actors would be necessary.

The desire of the national political authorities for a successful conclusion of the reform process has been shown inter alia by completion of the census of the armed forces and the holding on 16 November of parliamentary elections which were deemed fair and transparent by international observers. That desire will be a sine qua non for the future commitment of the European Union and the international community.

Western Balkans

Operation ALTHEA

Following the successful reconfiguration of Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in 2007 the European Union force (EUFOR) numbers some 2 200 troops on the ground, backed up by over-the-horizon reserves. Its operational priorities remain the maintenance of a safe and secure environment, the transfer of Joint Military Affairs (JMA) tasks to relevant national authorities, and support for the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina as regards training.

On 10 November 2008 the Council assessed operation ALTHEA and approved the recommendations made in the Secretary-General/High Representative's six-monthly report on the operation. The Council expressed deep concern at the recent political developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it noted that despite a difficult political situation, the security situation remained stable.

In the context of the European Union's overall commitment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council highlighted the decisive progress made by operation ALTHEA towards accomplishing its mandate, and in particular the completion of the military and stabilisation tasks provided for by the Dayton/Paris Agreement. Accordingly, the Council considered that the preparatory work for a possible development of the operation should be continued, taking into account the future role of the EU Special Representative.

The outcome of this preparatory work will be submitted to the Council in March 2009 so that it can take a decision on the future of the operation as soon as the conditions have been met. The future development of operation ALTHEA will have to take political developments into account.

The Council noted that cooperation with NATO on operation ALTHEA was continuing to work smoothly.

EULEX Kosovo

The **EULEX Kosovo** mission has continued its deployment and preparations for taking over operational responsibility, in accordance with the arrangements in the United Nations Secretary-General's reports of 12 June and 24 November 2008. The 24 November report was welcomed in a UN Security Council presidential statement of 26 November 2008. The mission reached its initial operational capability on 2 December. With 1600 personnel deployed, it will commence its operations in the coming days.

In this framework, the mission will be able to start operational fulfilment of its mandate, which is to uphold and promote the rule of law Kosovo-wide under UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

In accordance with its mandate as described in the Joint Action adopted by the Council of the European Union on 4 February 2008, the EULEX mission will act in three key areas: the police, justice and customs. In these areas, EULEX Kosovo's activities will involve monitoring, mentoring and advising the competent Kosovo institutions, whilst retaining certain executive responsibilities. EULEX Kosovo will ensure that cases of war crimes, terrorism, organised crime, corruption, inter-ethnic crimes, financial/economic crimes and other serious crimes are properly investigated, prosecuted, adjudicated and enforced, according to the applicable law, including, where appropriate, by international investigators, prosecutors and judges.

EULEX will help to ensure that all Kosovo rule-of-law services, including a customs service, are free from political interference. EULEX will contribute to strengthening cooperation and coordination throughout the whole judicial process, particularly in the area of organised crime. EULEX will be able to contribute to the maintenance of public order and security in Kosovo, in cooperation with the local and international actors concerned.

EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM)

The **EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM)** has continued to promote and support the reform of the BiH police services. The Mission has concentrated on supporting the BiH authorities in implementing the two police reform laws adopted in April 2008. The EUPM has continued its action on concrete capacity building at State level and country-wide harmonisation of all laws pertaining to law-enforcement agencies and police officials.

With the assistance of the EUPM, the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) has made substantial progress in implementing sustainable policing arrangements for the targeting of organised crime networks and bringing to justice key figures allegedly involved in serious criminal offences. The EUPM has also stepped up its action to combat organised crime by assisting with the in-depth analysis of crimes, using advanced investigative techniques and intelligence and organising a major communication and awareness-raising campaign.

The EUPM has further developed effective mechanisms for coordination between the law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary, particularly as regards relations between police and prosecutors.

The EUPM has offered to assist the BiH authorities with implementation of the strategy for border management and combating illegal immigration, which are important elements of the process of European integration.

Stefan Feller succeeded Vincenzo Coppola as head of mission on 1 November 2008.

Asia

EUPOL AFGHANISTAN

The EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (**EUPOL Afghanistan**) has actively pursued implementation of its mandate, in particular by monitoring, mentoring, advisory and training action at all levels of the command chain of the Afghan Police.

The Mission is now fully up and running. It is deployed in Kabul and in some fifteen provinces of Afghanistan, accommodated in Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Regional Commands. The Mission has endeavoured to render its action more coherent throughout Afghan territory.

The Mission has been actively contributing to work and thinking on reform of the Ministry of the Interior and the police, in particular with regard to the drafting of a *Vision for the Afghan Police* drawn up under the auspices of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, and the restructuring of the Ministry of the Interior. The Mission has also put considerable effort into interaction between the police and justice, and the areas of criminal investigation and border management.

In carrying out its mandate, in parallel with the Community actions, the Mission has sought to act in coordination with its international partners, in particular UNAMA and the United States, within the framework of the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB). Coordination has been strengthened, inter alia through the setting up of Integrated Project Teams with the United States partners. The Mission has continued to assist in the running of the IPCB Secretariat by making available staff and funding.

The decision to double the number of Mission personnel so that there are 400 staff members in the field will be implemented progressively from December 2008. That will enable the Mission, on the basis of a renewed mandate, to reinforce its activities in support of the Afghan National Police.

Kai Vittrup took over from Jürgen Scholz as Head of Mission on 16 October 2008.

