COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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NOTE

From :	General Secretariat of the Council
To :	Delegations
Subject :	Council Conclusions on ESDP

The Council Conclusions on ESDP, as set out at annex, were adopted by the Council on 17 November 2009.

ANNEX

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON ESDP

1. Commemorating the 10th anniversary of the inception of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), the Council commended the success of this policy which saw the deployment of some 70.000 personnel in 22 ESDP missions and operations, of which 12 are ongoing, in support of international peace and security. ESDP has proven to be an effective tool in the EU's comprehensive external action to be viewed in the framework of the European Security Strategy (ESS) and the need to strengthen the links and synergies between security and development.

2. The Council endorsed the Ministerial Declaration "ESDP Ten Years - Challenges and Opportunities[1]".

I. ESDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS

Western Balkans

EULEX Kosovo

3. The Council commended the mission's efforts in implementing its mandate throughout Kosovo, following its declaration of full operational capability on 6 April 2009, despite facing serious challenges. The Council continued its full support to the further efforts of EULEX to exercise its mandate throughout Kosovo.

[1] Doc. 16463/09

4. The Council noted with satisfaction the results achieved so far by EULEX KOSOVO in assisting judicial and law enforcement agencies and in promoting rule of law reforms, including in the prosecution and adjudication of sensitive criminal cases and in the fight against organised crime and corruption; as well as for assuming responsibility for law and order in support of the Kosovo police and in cooperation with other international partners when needed.

5. The Council looked forward to the establishment of the Human Rights Review Panel to assess the conduct of EULEX Kosovo in the performance of its executive mandate. This will contribute to the external accountability on the part of EULEX.

6. Recalling the considerable and unique responsibility assumed by the European Union, the Council stressed the importance of all Member States ensuring that the mission continues to be adequately staffed with high quality personnel in order for the mission to fulfil its mandate.

7. While expressing its full support for local efforts to establish the rule of law, the Council stressed the importance of continued and genuine cooperation on the part of the Kosovo authorities with the mission. The Council reiterated the importance of cooperation by regional and international partners with the mission. The implementation of the EULEX KOSOVO mandate will continue to play an important role in strengthening the stability of the region, in line with its European perspective and will require a consistent commitment by all stakeholders. The Council expressed its continued support to EULEX Kosovo's efforts to enhance regional cooperation.

EUPM Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM)

8. The Council welcomed the efforts carried out by EUPM Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to achieve its mandate and noted the important role played by the mission as part of the overall EU efforts to stabilise BiH with a view to its European perspective. It welcomed the support provided by the mission to BiH authorities in implementation of police reform; the fight against organised crime and corruption, including in high-level cases; and in improving the coordination between the police and the Judiciary.

9. The mission will contribute to the comprehensive enhanced EU engagement in BiH, as well as prepare for its reorganisation in line with its post-2009 mandate, refocused on the support to the combat against organised crime and corruption. EUPM will continue its close cooperation within the EU family, in particular with the EUSR, EUFOR ALTHEA and the European Commission.

Operation ALTHEA

10. The Council assessed Operation ALTHEA and approved the recommendations made in the Secretary-General/High Representative's six-monthly report on the operation.

11. The Council reconfirmed that Operation ALTHEA remained an important part of EU's comprehensive efforts in BiH to support a political process aimed at enabling BiH, on the basis of necessary reforms, to continue to move forward in the EU integration process.

12. The Council noted that the security situation in BiH continued to remain stable, despite the challenging political environment. The Council welcomed the positive contribution of the force to the safe and secure environment in BiH, and added that the EU-led force (EUFOR) continued to provide reassurance and remained ready to respond to possible security challenges throughout the country.

13. The Council welcomed further progress with the preparatory planning work for the possible future evolution of Operation ALTHEA towards a non-executive capacity-building and training operation. The Council reiterated that a decision on the possible evolution of Operation ALTHEA would need to take political developments, including the future role of the EU Special Representative, into account. It is expected to revert to the issue at its forthcoming meeting in December.

14. The Council reiterated the importance of Member States providing the operation with the necessary resources for the implementation of the mandate.

15. Coherence of EU action in BiH - involving all EU actors including the Commission and EU Heads of Mission - remains important. The EU Force Commander, the EUSR and the Head of EUPM continue to consult each other regularly prior to taking action. EUFOR has also maintained a close working relationship, including on operational matters, with other international actors. Cooperation with NATO continues to work well in respect of Operation ALTHEA.

South Caucasus

EUMM Georgia

16. The Council welcomed the Mission's contribution to the overall EU effort towards conflict resolution in Georgia, especially by monitoring the implementation of the Agreements of 12 August and 8 September 2008. Given the cessation of the UN and OSCE monitoring missions, EUMM is now the sole international monitoring mission in Georgia. This has increased the significance of EUMM activities. The mandate of the mission was extended by the Council for another year until 14 September 2010.

17. The Council welcomed the mission's contribution to stability, normalisation and confidence building in Georgia. The Council reiterated its support to the full implementation of EUMM's country-wide mandate, including access to the de-facto entities. While expressing its continued commitment to Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as to the principal of non-use of force, the Council emphasised the importance of measures to further build confidence among the parties, including through taking advantage of the agreed Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRM). This should enable human and trade contacts throughout Georgia leading to further improvement of living conditions for all populations affected by the conflict. In this context, the Council invited all parties to use all means at their disposal to contribute to these efforts.

