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THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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3055th and 3056th Council Meetings

Foreign Affairs

Defence and Development

Brussels, 9 December 2010

President

Ms Catherine Ashton

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and
Security Policy

P R E S S

Main results of the Council

*The **Defence session** focused on **military capabilities**. The Council discussed recent initiatives by Member States in this area, on pooling and sharing and on defence cooperation. It stressed the need to turn the financial crisis and its impact on national defence budgets into an opportunity, and to give a new impetus to European military capability development.*

The Council also underlined the need to take advantage of the post-Lisbon context, including the establishment of the European External Action Service, as a catalyst for reinforcing coordination leading to a better and more coherent utilization of resources.

The Council adopted conclusions covering military capability development, civil-military synergies and EU-NATO cooperation in capability development.

*It also adopted the budget of the **European Defence Agency** for 2011.*

*Over lunch, defence ministers discussed current **military operations** (ALTHEA, EUNAVFOR-Atalanta and EUTM Somalia) conducted under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).*

*A **European Defence Agency (EDA)** steering board meeting, chaired by High Representative Catherine Ashton, was held in the margins of the Council.*

*Ahead of the first anniversary of the earthquake in **Haiti** on 12 January, **Development ministers** took stock of the ongoing reconstruction efforts and assessed the current situation on the island, marked by the cholera epidemic and the recent elections.*

*The Council exchanged views on the EU's development policy approach to **Afghanistan** in the presence of the EU's Special Representative in Afghanistan, Vygaudas Ušackas.*

*The Council discussed mutual accountability and transparency between European donors and partner countries. It also introduced **more harmonised practices concerning the disclosure of information on development aid** volumes, allocation and forecasts by the Commission and EU Member States.*

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¹ Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks. Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>). Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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ITEMS DEBATED

DEFENCE SESSION

MILITARY CAPABILITIES

The Council held an exchange views on the need for greater pooling and sharing in the field of military capabilities on the basis of the results of the Ghent informal meeting of defence ministers (23-24 September 2010) and in the light of recent initiatives by Member States, mainly a German/Swedish food for thought paper on "Intensifying Military Cooperation in Europe" and the recent France-UK Defence Cooperation Agreement.

The Council adopted the budget of the European Defence Agency for 2011.

The Council adopted the following [conclusions](#) in the field of military capabilities:

"The Council stressed the need to turn the financial crisis and its impact on national defence budgets into an opportunity, to give a new impetus to European military capability development in order to meet its level of ambition, to address remaining shortfalls and to safeguard the defence capabilities required to support the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) as well as to achieve national capability targets, while avoiding unnecessary duplication between Member States.

Building on existing processes, the Council highlighted in particular the following solutions:

Cooperation as a force multiplier

The Council encouraged Member States to exchange information, as appropriate, and enhance transparency on current and forthcoming defence budget cuts, and to examine the impact of these budget cuts on capability development.

With a view to strengthening military capabilities in Europe for sustaining and enhancing CSDP, the Council called on Member States to seize all opportunities to cooperate in the area of capability development. It particularly stressed the need to develop pooling and sharing options, building on successful multilateral examples such as the European Air Transport Command launched in September 2010, and to explore role specialisation.

The Council welcomed the input by the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the German-Swedish initiative as contributions to the follow-up to the informal meeting of Defence Ministers in Ghent (September 2010). It encouraged Member States to systematically analyse their national military capabilities and support structures, taking into account criteria such as operational effectiveness, economic efficiency and sustainability. This would form the basis for Member States to consider: measures to increase interoperability for capabilities to be maintained on a national level; exploring which capabilities offer potential for pooling; intensifying cooperation regarding capabilities, support structures and tasks which could be addressed on the basis of role- and task-sharing.

The Council encouraged the EDA to intensify its work to facilitate the identification of areas for pooling and sharing, including potentially through the establishment of a Wise Pen Team, taking into account the diversity of experiences across the Member States, and to support Member States in their voluntary efforts to implement pooling and sharing initiatives. The Council underlined that such a Wise Pen Team would rely on an active engagement of the participating Member States.

The Council tasked the Political and Security Committee to remain seized of this matter, and agreed to examine progress by mid 2011.

In this context the Council also noted the existing bilateral and multilateral initiatives and the signature of agreements between Member States, such as the recent UK-France Defence Cooperation Treaty, which promise to contribute to improving European defence capabilities. These initiatives should help create a dynamic for stimulating further opportunities for cooperation between the Member States.

Civil-military synergies

The Council underlined the potential benefits of developing civil-military synergies in capability development and the added-value of dual use capabilities. In this regard, it emphasized the need for further cooperation between the European Defence Agency and the European Commission, notably in research and technology.

With a view to avoiding unnecessary costs and duplication, the Council underlined the need for the Member States and other relevant EU actors, to channel as appropriate military requirements, standards and other ongoing developments to those civilian bodies whose activities may have implications for the defence community.