Southern Caucasus and Eastern Europe

EUMM Georgia

The Council adopted the Joint Action on the **European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia)** on 15 September 2008 for a period of one year. It was launched on time under the terms of the agreement on implementation of the Ceasefire Plan of 12 August, signed by the parties on 8 September. The EU observers were deployed and began their monitoring activity, as from 1 October, mainly in the areas adjacent to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. On 10 November the Council reaffirmed its determination that the mission would continue fully to implement its mandate in Georgia.

In October and November, the Mission carried out nearly 500 patrols, by day and night. Nevertheless, frequent incidents in the vicinity of both Abkhazia and South Ossetia are a reminder that the situation remains volatile and that the safety of the observers remains a priority.

In accordance with its mandate, the Mission is involving itself on the spot in the development of a conflict prevention and resolution mechanism. The EUMM acts in coordination with the actions of the European Community and complements those of the other international actors in the field, in particular the UN and the OSCE.

Georgia Border Support Team

The activities of the Border Support Team in Georgia, within the office of the EUSR for the South Caucasus, have continued. The team has continued to assist the implementation of the border reform in line with Priority Area 4 of the Action Plan drawn up by the EU and Georgia under the European Neighbourhood Policy. The Georgian authorities have asked for the Border Support Team's mandate to be continued in 2009.

EUBAM Moldova-Ukraine

The **EU Border Assistance Mission to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM Moldova-Ukraine)**, which is a European Commission activity staffed to a large extent by seconded experts from EU Member States, has continued its activities. EUBAM Moldova-Ukraine assists the governments of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in areas involving border, customs and fiscal matters, including through monitoring activities.

Near and Middle East

EUPOL COPPS

The **EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS)** has continued its action to assist the Palestinian Civilian Police in establishing lasting and effective policing arrangements.

The Mission has embarked on setting up its Rule of Law section to assist the Palestinian justice system. It began deployment of its new staff in September bringing its personnel in the field up to around fifty. The Mission has started to draft its strategy for assisting the Palestinian courts and the prison sector. This document should be finalised by the beginning of 2009. In parallel, the Council has begun discussions on the extension of the Mission's mandate until the end of 2010.

The EU has also embarked on an evaluation of what is needed by the Palestinian Authority to reinforce its support for the rule of law in the Palestinian Territories. Following deployment of a fact-finding mission in June 2008, supplementary evaluations in the field have been launched with a view to a possible expansion of the EUPOL COPPS mandate at the beginning of 2009, and the stepping up of actions by the European Community and the Member States as part of the implementation of the EU Action Strategy.

EUBAM Rafah

The **EU Border Assistance Mission for the Rafah Crossing Point (EUBAM Rafah)** suspended its operations after the closure of the Rafah Crossing Point at the time of the takeover of Gaza by Hamas in June 2007 while maintaining its operational capability to redeploy at short notice.

The Council has reiterated its commitment to the EUBAM Rafah, to the Agreements concluded and to the region, in particular the population of Gaza. It has underlined the importance of the implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access by all parties. The EU remains ready, as it has promised, to redeploy to the Rafah Crossing Point as soon as conditions allow. On 10 November 2008 the Council adopted a Joint Action extending the mandate of the Mission until November 2009.

Alain Faugeras took over from Pietro Pistolese as Head of Mission on 25 November 2008.

EUJUST LEX

The EU's Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (**EUJUST LEX**) continued its activities to assist with the training provided by the Member States for senior Iraqi police officers, prosecutors, judges and prison governors. So far, the Mission has facilitated the training of more than 1 800 senior Iraqi civil servants.

Work on a renewed European Union commitment to the rule of law involving Community assistance, the ESDP Mission and Member States' programmes has been initiated on the basis of an evaluation of what is needed for justice and the rule of law in Iraq.

The EU has agreed in particular to extend and reinforce the EUJUST LEX's mandate as from June 2009, making it possible for the Mission to carry out pilot activities on Iraqi territory where security conditions permit.

Pilot actions would focus on consolidation of the activities undertaken, training on Iraqi territory and strategic advice, while pursuing the activities conducted in the Member States.

II. LESSONS LEARNED

The Council of the European Union on 10 November adopted **guidelines for the identification and implementation of lessons learned and best practice** in ESDP civilian missions. Certain international organisations and NGOs gave accounts of their experience for the purpose of drawing up these guidelines.

The guidelines should make possible a systematic follow-up in order to identify and implement lessons learned, as well as the creation of an institutional training programme in which the lessons identified are turned into best practice. This new system will be implemented gradually in 2008 and 2009. Similarly, a report identifying lessons learned after the end of the EUPOL Kinshasa Mission has been approved.

III. CAPABILITIES

(a) Civilian capabilities

In accordance with the plan for implementation of the new **Headline Goal 2010**, the process of planning civilian capabilities has focused in the second half of 2008 on the establishment of a **civilian strategic option** (on the basis of the common pilot illustrative scenario drawn up during the first half of 2008, a scenario supportive of both civilian and military ESDP capability development processes, taking into account the relevant capabilities available to the European Community).

This civilian strategic option has served as the basis for drawing up a list of **the capabilities necessary**, with the emphasis on personnel requirements. The General Secretariat of the Council has launched a study of the possibility of Member States making available the experts required. In parallel, the Member States have been invited to confirm again or modify the indications regarding the possibility of making available civilian personnel for ESDP Missions which they gave for the Capability Headline Goal 2008.