Asia

EUPOL Afghanistan

18. The Council reaffirmed its determination to make a significant contribution to the reform of the Afghan police. Strengthening the Afghan police and rule of law sector is of crucial importance in the promotion of stability and security in Afghanistan. The Council stressed the distinctive role of EUPOL AFGHANISTAN in providing civilian policing expertise as key to the sustainability of police reforms in Afghanistan and acknowledged the importance of close cooperation among the actors on the ground. In this context the Council underlined the crucial role of the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB).The Council welcomed the consolidation of EUPOL AFGHANISTAN strategic priorities along six objectives, namely intelligence-led policing; police chain of command, control and communication; criminal investigation; anti-corruption; police-prosecutor linkages; and human rights and gender mainstreaming within the Afghan Police. The Council also welcomed the continued progress made by the mission over the last year at strategic, operational and tactical levels.

19. At this critical moment, it is of utmost importance that the EU honours commitments made in support of police reform in Afghanistan. The Council underlined the importance that Member States provide the mission with the personnel and logistical resources necessary to implement its mandate countrywide.

Middle East

EUJUST LEX

20. The Council underlined the strong continued commitment of the European Union to support the development of the rule of law in Iraq, specifically by providing training and mentoring in the area of the police, the judiciary and the penitentiary system. The Council welcomed the extension of EUJUST LEX for one year and its first pilot activities on Iraqi territory. Building on the success of these in-country activities, the mission is stepping up its engagement to support the rule of law in Iraq through further planned work. The Council stressed the importance of ensuring a geographical balance in the mission activities and the continuation of training of senior officials, in Iraq, in the region as well as in Europe.

EUPOL COPPS

21. The Council welcomed the work carried out by the mission in the area of police and criminal justice. In particular, it welcomed the mission's efforts to strengthen its advisory section on the rule of law which now co-locate with their Palestinian counterparts and its advocacy for the Civil Policing Model and support for Community Policing. The Council agreed to take work forward on addressing further action in the broader rule of law in the Palestinian Territories. Synergies should continue to be sought between EUPOL COPPS activities and Community as well as Member States action in this area.

EUBAM Rafah

22. Welcoming the extension of the mandate of EUBAM Rafah for a further six months, the Council confirmed the EU's readiness to redeploy at short notice at the Rafah Crossing Point, should circumstances allow. Despite the closure of the Rafah Crossing Point the mission is maintaining its operational capability.

Africa

Operation ATALANTA/EUNAVFOR

23. The Council commended that ATALANTA continued to successfully contribute to maritime security off the coast of Somalia by protecting World Food Programme chartered vessels delivering aid to Somalia, vessels supplying critical shipments to the AU peace support operation in Somalia (AMISOM), and other vulnerable vessels, notably in the Gulf of Aden and in the Somali Basin. In this regard, the Council welcomed the successful generation of maritime assets so far, in particular the recent increase in maritime patrol aircraft, and noted the need for continuing efforts. The Council also welcomed the growing participation of third states.

24. Recognizing the complex challenges involved in combating piracy over vast maritime areas, the Council encouraged all actors to pursue existing coordination efforts, including in the field of gathering and exchanging information and intelligence. The Council welcomed the achievements made through ATALANTA's Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa, which allows notably an effective coordination and cooperation with the civilian maritime community. The Council welcomed the leading role taken by ATALANTA in the coordination between the multinational, national and regional naval forces operating in the area to ensure de-confliction, shared awareness and coordination in the disruption of piracy. In this context, the work of the SHADE (Shared Awareness and Deconfliction) forum in Bahrain was particularly commended.

25. The Council recalled the crucial contribution made by Kenya to the detention and to the undertaking of prosecution of suspected pirates apprehended by ATALANTA's warships. The Council also welcomed the exchange of letters concluded on 30 October 2009 between the EU and the Republic of Seychelles for the transfer of suspected pirates and armed robbers apprehended by ATALANTA. This arrangement constitutes an important new contribution to the counter-piracy efforts. In this context, the Council commended the important contribution by the European Commission through the Instrument for Stability in support of the Kenyan judicial system and welcomed that the Commission is now providing similar support to the Seychelles.

26. The Council underlined the necessity to seek sustainable solutions for the prosecution of suspected pirates and took note of the initiatives taken in the framework of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, including to set up a UN trust fund inter alia to financially support countries willing to prosecute suspected pirates, and on the study on establishing an international mechanism for the prosecution of suspected pirates.

27. The Council recalled its intention to extend Operation ATALANTA for another year following the end of the current mandate on 12 December 2009.

Somalia

28. In July 2009 the Council decided to step up the EU's engagement for promoting peace and development in Somalia. To this end, the Council has studied possibilities for the EU to contribute to international efforts, including in the security field.

29. Further EU support to the Somali security sector should be considered within a comprehensive EU approach to the situation in Somalia. This support should be part of a larger and coherent framework involving close EU cooperation with the AU, the UN and other relevant partners, in particular the US. In regard to the AU, the role of AMISOM is especially important.

30. The Council stressed the importance of Transitional Federal Government (TFG) ownership and a clear TFG commitment to build a viable and sustainable security sector.

31. The Council approved a Crisis Management Concept on a possible ESDP mission to contribute to the training of TFG Security Forces and requested further planning work, without prejudging subsequent decisions on a possible ESDP action.

EUSEC RD Congo

32. The Council welcomed the work of EUSEC RD Congo and stressed that defence reform and good governance in the defence field remain key factors in creating conditions for lasting stability and development in the country. On the basis of a strategic overview, the mandate of EUSEC RD Congo was revised and extended until 30 September 2010.