The General Secretariat of the Council has continued work on finalisation of the **Civilian Capability Management Tool**, and in particular of a specific software application comprising several interconnected modules on a secure internet site.

On the issue of **mission support**, the implementation of a global work programme to strengthen capacity is continuing (traffic light). The lessons learned from the rapid deployment of the Mission in Georgia will help to reinforce the work that has been undertaken.

On the issue of **human resources**, the expert workshops set up in the summer of 2008 under the "Human Resources Action Plan for Civilian ESDP Missions" are considering the requirements to be satisfied by such personnel together with the procedures for generating forces and for deployment. The final report, scheduled for the winter of 2009, will ensure a standard approach and the dissemination of best practice. The publicising of ESDP Mission calls for contributions on the websites of the Council General Secretariat and the Missions has continued (for example, in a context of rapid deployment, to recruit support staff for EUMM Georgia Mission). Finally, a review of the "guidelines for the daily allowances applicable to civilian ESDP personnel" has begun in order to adapt the existing system of allowances.

Regarding the **Civilian Response Teams (CRTs)**, the creation of a group of 100 experts, which was begun at the end of 2007, was concluded in the summer of 2008. A fifth induction training course for the Civilian Response Teams was held in October 2008 with financial support from the European Commission. The need to increase the number of experts in the fields of finance and procurement has already been highlighted. Efforts are continuing to train the members of the CRTs in order to equip them with the appropriate tools and facilitate their rapid deployment. In the second half of 2008, a Civilian Response Team comprising seven people was deployed in Georgia.

The concept of **Preparatory Measures** (and preparatory teams, in the context of the preparatory-measures budget line within the CFSP budget, still being drawn up) was tested in the case of planning the EUMM Georgia. That experience highlighted in particular the importance of deploying a sufficient number of administration experts and the need for an instrument making possible procurement for a forthcoming mission during the preparatory period. The lessons learned will be taken into account in the European Commission's Framework Decision on this budget line in 2009.

On the issue of **logistics**, a framework document on logistics for Civilian ESDP Missions has been drawn up to provide common bases for all missions. A detailed logistics handbook covering all the necessary procedures is being finalised.

Regarding **procurement**, the conclusion of framework contracts is continuing in order to establish a proper catalogue of contracts. The framework contract for off-road vehicles drawn up in the spring of 2008 plays a key role in equipping EULEX Kosovo whereas some difficulties are being experienced with implementation of the framework contract for armoured vehicles. For insurance policies and communication and information systems, contractual procedures are in progress. In future, the catalogue should be supplemented by framework contracts in the medical and container fields. In addition to this catalogue, a study is under way on possible equipment-storage options to deal with immediate-deployment situations.

The procurement and finance training of experts for ESDP Missions and CRTs continues to strengthen ESDP personnel capacity in these specialised fields. At the same time, common tools have been put in place, in particular a technical database for the preparation of calls to tender. Support reinforced by the deployment of a roving expert is also planned by the European Commission.

A practical **handbook** to assist missions is being drawn up by the General Secretariat of the Council and the European Commission and will be distributed to missions via a secure website. A system for transmitting the missions' administrative reports to the General Secretariat of the Council and the European Commission has been put in place. All these developments might make it possible to decentralise funding powers to Heads of Mission.

In further work on civilian capabilities, the Council of the European Union on 10 November 2008 endorsed **Ministerial Commitments as regards the Development of Civilian Capabilities** and a **progress report** on the implementation of the new Civilian Headline Goal 2010.

The Council of the European Union on 10 November noted the statement that the **Watchkeeping Capability** and **Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability** had attained full operational capability in August and November 2008 respectively.

(b) **Military capabilities (including capability projects developed in the European Defence Agency)**

Within the context of the Headline Goal 2010, new contributions to the **Force Catalogue** have been announced by some Member States, and are currently being studied. They will be taken into account in a new version of the Force Catalogue, to be produced during the first half of 2009. The EUMC has launched work to draw up a methodology to measure progress on capability development.

The **Capability Development Plan**, of which an initial version and a first series of priority actions were approved by the EDA Steering Board in July 2008, will enable the Member States to focus their capability efforts on areas where there are gaps in the European Union's operational capability.

Through the "Defence Ministers' Military Capabilities Development Commitments", considerable efforts have already been made to contribute by means of concrete and operational initiatives to resolving those gaps and thus strengthen the European Union's external action capability.

Force projection

A series of initiatives, launched in variable configurations, should enable the Member States concerned to ensure better **force projection in external theatres**:

preparations with a view to the establishment of a European airlift fleet (signing of a Declaration of Intent by 12 Member States), the establishment of an A400M multinational unit (signing of a Declaration of Intent by four Member States) and the imminent establishment of a European airlift command, initiated by several Member States. Lastly, the projection of an airbase during the BAPEX national exercise will illustrate the deployment of an airbase for a European force.

The European Carrier Group Interoperability Initiative, based on a Declaration of Intent signed by nine Member States, will promote the interoperability of European navies and their carrier air groups and improve the efficiency of EU and of NATO operations.

With a view to improving **helicopter deployment** in crisis management operations, including EU ones, the EDA Steering Board has approved a roadmap with a view to the launch in 2010 of a tactical training programme for helicopter pilots, and the EDA has started work on upgrading helicopters, the preliminary results of which are due to be presented in the spring of 2009. A multinational helicopter fund has been put in place. This should allow the financing of initiatives, including projects in the EDA or NATO framework, relating to the training of pilots and crews and to the upgrading of helicopters. The intention to assign the ad hoc Franco-German project on a future transport helicopter to the EDA has been confirmed by both countries.

Space

The future of the European Union's space observation capability must be ensured.

A Letter of Intent has been signed by five Member States, which confirmed their intention to cooperate under the MUSIS project and to involve the EDA under an ad hoc project.

The European Space Agency and the EDA are working, in their respective spheres of competence, to increase European space surveillance capability.

Finally, considerable efforts have been made to facilitate access to government-source satellite images by the European Union Satellite Centre. This will enhance the Union's analysis capability for the conduct of ESDP crisis management operations and missions.

Maritime aspect

European maritime **surveillance capability** should be improved, especially as a result of EDA initiatives, including the ad hoc project on the future surveillance UAV (Unmanned Air Vehicle) (with the participation of seven Member States) and the work on the networking of European maritime surveillance systems.

A major effort will be made as regards maritime mine clearance following the launch by 10 Member States (plus Norway) of an ad hoc project in the EDA framework.

Force Protection

Progress has been made in the EDA framework with a view to the launch in 2009 of a programme to enhance and develop equipment to combat biological agents.

Communications

Work is under way on establishing communications and information systems, such as the EU OPSWAN (*Operations Wide Area Network*) system, connecting Brussels, EU operational headquarters provided by the Member States, and the agencies concerned, such as the EU Satellite Centre.

Rapid response

The review of the rapid response concept should be concluded as soon as possible. It will take into account the progress made since 2003: the drawing up of the battlegroup concept in 2006, and the drafting in 2007 of maritime and air rapid response concepts. This work will maintain a high level of ambition with regard to rapid response, from the planning phase.

Progress has been made in the implementation of the Maritime Rapid Response and Air Rapid Response Concepts: at the Maritime Rapid Response and Air Rapid Response information conferences held in October 2008, the Member States reviewed the resources and capabilities they had declared for 2009, and gave their initial indications for 2010 and beyond.

At the Battlegroups Coordination Conference held in October 2008, Member States committed themselves in detail to providing the required number of battlegroups up to the first half of 2011. A generic preparation guide for battlegroups was finalised in July; it will be used by those Member States which wish to do so, to prepare battlegroups before their standby period. The document provides for the harmonisation of battlegroup planning and training, and hence better interoperability between the forces of the Member States.

European multinational forces

Multinational forces represent a considerable potential for the European Union's capability for external action. Work is in hand to facilitate the use of European multinational forces in ESDP operations.

The first stage, which is currently being studied, consists of identifying Member States' willingness to facilitate the use of such forces in the ESDP framework.

Evacuating nationals

Issues relating to the mobilisation of military assets within the framework provided by the consular lead State concept are under consideration.

Organisation of the European Union Military Staff (EUMS)

The European Union Watchkeeping Capability has been fully operational since 1 August 2008. It monitors all ESDP operations and missions.

On 10 November 2008, the Council noted the implementation of the measures which it had asked the Secretary-General/High Representative to take, in May 2007 following the informal Ministerial meeting in Wiesbaden, regarding in particular enhancing the planning abilities of the EUMS, increasing its staffing, undertaking its provisional restructuring and reviewing its terms of reference.

The EUMS was restructured in March 2008. The EUMS now has a team of military planners who have already been working to support the planning of the European Union mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia), and planning for the European Union operation to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia (ATALANTA). The new military analysis and planning section of the Military Staff has only just completed its training period. New more selective recruitment criteria should make it possible to improve the quality of Military Staff personnel in the medium term.

The Council has indicated that it will return to this matter at its meeting in May 2009, on the basis of a report from the Secretary-General/High Representative.

Feedback from experience

The Military Staff continued developing the "lessons learned" process (ELPRO – EUMS Lessons Process), which has proved to be a useful tool for managing feedback from experience in military activities. The database currently contains 455 lessons relating to 8 types of military activity (linked to operations, exercises and battle groups). Among them, 102 come from recent lessons learned from EUFOR CHAD/CAR, MILEX08 and the Nordic battle groups and HELBROC.

(c) European Defence Agency

The Head of the Agency's report highlighted noticeable progress on finalising the strategic framework and implementing elements of it (the CDP and three strategies), and on preparing, generating and launching specific cooperative initiatives.

The long-term strategic framework has been supplemented by:

- the initial version of the Capability Development Plan (CDP), approved by the Steering Board in July, which will enable the Member States to focus their capability-related efforts. Twelve priority areas of action have been selected by the Member States;
- two new strategies, one on European armaments cooperation and the other on defence research and technology in Europe, adopted by the Steering Board in October and November respectively.

Concrete progress has been made in the implementation of the strategy to strengthen the European defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB), adopted in May 2007, in particular:

(i) adoption of a Code of Conduct on offsets, aimed at mitigating their adverse impact on competition and the EDTIB; (ii) agreement on specific measures to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and non-traditional suppliers; (iii) the encouraging continuation of efforts to open up defence markets in Europe through the Code of Conduct on defence procurement.