33. The Council underlined the importance of EUSEC RD Congo's key tasks of providing advice and assistance for defence reform with the aim of implementing the Congolese revised reform plan for the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) and to translate it into concrete actions. The Council highlighted the importance of political commitment by the Congolese authorities to take the reform process forward and encouraged the establishment of a coordination mechanism for defence reform under Congolese ownership, with appropriate support from EUSEC.

34. The Council welcomed the progress in the integration of former armed groups, including CNDP. This integration, including cooperation in the chain of payments, remains a key short term priority in the defence reform process.

35. The Council underlined the importance of EU action in DRC in contributing to the prevention and addressing of human rights violations and therefore welcomed the increased focus of EUSEC RD Congo in supporting efforts to address impunity for crimes, particularly sexual and gender-based violence, committed by the security forces and the use of child soldiers.

EUPOL RD Congo

36. The Council welcomed the work of EUPOL RD Congo in supporting the reform of the Congolese national police and its interaction with the justice sector. Notwithstanding the security situation in the country, which remains volatile, this reform is beginning to achieve some positive results, such as the submission of the draft Organic Law for the Police to the Congolese National Assembly. The Council encouraged the Congolese authorities to proceed with passing this important law in a timely manner. The Council also noted the important coordination work conducted by the Comité de Suivi de la Réforme de la Police (CSRP) and invited all partners to further the coordination efforts in the field of police reform.

37. The Council welcomed the deployment of the mission in Goma and Bukavu and the reinforced effort in the area of criminal investigation, including the fight against sexual violence and impunity, through the deployment of additional specialised personnel. The mission's mandate has been extended until 30 June 2010.

EU SSR Guinea-Bissau

38. The Council welcomed the work taken forward by EU SSR Guinea-Bissau under difficult circumstances and in a climate of political instability. The Council noted the recent positive developments in Guinea-Bissau, notably the successful presidential elections, and the more promising outlook for progress on SSR reform. The Council noted the expression of commitment from the Government of Guinea-Bissau to reiterate its efforts for Security Sector Reform.

39. The Council approved in November 2009 an extension of the mission for six months. The main purpose of the extension is to complete the activities foreseen in the current mandate and to prepare the ground for the future implementation of the legal framework by the authorities of Guinea-Bissau. A strategic review on the future of the EU engagement in Guinea-Bissau, taking into account regional aspects, will be carried out by January 2010.

II. CONFLICT PREVENTION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES AND THEMATIC ISSUES

Civilian Capabilities

40. The rise of new security threats and challenges and the growing demand for EU civilian crisis management has resulted in the need to enhance further the ESDP civilian capabilities. Moving forward means addressing persistent shortfalls - as they have been identified in the course of the Civilian Headline Goal 2010 and recalled by the European Council Conclusions of December 2008 - and better preparing, deploying and conducting ESDP civilian missions increasingly faced with more challenging and complex tasks. In light of this, the Council recognized the growing need to ensure that civilian ESDP missions, as an effective crisis management tool are able to be deployed rapidly by the EU alongside other instruments, in support of strategic EU's aims and objectives.

41. The Council welcomed the considerable progress made in civilian capability planning and development during the Swedish Presidency. The Council welcomed the document on implementation entitled "Civilian Capability Planning and Development - Guiding Lines for the Second Semester 2009", which brought together the various strands of work needed to address the EU's challenges comprehensively. It noted that this process had allowed for a dynamic and focused civilian capability development effort while ensuring adequate strategic oversight and guidance. Although it acknowledged the need of taking into account the various national approaches, the Council deemed that a well coordinated civilian capability development framework continues to be necessary to guide future work on enhancing civilian capabilities.

42. These conclusions bring together reporting on progress made as foreseen in the Civilian Headline Goal 2010 (November 2007), the Ministerial Commitments as Regards the Development of Civilian Capabilities (November 2008) and the Implementation Plan for Civilian Capabilities (January 2009). It also comprises reporting on the ESDP mandate for the Swedish Presidency (June 2009) as well as the state of implementation of the Guiding Lines for Civilian Capabilities (July 2009).

43. As the Civilian Headline Goal 2010 draws to a close, the Council looked forward to further reflections on ways to foster the delivery of European capabilities beyond 2010. This should include modalities for the foreseen stocktaking event by the end of 2010 and considerations on the need to bring closer together the civilian and military capability development processes, where possible, also taking into account the results of the Headline Goal 2010 on the military capabilities.

Enhancing the availability of civilian personnel

Facilitating the deployment of civilian personnel

44. The Council welcomed the considerable progress made by Member States in enacting and implementing national measures facilitating the deployment of civilian personnel. It noted that several Member States are in the process of adopting such national measures/strategies and establishing more appropriate structures. The Council welcomed, in this context, the fostering of a continuous exchange of experiences and best practices, through inter alia expert seminars, leading to increased involvement of relevant national authorities in the civilian force generation process. The Council notes that this exchange currently focuses on four areas of action (i.e. national regulatory measures, national budgetary measures, national rosters and training). The Council expects this work to be pursued without delay.

45. The Council noted the continued need for missions to be adequately staffed with high quality personnel to enable the successful delivery of mission mandates. The Council stressed the importance of continuing efforts to match ambition with resources. It encouraged strongly that all Member States take practical steps to ensure the required force generation.

Human Resources

46. With a view to facilitating an orderly and predictable force generation, the Council welcomed the significantly improved procedures that have been put in place regarding calls for contribution and selection of staff. The Council took note of progress regarding the standardisation of job descriptions as well as of the development of standard mission administrative tools.