In addition to the progress made on practical capabilities projects (see above), the EDA has made substantial progress on specific projects and initiatives:

- in the field of airworthiness, the setting up of a European Union forum for military airworthiness authorities;
- provisional support for intelligence training activities;
- increased efforts in cooperation on research and technology, with the signature of the arrangement for a defence research and technology Joint Investment Programme on innovative concepts and emerging technologies, and the launch of eight projects in the framework of the Joint Investment Programme on force protection.

The EDA continued its efforts to ensure that its work is complementary with the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) and the LoI, in compliance with the provisions of the Joint Action. In its statement on cooperation between the EDA and OCCAR, the Council called on the EDA to conclude an administrative arrangement with OCCAR, to organise the relationship between them. Cooperation between the two bodies will help to safeguard the continuity of the development of capability plans. The EDA continued its efforts to ensure that its work was consistent with NATO's, in accordance with the provisions of the Joint Action. The EDA also made a substantial contribution to the EU-NATO Capability Group.

European defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB)

The European Union must pursue its efforts, also in the Community context and within the EDA, to secure a robust and competitive EDTIB capable of meeting the Member States' capability requirements and of supporting the ESDP. In particular, further consideration should be given to the questions of reinforcing security of supply, opening up national markets and strengthening supply chains, notably through measures to encourage SMEs.

IV. CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION

The Council took note of the continuing work on Information Exchange Requirements, in the framework defined by the competent Council bodies.

The Council also noted that a project on network-enabled capabilities in the ESDP framework is currently being examined by the relevant Council bodies. Development of the concept is to be based on work relating to Information Exchange Requirements (IER).

The Secretary-General/High Representative intends to set up a single strategic civilian-military planning structure for ESDP operations and missions, aiming to enhance the coherence of the civilian and military aspects of our operations, which represent the European Union's specific and unique added value.

V. EU SATELLITE CENTRE

The European Union Satellite Centre (EUSC) is now going to have access to government-source satellite images from Helios II, Cosmo-Skymed and SAR-Lupe. That access will improve the quality of its products.

The EU Satellite Centre has continued to provide analytical products and services in support of the ESDP and European Union operations and missions.

In particular, in support of EUFOR Tchad/RCA, successful cooperation has continued between the Operational Headquarters in Mont Valérien and the EUSC. This cooperation has been facilitated by an ad hoc arrangement between Helios partners, with the aim of providing access to government images available very rapidly.

The Satellite Centre has also offered products and analyses in support of the European Union mission in Georgia.

In addition, the Satellite Centre is offering support to the Operational Headquarters in Northwood for the ATALANTA operation.

The establishment of the secure communications network EU OPSWAN will facilitate access to products from the Satellite Centre, particularly for the European Union's operational headquarters. The tactical station for the exploitation of images, currently at the demonstration stage, will make it possible to receive data from different sources for exploitation and use in the context of EU operations and missions.

Close cooperation with the UN has continued, particularly in connection with the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

The EUSC has taken an active role in the framework of the European initiative of Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES). The Centre has also participated in research projects relating to the security aspect of GMES.

VI. EU INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES

The EU Institute for Security Studies continued its work with regard to research, debate and analysis on security issues.

The Institute formed a focal point for academic exchange, networking and monitoring of the European security agenda as well as a policy-orientated think tank supplying European policy-makers with analysis, advice and suggestions.

The Institute organised, in cooperation with other European political and research centres, a series of seminars on the implementation of the European Security Strategy, which contributed to a better understanding of the Union's progress as an international player and in promoting a stronger and safer Europe. On 5 and 6 June 2008 in Rome, the Institute co-organised a seminar with the Istituto Affari Internazionali, on the EU and global governance. It also held a seminar on European neighbourhood on 27 and 28 June 2008 in Warsaw, with the Natolin European centre and a seminar on the EU's approach to international security on 18 and 19 September in Helsinki with the Finnish Institute of International Affairs and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. The debate ended with the Paris Forum on Europe's strategic interests and options, held in cooperation with French Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The Institute organised a series of seminars, for example on security in the Middle East, WMD, non-proliferation and disarmament on 19 and 20 June 2008, and on strengthening ESDP on 18 and 19 September 2008. The annual conference was held on 30 and 31 October 2008, and the first EU-Washington Forum took place on 20 and 21 November 2008. The Institute co-organised a seminar on Georgia and the EU from 15 to 18 July 2008 in Tbilisi with the Georgian foundation for security and international studies. Finally, the ISS contributed actively to the organisation, with the Ravand Institute, of a seminar in Tehran on 6 and 7 December 2008 on the European Union and Iran, which focused on the European Union's foreign policy and on the future of relations between the European Union and Iran.

VII. SECURITY SECTOR REFORM (SSR)

Security Sector Reform is an important field of the European Union's activities, as is illustrated by several ESDP missions.

To enhance the European Union's capability in the area of Security Sector Reform, on 10 November 2008 the Council approved the creation of a pool of European experts in this area, which will make it possible to set up teams deployable as needed to take part in actions to support security sector reform in partner countries. The missions and training courses in which these experts take part will contribute to creating a community of European experts in the field of SSR.

Work on implementing this project is already under way. Member States will receive a progress report at the beginning of 2009.

A pilot project on security sector reform was organised jointly by France and the Netherlands in the Hague from 20 to 23 October 2008, under the auspices of the European Security and Defence College.