Rapid deployment

47. The Council welcomed progress made towards enhancing civilian rapid deployment capability, and recalled the need to enhance further this capacity as a priority action.

Preparatory measures and financial regulation

48. The Council welcomed the agreement to make financial resources available in the early phases of EU response to a crisis, and looked forward to the adjustments of the Preparatory Measure framework in 2010. In order to enhance the EU's potential to respond rapidly to crises, the Council underlined the need to make further progress on financing of activities and simplifying decision-making procedures and implementation modalities, taking account of lessons learned.

    In this regard, the Council also looked forward to the opportunities offered by the revision of the Financial Regulation foreseen in 2010.

Equipment

49. The Council stressed that a permanent capacity to store new and existing strategic material is a vital resource to ensure rapid deployment of equipment to new and existing missions as well as sound financial management. It welcomed the establishment of a temporary warehouse within EUPM Bosnia and Herzegovina by January 2010 and appreciated the ongoing exploratory work on the establishment of a permanent warehousing solution. The Council looks forward to the results in 2010 with regard to the possible establishment of a permanent warehousing solution. The Council also welcomed the ongoing work of an inventory management system for civilian ESDP missions.

50. The Council took note of the Framework Contracts currently concluded by the Commission and emphasized the need to put in place or launch, before the end of 2009, all Framework Contracts necessary to allow for proper and timely delivery of key equipment.

Civilian Response Teams (CRT)

51. The Council welcomed the revision of the CRT concept. This foresees that the CRT pool shall be doubled with a target up to 200 experts with additional fields of expertise, as well as more efficient procedures for decision and deployment. The Council expects that the revised CRT concept will lead to a higher degree of flexibility and availability. The Council also welcomed the Commission's participation, including in identifying a long-term solution for the financing of training needs. It looked forward to the implementation of the revised CRT concept, while at the same time taking into account the development of the European SSR pool.

Goalkeeper software environment

52. The Council welcomed the progress made with the development and release of the Goalkeeper software environment and recalled the need to finalize, implement and operationalize all Goalkeeper applications without delay.

Comprehensive Concept for Police Strengthening Missions

53. The EU Comprehensive Concept for Police Strengthening Missions was revised, to take account of experience acquired in ESDP missions. The revised concept continues to be framed by the fundamental principles of rule of law and acknowledges the need for strong links with the justice sector. It continues to stress the importance of the necessary interface with a host country's justice system, as well as of local ownership; a stronger focus on combating organised crime and corruption; as well as police officers able to take appropriate action when faced with Human Rights violations. The Council considers that the revised concept, in setting out the tools available to police strengthening missions, should contribute to improved mission planning, mission benchmarking and best practice sharing.

Cooperation between ESDP and JHA

54. The Council welcomed the initiatives taken in this area. Recognizing the pressing need for increased participation of police, prosecutors, judges and penitentiary personnel in ESDP missions, the Council welcomed the discussions that have taken place between ESDP and Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) actors (e.g. Informal CivCom meeting, Article 36 Committee, Informal EUROPOL Ministerial meeting and the Task Force of Chiefs of Police) on cooperation between the relevant JHA and ESDP actors. It noted that several ESDP missions also make a positive contribution to the EU's internal security by supporting the combat against serious transnational crime in their host countries and by building capacity in the field of international legal cooperation. It noted that the experience gained in missions contributes to competence development for law enforcement personnel. It underlined the importance that relevant JHA actors recognize this rationale when prioritizing allocation of appropriate personnel to ESDP missions. It welcomed the progress made regarding the exchange of information within agreed frameworks between ESDP missions and EUROPOL, and in particular with EULEX Kosovo. The Council encouraged enhanced coordination between ESDP and initiatives relating to the external dimension of the JHA, e.g. FRONTEX. Furthermore, the Council encouraged further enhanced cooperation and sharing of information, where appropriate, between relevant ESDP and JHA actors.

Civil-Military Capability Development

55. The Council reconfirmed the importance of the EU's Comprehensive approach to crisis management and welcomed work launched by the Swedish Presidency aimed at identifying possible synergies between EU civilian and military capability development work, taking into consideration previous efforts on civil-military synergies. The Council looked forward to the workplan to be presented during the first semester 2010, in which the possible ways forward on a number of concrete areas will be further elaborated, with a view to strengthening future synergies. It also emphasized the need to concentrate joint efforts on concrete areas based on lessons identified in ESDP missions, operations and exercises. Further, the Council acknowledged the possible economic benefits of finding Civil Military synergies in Capability Development, and the added value of dual use capabilities.

56. The Council underlined that the Political and Security Committee (PSC) should play a leading role in this work by giving guidance to the work related to synergies between the EU civil and military capability development and noted the importance of the establishment of the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD) in the work ahead. The CMPD will, within its area of responsibility, *inter alia* foster and coordinate work on synergies between civilian and military capability development, including in helping identify dual needs.

57. The Council noted that the ongoing work towards the integration of maritime surveillance is a concrete example of achieving civil-military synergies. In this context, the Council welcomed the EDA's ongoing work and the Commission's communication on maritime surveillance. The Council noted that the work of the Wise Pen Team is ongoing.

Military Capabilities

Headline Goal 2010

58. The Council welcomed the work carried out in the development of Member States` military capabilities and noted the Single Progress Report.