A seminar on cooperation between the European Union and civil-society actors in the area of Security Sector Reform was organised in Brussels by the French Presidency on 12 September 2008, in cooperation with the EPLO (European Peace-building Liaison Office) European network and the Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). The Council General Secretariat, the European Commission, representatives of CIVCOM, the PMG, the CODEV and COAFR Working Parties and several experts from civil society organisations attended the meeting.

VIII. HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER ISSUES

The need to mainstream human rights issues, including children and women affected by armed conflict and gender issues, in the planning and conduct of ESDP missions and operations, has been reiterated.

In this connection, the need for continuing implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1612 and 1820 and for increased participation by women in ESDP missions and operations was underlined. In particular, closer cooperation on these issues with the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), whose mandates henceforward contain dedicated human rights provisions, and with the European Commission, was advocated.

On 10 October 2008, in the context of the priority it is giving to combating violence against women, the French Presidency organised a conference in cooperation with UNIFEM entitled "Implementing SCR 1325 and 1820 in EU missions: Improving immediate and long-term security for women". The conference focused on concrete examples of implementation and on the interaction between political decision-makers and personnel present on the ground. The conference ended with a series of concrete and operational conclusions and recommendations for enhanced EU action to implement United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820. On this basis, the relevant European Union texts have been merged and amended to produce a new document entitled "Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 in the context of ESDP". The document was approved by the Council on 8 December 2008.

IX. CONFLICT PREVENTION

Efforts were pursued to improve the culture and strategy of conflict prevention. In this connection, the French Presidency of the European Union, in close cooperation with the general Secretariat of the Council, the European Commission and the EPLO (European Peace-building Liaison Office) European network, supported a seminar organised by the Madariaga – College of Europe Foundation and the Folke Bernadotte Academy on Conflict Prevention and the Fight against Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (16 and 17 October 2008, Brussels).

This seminar formed part of the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on the Arms Trade Treaty and made possible an update on implementation of the European Strategy to Combat SALW, which was adopted in 2005 by the European Council in association with representatives of the African Union and other sub-regional organisations and the representatives of civil society.

An action plan for pooling Member States' best practices in the field of conflict prevention has been approved for 2009-2010.

X. VISIBILITY OF THE ESDP

During the second half of 2008, the EU continued its action to enhance visibility of the ESDP. While its activities in the field of crisis management are growing and the EU is taking on increasing responsibility for the stabilisation and peaceful development of regions affected by conflicts throughout the world, there is a clear need to continue to effectively communicate its goals and aims to the broader public, decision-makers and major stakeholders. The communications activities carried out by the Council Press Office on the occasion of the launching of the Civilian Monitoring Mission in Georgia and of a maritime operation off the coast of Somalia have highlighted the EU's capacity to respond to these challenges. Other outreach campaigns have targeted key events in the course of operations. The ESDP continues to attract very considerable public interest.

XI. COOPERATION WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

In order to step up the dialogue between NGOs and Council preparatory bodies, the Presidency invited NGO representatives to brief members of the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management, in accordance with the recommendations for increased cooperation with NGOs and civil society organisations.

The Presidency has also organised two seminars, on reform of the security sector and confliction prevention respectively, in partnership with NGOs and civil society organisations.

XII. ESDC AND TRAINING

On the basis of the Study on the future perspectives of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), which particularly stresses the growing demand for training in the ESDP field faced by the College, its Steering Committee recommended improving the functioning of the College by giving it a larger secretariat, a budget of its own and legal personality. The Council has approved these recommendations.

On 10 November 2008, the Council approved the launch of the European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus. The aim is to develop exchanges between officers in their initial training phase, in order to reinforce the ability of the European armed forces to work together and the interoperability of forces. This initiative, which will facilitate exchanges between national training colleges, will be implemented on a national and voluntary basis, with assistance from the European Security and Defence College (ESDC).

In July 2008, the analysis of training needs in the ESDP area was approved. It has been published on the European Security and Defence College website.

In the last six months, the European Security and Defence College has begun the 2008/2009 academic year with the ESDP High Level Course 2008/2009. An experimental internet-based distance-learning (IDL) course was established to support the first module of the High Level Course. Experience has confirmed the great potential which IDL capacity could have in the training process.

The ESDC also organised two ESDP Orientation Courses, with the aim of giving participants a solid general knowledge of the ESDP. The two courses, which were organised jointly with the French *Institut des hautes études de la défense national* (IHEDN) and the German *Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik*, took place in Brussels from 15 to 19 September and from 24 to 28 November 2008.

The ESDC organised a course jointly with the IHEDN intended for press and public information staff from 17 to 19 November 2008, to familiarise them with the ESDP.

The ESDC also developed new types of training activity. From 20 to 23 October 2008, a pilot course on security sector reform (SSR) was organised jointly in The Hague. Several Member States expressed their intention to organise a further course on SSR in 2009. In addition, a seminar on leadership and decision-making in the ESDP area was organised jointly with the Italian *Centro Alti Studi Difesa* in Rome from 29 to 31 October 2008. Finally, a course on the planning process for European Union crisis management operations and missions was organised jointly in Brussels from 3 to 5 December 2008.

In total, the ESDC has provided training to 1543 people since it was created in 2005.

The second session of the programme for the operational training of police experts to be deployed in international missions including those of the United Nations, co-financed by the European Commission under the Instrument for Stability, was held in France in November, at the National Training Centre for Gendarmerie Forces at St Astier. Some 300 personnel from 20 police forces from 18 Member States participated in that session.

XIII. EXERCISES

The holding of the second European Union crisis management exercise CME 08, which went well, made possible the simultaneous and coordinated planning of a military operation and a civilian mission engaged in the same theatre. The exercise took place from 24 November to 5 December, and involved the European Operational Headquarters in Mont Valérien (France), which is also involved in the conduct of the EUFOR Tchad/RCA operation, as well as the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC).

The third European Union military exercise (MILEX 08) from 19 to 27 June 2008 went well and demonstrated the full capability of the Rome (Italy) European Operational Headquarters to conduct European Union military operations.

There was satisfactory progress with preparations for the CME 09 crisis management exercise. That exercise will involve the Operations Centre, in an appropriate scenario.

There has been satisfactory progress with preparations for the military exercise MILEX 09. That exercise will, in the framework of a scenario for a military operation including maritime aspects, involve the European Operational Headquarters in Larissa (Greece) and the European Forces Headquarters in Naples (Italy).

XIV. COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS, MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS AND THIRD STATES

European Union – United Nations

EU-UN cooperation is an important component of ESDP.

On 10 November 2008 the Council took note of the progress achieved in implementing the 2007 joint statement, in particular by a widening and deepening of the area of cooperation between the two organisations in the following areas: early warning; training and exercises; planning; arrangements for transition between operations; and security sector reform.

It is necessary to continue close coordination between the two organisations in theatres of operation in which they are jointly committed, notably in the Central African Republic, Chad, Kosovo, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and Somalia.

On 26 September 2008, the Presidency organised a ministerial seminar on cooperation between the EU and the UN on crisis management, in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly and in the presence of the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary-General/High Representative, the Commissioner with responsibility for External Relations and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Discussions covered possible new areas of cooperation, and the resources needed to strengthen the partnership between the two organisations on crisis management and security.

Also, jointly with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (Sweden), the Presidency organised an International Forum from 20 to 22 October 2008 in Paris on the challenges of peacekeeping operations, entitled *"Partnerships – The United Nations, the European Union and the regional dimensions of peace operations: examples of cooperation within the framework of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter"*. The seminar analysed the evolution of the relationship between the United Nations and other international organisations, using the example of UN-EU cooperation and the lessons learned from recent cooperation. Humanitarian aspects, the development and consolidation of peace, and the reform of security systems were also addressed.

The EU-UN Steering Committee met on 24 and 25 November 2008 in New York. It discussed the operations which are under way or at the planning stage, as well as horizontal aspects such as planning, joint support for mission and operations, civil protection and mediation capabilities. The PSC was informed of the outcome of the Committee's proceedings.

European Union – NATO

The importance of good operational cooperation between the European Union and NATO in theatres in which the two organisations are jointly committed was recalled. The high-level seminar on relations between the Union and NATO, organised in Paris on 7 July 2008 in the presence of the Secretaries-General of the two organisations, confirmed the need for more far-reaching cooperation between them in the direction of mutual reinforcement of their activities. In this context, the strategic partnership between the European Union and NATO must be strengthened.

It is also important to continue cooperation between the European Union and NATO on military capabilities development matters. As the Council noted on 10 November 2008, the EU-NATO Capability Group continued to provide a forum for exchanging information on the development of military capabilities in the European Union and in NATO where requirements overlapped (e.g. externalisation of logistic support, helicopters, radio spectrum, etc.). In this way the EU-NATO Capability Group has contributed to transparency between the two organisations in accordance with the capabilities development mechanism. Before and after each meeting Member States were briefed in detail on the items on the agenda of the Capability Group's proceedings. Henceforward Malta will attend EU-NATO Capability Group meetings. The participation of all the EU Member States would facilitate exchange of information in the field of military capabilities further still.

European Union – Africa

Progress has been made with implementing the European Union-Africa Joint Strategy and its 2008-2010 Action Plan, both adopted at the European Union-Africa Summit which took place in Lisbon in December 2007.

The first meeting in Brussels on 30 September 2008 between the members of the European Union's Political and Security Committee (PSC) and the members of the African Union's Peace and Security Council (PSC) afforded the opportunity of further enhancing crisis-management ties and dialogue between the African Union and the European Union, with regard to such essential issues as strengthening the African peace and security architecture and African peacekeeping capabilities. The meeting made it possible to reiterate the need for progress on specific dossiers, in particular concerning the AMANI AFRICA (EURO RECAMP) Cycle intended to assist with establishment of the African Standby Force, which was launched on 21 November 2008, and with European Union support for the African peacekeeping training centres, which will already take effect in the first quarter of 2009 as part of the new Peace Facility.

Regular organisation of the joint meetings between members of the European Union's PSC and the African Union's PSC is to be encouraged.

EU – OSCE

In Georgia, the OSCE and the Civilian ESDP Mission EUMM are cooperating closely in monitoring the plan for implementation of the agreement of 12 August, signed by all parties on 8 September. Coordination between the monitoring actions of the two organisations is important for the success of the Missions and for peace in the region.

Cooperation with EUROPOL

Work on mechanisms for cooperation between civilian ESDP missions and EUROPOL on the exchange of strategic information led to the signing on 18 July 2008 of an arrangement between the Secretary-General/High Representative for the CFSP and the Director of EUROPOL. The Council called on Member States, in close cooperation with EUROPOL and the Council General Secretariat, to implement a mechanism for the exchange of information via the National Units for the EULEX Kosovo Mission without delay. The Council also invited the Council General Secretariat and EUROPOL to conduct a joint assessment of the implementation of the mechanism before June 2009.