59. The Council was pleased to note that thanks to updated contributions to the Force Catalogue made by nine Member States, two military capability shortfalls were solved and twelve other capability shortfalls were partially remedied. It noted that the conclusions of the Progress Catalogue 2007 remain unchanged and called for increased efforts by Member States efforts in improving their military capabilities in particular in the areas of survivability, deployability and information superiority. The Council welcomed the progress made towards a common understanding regarding Member States' contributions to the Force Catalogue and the purpose of the Force Catalogue as well as the exploitation of agreed tools and procedures to collect and scrutinise Member States contributions. The Council called for Member States to implement the recommendations agreed by the EUMC in this domain.

60. The Council welcomed the work done in accordance with the Capability Development Mechanism and the Methodology for Measuring Progress and Reviewing Priorities

61. The Council looked forward to the results of the cooperative work of the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and the European Defence Agency (EDA) in order to review and update the Capability Development Plan (CDP) and highlighted the importance to continue work on the twelve CDP priority actions. The Council welcomed their cooperation on lessons learned from operations related to capability trends including on EUFOR Tchad/RCA, EU NAVFOR ATALANTA and Afghanistan.

62. The Council welcomed progress made in military concepts including the EU Conceptual Framework for Military HUMINT in EU-led Military Operations and the Computer Network Concept agreed by the EUMC. It looked forward to the finalisation of ongoing conceptual work undertaken by the EUMC and the EDA in close cooperation and to the finalisation of the EUMC Interoperability Study by the end of 2009.

63. The Council emphasised the importance of reaching the EU Operations Wide Area Network (EU OPS WAN) full operational capability as early as possible.

64. The Council looked forward to further reflections on ways to foster the delivery of European capabilities beyond the 2010 horizon. This should include considerations on the need to increase synergy between the civilian and military EU capability development processes.

Financing

65. Without prejudice to other actual discussions in the relevant fora, the Council invited the CGS to elaborate ideas on financing of military operations for discussion at high level in 2010.

Rapid Response

66. The Council welcomed the initiated follow-on work related to the Air Rapid Response Concept, in particular regarding the EUFOR Deployable Operating Base implementing concept.

67. The Council welcomed the outcomes of the six-monthly Battlegroup Coordination Conference held on 15 October, where Member States commitments, with the related pre-identified Operation Headquarters, were confirmed until the end of 2011. It encouraged Member States to make new offers for Battlegroups from 2012 onwards and to fill in particular the vacant slot in first Semester of 2012 which is perceived as a growing concern.

68. The Council welcomed the agreed guidelines on increasing the flexibility and usability of the EU Battlegroups. The Council underlined the necessity to pursue in due course the related follow-up work.

69. The Council emphasized that the use of EU Battlegroups in a more flexible manner must follow a voluntary approach and be applied on a case by case basis, when the Battlegroups are unanimously considered the best instrument for the given situation. The Council underlined that the EU Battlegroups must not become the default gap filler during force generation. The Council stressed that cooperation between Battlegroups, and between Battlegroups and the Council General Secretariat (CGS) during the preparation phase, as well as during and after the stand-by period of Battlegroups will bring significant benefit and encouraged Member States and CGS to deepen this cooperation. The Council recalled the importance to maintain the EU level of ambition concerning the EU Battlegroups as described in the related concept.

70. The Council welcomed the results of the Air and Maritime Rapid Response conferences held in October.

Multinational forces

71. The Council welcomed the achievements related to the identification of Multinational Forces and Headquarters potentially available for EU-led military operations. It noted that this work is conducted without prejudice to national and multinational decisions to be made by those Member States and Third States concerned, nor to the established decision-making procedures with regard to the participation of Third States in EU military operations. The Council looked forward to the conclusions of this work in early 2010.

European Defence Agency

72. The Council noted the report by the Head of the European Defence Agency, welcoming the Agency's work on defence capabilities in support of ESDP.

73. The Council noted with satisfaction the progress on the 12 selected priority areas defined by the Capability Development Plan. The development of cooperative projects, such as the Helicopter Training Programme, was welcomed as important progress in collaborative capability development. The Council also welcomed the good progress of the Third Party Logistics Support Platform as a means of achieving cost-effective support solutions for ESDP operations.

74. The signature of the Letter of Intent of the EATF was welcomed by the Council as a concrete step in improving cooperation for European capabilities aimed to increase the European airlift provisions.

75. The Council welcomed the EDA's continuing efforts on pooling and sharing, aiming at improving cooperation for capabilities, as stated in the Declaration on Strengthening Capabilities (2008).

76. The Council underlined the importance of continuing efforts to strengthen a capability driven, competent and competitive European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB), and an open and transparent European Defence Equipment Market (EDEM). It welcomed the Political Declaration of Level Playing Field for the European Defence Equipment Market by the EDA Steering Board. The Council also welcomed the entry into force, on 1 July 2009, of the Code of Conduct on Offsets, bringing added transparency to the functioning of the defence market.

77. The continued work on a Security of Information Agreement between the EU and OCCAR and an Administrative Arrangement between EDA and OCCAR was welcomed by the Council as a major step forward in support of a seamless transfer of capability requirements into cooperative procurement programmes. The Council invited all parties to enhance efforts to conclude the Security of Information Agreement and the Administrative arrangement before the end of 2009.

78. The Political Declaration by the EDA Steering Board on the Implementation of the European Military Airworthiness Requirements was noted by the Council as an important reinforcement of the need to harmonise military airworthiness requirements and certification processes to achieve cost-savings and to increase the competitiveness of the EDTIB. In this context, the Council encouraged the Agency to take into consideration the ongoing work related to the Single European Sky.

79. The Council underlined the necessity of finding synergies between defence and civilian security research related activities, situation awareness being considered as one possible candidate, welcoming the European Framework Cooperation for Security and Defence Research to be implemented in close cooperation with the Commission and, as appropriate, with the European Space Agency.

Organisation Development

80. The Council welcomed the appointment of the Deputy Director General who will head the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD). It strongly urged the immediate implementation of the organisational measures to establish the CMPD, with the aim notably to further improve EU civilian and military coordination within the framework of the EEAS.

Security Sector Reform

81. The Council welcomed the considerable progress made on the implementation of the agreement of November 2008 to enhance the capability of the EU in the area of Security Sector Reform (SSR) by creating a pool of European SSR experts to be used in the context of SSR activities carried out by the EU, within the framework of ESDP or Community external action.

82. The established modalities for the setting up of the pool, for the deployment of experts and for training and related activities have been completed, enabling the creation of a community of experts familiar with SSR questions as a whole and sharing a common approach to SSR. The revised CRT concept takes into account the establishment of the pool.

83. In this context, the Council noted work on developing a Guiding Framework for EU SSR Assessments aiming at providing a practical tool for the EU Institutions for assessing and planning possible EU SSR actions both within the framework of ESDP and Community external actions, also with a view to strengthening EU's capacity to implement such actions.

84. The Council encouraged the continuation of efforts to strengthen EU's capacity in SSR, including through cooperation with other actors, especially the UN, and underlined the importance that the expert pool becomes operational as soon as possible.

Gender and Human Rights

85. The Council recalled the importance of a systematic consideration of Human Rights, Gender and Children Affected by Armed Conflict aspects in the planning and conduct of ESDP missions and operations, as well as in the subsequent lessons learned processes. Efforts made to date were commended, but need to be further pursued, including on the protection of civilians, as means to further increase the effectiveness of EU crisis management.

86. The Council welcomed the document "Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 1820 in the context of training for the ESDP missions and operations - recommendations on the way forward", which outlines how to strengthen ESDP missions and operations through training on gender by improving the coherence and quality of pre-deployment and training in general for staff deployed in ESDP missions and operations; increasing the availability and access to gender training, inter alia through developing elements for the training curriculum on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 for ESDP missions and operations; strengthening the links between capability-building, training and deployment; and by raising awareness of gender mainstreaming as a security element and as an important element to achieving greater operational effectiveness.

87. This work was initiated through an expert seminar, and later followed by an ESDP gender perspective symposium under the aegis of the ESDC. A meeting on national action plans on UNSCR 1325 was also initiated. These activities feed into the implementation of the implementation of the "Comprehensive approach to the EU Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security", in particular in the run up to the Ministerial Review Conference.

Conflict prevention, Mediation and Dialogue

88. The Council endorses the "Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities", which provides a policy basis for the EU's engagement in mediation and dialogue and allows the EU to develop a more systematic and coordinated approach in this area. The Council notes that the Concept provides a follow-up to the SG/HR's 2008 Report on the Implementation of European Security Strategy, which recommends that the EU expands its dialogue and mediation capacities. The Concept takes into consideration the results of a meeting of EU Special Representatives in July 2009 and a number of expert seminars, involving international partners and civil society representatives. It is also in line with the broader EU engagement in the area of conflict prevention as set out in the Göteborg Programme of 2001.

89. The Council noted with satisfaction the work that was taken forward during the Swedish Presidency in line with the recommendations of the 2009 Annual Report on the Implementation of the EU Programme on the Prevention of Violent Conflict (Göteborg Programme). Within the framework of the two-year programme "Conflict Prevention in Practice - Creating a Leading Role for the European Union" an outreach workshop and dialogue forum was held in October in cooperation with civil society organisations in order to raise awareness about the tools of dialogue and mediation and to discuss among experts and representatives from relevant organisations how the EU working together with partners, can provide an added value in this field.

90. The Council welcomed the intention of the upcoming Presidencies to take stock of a decade's progress in the field of conflict prevention, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the EU Programme on the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, and will propose further steps on the basis of this stocktaking exercise

Training and Analysis

European Security and Defence College (ESDC)

91. The Council noted with satisfaction the courses undertaken under the aegis of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC). This includes courses and pilot courses, covering important topics such as ESDP mission planning, civil-military co-ordination, capability development, peace building, SSR, international humanitarian law and the law of armed conflicts. In addition, considerable progress was made over recent months on training in the domain of gender and security.

92. The Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) system is providing effective individual preparation phases before most residential courses/modules. Increasing exchanges and cooperation with relevant international training actors may provide further opportunities for enhancing the quality of training.

93. As regards the future format of the ESDC, work is still ongoing on the elaboration of a new Council Decision evolving the ESDC in line with the ESDC Steering Committee recommendations approved by the Council in December 2008. The Council strongly urges that these recommendations be implemented as soon as possible.

94. With regard to the implementation of the European initiative on the exchange of young officers during their initial training inspired by Erasmus, the Council noted that the first Common Module on ESDP has been successfully completed and noted with satisfaction that Member States intend to repeat this module. The Council also noted that further work is under way which in particular focuses on taking stock of current exchange activities and the development, in the framework of this initiative, of a legal framework for the voluntary exchange of officers.

System for pre-deployment training for civilian ESDP

95. The Council noted with appreciation work on enhancing the system of pre-deployment training for civilian ESDP missions. Given the increased complexity of crisis management missions and the challenging environments in which they operate, the Council stressed the importance of adequate pre-deployment training for the ability to implement mission mandates. In this regard, it is important to build on experiences made within the EC Project on Training for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management. More generally, the Council stressed the need for a strong link between training and deployment and the need for proper coordination of pre-deployment training.