Cooperation with third States

The European Union continued the close cooperation in ESDP crisis management with the non-EU European NATO members and countries which are candidates for accession to the EU, and with Canada, the United States, Russia, Ukraine and other third States. Non-EU European NATO members and countries which are candidates for accession to the EU met regularly with the PSC and the EUMC regarding the development of European Union military operations.

Dialogue and cooperation with Mediterranean partners in the area of ESDP continued. Several of them participate in operations and training activities run by the European Union.

An informal meeting was held between members of the PSC and non-EU NATO members and countries that are candidates for accession (Canada, Croatia, FYROM, Iceland, Norway, Turkey and the United States) in Brussels on 8 October 2008. That meeting resulted in a fruitful exchange on operational questions of mutual interest.

Many third-country participants also took part in the ESDP Orientation Course organised by the European Security and Defence College, which took place in Brussels from 15 to 19 September 2008. Several third States were invited to propose candidates for the course which was held from 24 to 28 November 2008.

Several third States continued to take part in the ALTHEA military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Albania, Chile, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Switzerland and Turkey). Albania, Croatia and Russia are participating in the EUFOR Tchad/RCA operation. In the context of the military coordination action being conducted by EU NAVCO in support of United Nations Security Council resolutions 1816 and 1814, contacts have been established with several third States which are concerned by the situation in the region. Those contacts will be continued with a view to the possible participation of third States in the ATALANTA operation.

XV. MANDATE FOR THE INCOMING PRESIDENCY

On the basis of the present report and taking into account the European Security Strategy, the incoming Presidency, assisted by the Secretary General/High Representative and in association with the Commission, is invited to continue work on developing the European Security and Defence Policy, and in particular:

- To prepare and ensure effective implementation of decisions relating to present and future missions and operations, both civilian and military.
- To continue to develop civilian capabilities in the framework of the Civilian Headline Goal 2010, taking into account the commitments of Ministers on the Civilian Capabilities approved on 10 November 2008, and to ensure follow-up to the initiatives for the enhanced effectiveness of civilian crisis management.

- To continue work on the development of military capabilities in the framework of the Headline Goal 2010, focusing on recommendations from the Progress Catalogue 07 in conjunction with the Capability Development Plan.
- To support the European Defence Agency (EDA) in its work, in particular with regard to the Capability Development Plan (CDP) and strengthening the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB), taking into account consequent steps elaborated by the EDA.
- To further develop work on concrete capability projects and initiatives, including those developed by the EDA.
- On the basis of the report and recommendations by the Secretary-General/High Representative which were adopted by the GAERC in November 2007, to continue work on implementing the recommendations addressing shortcomings in the EUMS's ability to conduct planning for EU-led operations at the strategic level, with a view to the SG/HR's presenting a report at the GAERC in May 2009.
- Relating to the civil-military coordination (CMCO), to further develop work on the EU Network Enabled Capability concept.
- To continue implementing the EU exercise programme, including conducting the comprehensive evaluation of CME 08 and taking forward the work on the planning of the Crisis Management Exercise CME 09.
- To continue the effort to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning, conduct and control of civilian ESDP missions.
- To implement the Guidelines for identification and implementation of lessons and best practices in civilian ESDP missions.

- To strengthen training in the field of ESDP, encompassing both civilian and military dimensions, in particular through the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and taking into account national activities as well as the Community instruments.
- To take further the work on the ESDP contribution to Security Sector Reform (SSR), in particular on creating a pool of experts who would form teams deployable in the framework of EU missions.
- On the basis of the "Joint Statement on EU – UN Cooperation in crisis management", to continue to promote consultations and cooperation with the United Nations in the field of crisis management.
- To enhance EU-NATO strategic partnership in crises management, to ensure effective and practical coordination, including on the security of EU civilian missions, where the two organisations are engaged in the same theatre, notably in Kosovo and Afghanistan; to ensure the mutually reinforcing development of capabilities where the requirements overlap, including through exchange of information in the EU-NATO Capability Group; to continue the implementation of the existing framework of cooperation between the EU and NATO
- To continue the EU engagement in the Western Balkans through ongoing and future activities and to continue the dialogue with Mediterranean partners participating in the Barcelona process.
- On the basis of the Africa-EU Joint Strategy and the Action Plan (2008-2010), to continue strengthening the strategic partnership between the EU and Africa in the area of African capabilities for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. To further assist in development of the African Standby Force, including through conduct of the AMANI AFRICA/EURO RECAMP Cycle.
- To continue close dialogue and cooperation with other key partners.

- To follow on promoting the implementation of relevant human rights-related provisions in the context of the ESDP crisis management activities, as well as gender mainstreaming and the subject of Children and Armed conflicts.
- To continue dialogue and exchange of information with NGOs and civil society in accordance with Recommendations for Enhancing Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the Framework of EU Civilian Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention.
- To continue the implementation of Conflict Prevention including launching a two-year programme "Sharing of Best Practices" as well as to prepare a Presidency Report on Conflict Prevention to be adopted by the European Council in June 2009.
- To enhance the ESDP information and communication activities with a view to further raising the ESDP profile within the EU and outside.
- To work on implementing the European young officers exchange scheme, modeled on ERASMUS.