96. The Council also acknowledged the relevance for civilian ESDP missions of the Instrument for Stability project EUPFT 2009, i.e. training of police experts in Vicenza (Italy) in September/November 2009.

European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)

97. The Council expressed satisfaction with the work of the European Union Institute for Security Studies, in particular the analysis, advice and suggestions it provides to European policy makers, including through its Annual Conference drawing together a number of international actors and enabling an in-depth discussion of CFSP and ESDP issues.

98. The Council encouraged the Institute to continue enriching Europe's strategic debate, notably through its role as a focal point for academic exchange, networking and studying the European foreign and security agenda.

Lessons Identified

99. The Council looked forward to the First Annual Report on identifying and implementing lessons and best practices in civilian ESDP missions. It will be based *inter alia* on lessons identified from the planning phases of EUMM Georgia, EU SSR Guinea Bissau and EULEX Kosovo.

100. The Council emphasised the importance of the lessons identified process as a tool which provides necessary and valuable input to the civilian capability development effort and stressed the importance of the implementation of lessons identified. The Council welcomed the progress made in applying the "Guidelines on identifying and implementing lessons and best practices in civilian ESDP missions". In particular, it underscored the need to take forward the work on implementing lessons agreed to date and new horizontal, thematic reports on lessons identified. It also encouraged the exchange of views on lessons identified with other relevant actors in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management.

Exercises

101. The Council underlined the important role of exercises. Furthermore, the Council stressed the importance of identifying lessons during exercises and that relevant lessons should be systematically implemented.

MILEX 09

102. The Council welcomed the successful conduct of the EU Military Exercise MILEX 09, which focused on the interaction between an EU OHQ and an EU FHQ. It involved the successful activation of the EU OHQ at Larissa and the EU FHQ in Naples, and highlighted maritime aspects in particular. Within this context, the EU OHQ at Larissa has reached full operational capability and was offered by Greece for future ESDP operations. Further to the conduct phase from 17 to 26 June, the exercise provided an opportunity to evaluate military aspects of EU crisis management at the military strategic and operational levels.

CME 09

103. The Council welcomed the conclusion of planning for the EU Crisis Management Exercise CME 09, and welcomed that final preparations are under way for the conduct phase, which will take place from 23 November to 4 December 2009. The exercise foresees practicing EU rapid response to a crisis, in the context of a scenario involving both the EU Operations Centre and the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC).

MILEX 10

104. Exercise planning has started for the EU military exercise MILEX 10, the conduct of which is foreseen in the first semester of 2010. The exercise will focus on the interaction between an EU OHQ activated in Germany and an EU FHQ activated in France.

CME/CMX 10

105. The Council recalled the importance it attaches to the planning and conduct of regular crisis management exercises, including together with NATO and with the participation of all EU Member States. Planning has started for the Crisis Management Exercise with NATO (CME/CMX10).

EU Satellite Centre (EUSC)

106. The Council welcomed the support provided by the EUSC to the EU military operations, in particular its support to operation ATALANTA, as well as its increasing role in support of the EU civilian missions, in particular to the EUMM Georgia.

107. The Council encouraged the facilitated access of the EUSC to governmental imagery, in particular in areas where access to commercial imagery is limited. In this regard, the Council welcomed the access to Helios II imagery, in particular in the case of EUFOR Tchad/RCA, and looked forward to the use of Cosmo-Skymed and Sar-Lupe imagery in the future.

108. The Council welcomed the revision of the EUSC Joint Action. This will allow the EUSC to continue to explore cooperative opportunities where benefits for further improvement in EU crisis response capabilities could arise. In this context, the Council noted the progress made so far in cooperation with the US National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and the SE ESRANGE Space Center.

109. The Council noted the discussion ongoing on financial aspects of EUSC support to EU operations and missions.

III. INFORMATION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS ON ESDP

110. The Council recalled that in accordance with Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union, the European Parliament was regularly informed of CFSP/ESDP developments by the Presidency, the SG/HR and the General Secretariat of the Council.

111. The Council welcomed the continued interest shown by the European Parliament as well as National parliaments of the Member States in ongoing ESDP missions, operations and activities.

IV. PARTNERSHIP TO PROMOTE SECURITY

EU-UN

112. The Council underlined the importance of EU-UN co-operation in crisis management and welcomed the continued close coordination and cooperation between the two organisations, including in operational theatres, where both organisations are committed, notably in Kosovo, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau, Somalia and Georgia. On Somalia, it emphasised the need for co-ordination with the UN and other partners in the efforts to step up international support to peace and development in the country. The co-operation between EU and UN has been successful in the Republic of Chad and the Central African Republic. Lessons learned from the transition from EUFOR Tchad/CAR to MINURCAT as well as from the deployment of EULEX Kosovo after the reconfiguration of UNMIK, will further consolidate the excellent co-operation between the UN and the EU in crisis management.

113. The Council took note of the progress achieved, in implementing the 2007 Joint Statement of UN-EU Cooperation in Crisis Management, including through the implementation of the agreed action points of the 10th EU-UN Steering Committee, and in this context encouraged further work on developing concrete co-operation, notably in the area of planning and arrangements between the EU and UN for transition between operations. The Council encouraged continued sharing of expertise and best practices between EU and UN.

EU-NATO

114. The Council recalled the objective of strengthening the EU-NATO strategic partnership in crisis management, in a spirit of mutual reinforcement and respect for their decision-making autonomy. It particularly stressed the importance of efficient operational cooperation between the EU and NATO concerning theatres in which the two organisations are both committed. As demonstrated by operation ALTHEA, Berlin plus arrangements have proven to be effective and efficient.

115. The Council underlined the need for continued cooperation with NATO regarding the development of military capabilities. In this regard, it welcomed efforts to make the best use of the EU-NATO Capability Group, within the agreed framework, where requirements overlap. It has contributed towards transparency between the two organisations in accordance with the Capability Development Mechanism (CDM). With the participation of senior policy-makers from the capitals, as envisaged by the CDM, the Capability Group discussed issues regarding respective work on Rapid response including the EU Battlegroups and the NATO Response Force (NRF). In preparation of the Capability Group meetings, all Member States discussed in detail the agenda items and were briefed accordingly after these meetings. As recognised by the Council, in order to continue improving coherence, mutually reinforcing development of military capabilities and transparency, further efforts are needed to ensure effective working methods of the Capability Group, while inclusiveness through the participation of all the EU Member States would further facilitate exchange of information in the field of military capabilities.

116. The Council welcomed continuing efforts to ensure transparency and coherence between the EU and NATO. It took note of the Presidency initiative to brief the NAC at an informal session on ATALANTA on 14 October 2009 and encouraged reciprocal briefings from NATO to the PSC on operational issues of common interest. The Council also welcomed the Presidency initiative of an informal meeting between all EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ministers of Defence and the Secretary General of NATO to discuss current challenges in the field of crisis management, on 16 November 2009. The Council welcomed the regular staff to staff meetings on issues of common interest and underlined the importance for the PSC to continue being regularly informed.

117. The Council stressed that there is a potential for increased transparency, efficiency and coherence between the distinct ESDP Capability Development and NATO Defence Planning processes, in order to better inform sovereign national decisions on planning and the delivery of improved military capabilities. It welcomed continuing work, including at staff to staff level, to establish a common Information Gathering Tool available to all Member States, and a "common language" for capability development within the EU. It noted that the overlapping capability shortfalls that emerge from the two distinct processes in the EU and NATO should be addressed in a coherent manner. In this context, the Council underlined the fundamental principles of the EU´s integrity and autonomy of decision making, of a distinct EU process and of inclusiveness and participation of all Member States.

EU-AU Cooperation - Strengthening African Capabilities

118. The Council welcomed the progress in the "Peace and Security" partnership between the EU and Africa. Political dialogue has further intensified, particularly through the joint EU-AU PSC to PSC meeting that took place in Addis Abeba on 12 October 2009 and the Ministerial Troïka that took place on 14 October 2009. Discussions with Regional Economic Communities in Africa have also been reinforced but further efforts are needed. Within the partnership, the efforts to make the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) operational are also making good progress, including through the reinforced involvement of the regional economic communities in Africa.

119. The Council welcomed the work on African training Centres and on the development of all components of the African Stand-By Force. This work is particularly welcomed in view of the EURORECAMP/Amani Africa cycle, which has progressed with the holding of the Senior Decision Makers Seminar, the Main Planning Conference and the Map Exercise (MAPEX). The final exercise (CPX) will be held mid-2010.

120. The Council welcomed the conclusions of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) mapping exercise as a useful step for the planned overall mapping exercise of APSA capacity building needs. In this context, the Council welcomed the initiatives taken in the framework of MIVAC (Mécanisme interactif de veille et d'anticipation des crises). The Council also noted work taken forward in the area of Mediation.

121. The Council recalled the importance of close co-operation with the UN, including through the triangular UN-AU-EU dialogue, for the strengthening of African capabilities and in the work towards predictable and sustainable funding of AU-led peace-support operations undertaken following the Prodi Panel report.

Cooperation with Third States

122. The Council stressed the importance of engaging Third States in ESDP. Their involvement in ESDP missions and operations strengthens partnerships and their further contributions would be welcome. Already today Third States make a significant contribution to EU missions and operations. To date, 16 EU missions and operations have had third state participation from a total of 24 countries from five continents. At present, 13 Third States (*Albania, Angola, Canada, Chile, Croatia, FYROM, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the US*) are contributing to 7 ongoing missions and operations.[2]

[2] EUPM and ALTHEA in BiH, EULEX Kosovo, EUPOL COPPS, EUPOL Afghanistan, EUPOL RD Congo and EUNAVFOR ATALANTA.

123. The Council underlined the importance of closely cooperating in theatre with partners, and welcomed the unique cooperation that has been achieved in the case of Operation ATALANTA with partners, notably China, Egypt, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Oman, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles and Yemen, some of whom cooperate with the EU in the context of ESDP for the first time.

124. The Council noted the value of the informal gatherings between the members of the PSC, the non-EU members of NATO and other countries that are candidates for accession to the EU, resulting in discussions on operational issues of mutual interest.

125. The Council welcomed the continued dialogue and cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean partners in the ESDP field, which included several partners' participation in operations and training activities.

Contacts with civil society / NGOs

126. The Council recognized the co-operation with NGOs and civil society as a means to improve the impact of the ESDP missions and operations and encouraged its continuation both in Brussels and in the field, including through regular contacts.

V. OTHER OPERATIONAL ESDP RELATED ACTIVITIES

127. The Council recognised the relevance to ESDP of other EU operational activities. It particularly noted the community funded activities including overall action of the Instrument for Stability. The Council welcomed the activities carried out by EUBAM for the Republic of Moldova and to Ukraine and took note of the Commission's decision to extend its mandate until 2011. It also welcomed the ongoing efforts of the EUSR for the South Caucasus Border Support Team with a view to reforming Georgia's Integrated Border Management in accordance with the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

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