EU-NATO cooperation in capability development

The Council reiterated the need for continuing to develop cooperation with NATO regarding the development of military capabilities, adhering to the principles of inclusiveness and autonomy of decision-making. The Council welcomed progress in the areas of Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices and Medical Support, two essential domains for the protection and sustainability of troops. It looked forward to the rapid implementation of the proposals and stressed the need to continue staff-to-staff contacts on capability development, with a view to identifying possible additional areas of concrete cooperation under the political guidance of the PSC, the outcomes of which will be available to all Member States.

Potential of the Lisbon Treaty

The Council underlined the need to take advantage of the post-Lisbon context , including the establishment of the European External Action Service, as a catalyst for reinforcing coordination leading to a better and more coherent utilization of resources. Possibilities for the use of Permanent Structured Cooperation shall be explored in order to enhance defence capabilities with a view to strengthening the EU's ability to respond to crises.

Way ahead

The Council invited the High Representative to take forward work on these solutions, cooperating closely with Member States through the Political and Security Committee, the EU Military Committee and the EDA, and in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The Council invited the High Representative to present a report on the state of play by mid 2011."

MILITARY OPERATIONS

Over lunch, defence ministers discussed current military operations (EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUNAVFOR-Atalanta and EUTM Somalia) conducted under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy.

SESSION ON DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

FUTURE OF EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Council discussed how to ensure that EU development policy effectively achieves its objectives, namely the reduction of poverty in developing countries and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

The debate was based on the Commission green paper launching a consultation among stakeholders ([16146/10](#)) and focussed on four questions:

- how to ensure a high impact of EU development policy for poverty reduction;
- how to facilitate more and more inclusive growth in developing countries;
- how sustainable development can improve the growth potential in developing countries;
- how to achieve durable results in the area of agriculture and food security.

Ministers supported the idea that EU development policy should focus on stimulating more and more inclusive growth in developing countries and on poverty reduction at the same time. Many argued that the EU had to focus on a number of priorities in which it has particular expertise, for instance on sustainable development, agriculture, human rights and gender equality. A number of delegations highlighted the need for coherence between all EU policies impacting on developing countries, including trade and agriculture policies.

Ministers will feed into Commission proposals for modernising European development policy, expected in the second half of 2011.

Since the eight Millennium Development Goals were agreed in 2000, the EU and its Member States have doubled the amount of their official development assistance. They provided a total of EUR 49bn in 2009, accounting for 56% of global aid.

AFGHANISTAN

The Council exchanged views on the EU's development policy approach to Afghanistan in the presence of EU Special Representative in Afghanistan, Vygaudas Ušackas.

All ministers stressed their long-term commitment to development in Afghanistan and to the transition of responsibilities to the Afghan government.

In 2010, the EU has already enhanced its coordination. By merging the offices of the EU Special Representative and of the Commission delegation, the EU has combined its substantial development assistance with a growing political weight in Afghanistan. The need to coordinate also with the UN SRSG and NATO civilian representative was also stressed by ministers.

In October 2009, the EU adopted a plan for strengthening EU action in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It represents the EU's renewed commitment to increasing the effectiveness of EU assistance, by channelling its resources in support of the strategic development priorities of the Afghan government. Delegations stressed the need to channel support, following the 2010 Kabul Conference, into key national priorities programmes.

The EU is one of Afghanistan's largest donors. The Commission and Member States channel on average EUR 1 billion into Afghanistan per year.

HAITI

Ahead of the first anniversary of the earthquake in Haiti on 12 January, the Council took stock of the ongoing reconstruction efforts and assessed the current situation on the island, marked by the cholera epidemic and the recent elections. It also took note of the state of play of the joint Commission/Member States programming document on reconstruction efforts.

Presidential and legislative elections took place in Haiti on 28 November and preliminary results were released on 7 December. The EU contributed EUR 5 million to the cost of the elections and stands ready to assist Haiti in the preparation for a possible second round of voting, including in any review of the reported irregularities of the first round.

The EU and its Member States jointly pledged EUR 1.235 billion in support of Haiti's reconstruction at the donor conference on 31 March in New York. Priorities for the remaining finance are currently being discussed by the Member States, the Commission and the Haitian authorities.

The EU reacted promptly to the cholera outbreak. In their joint efforts, the EU and its Member States have so far mobilised more than EUR 18.5 million and substantial in-kind contributions to face the epidemic.

TRANSPARENCY AND MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT AID

The Council discussed mutual accountability and transparency between European donors and partner countries. It also introduced more harmonised practices concerning the disclosure of information on development aid volumes, allocation and forecasts by the Commission and Member States. These are set out in conclusions adopted by the Council without discussion, see [17769/10](#).

INNOVATIVE FINANCING MECHANISMS

The Council discussed innovative financing sources and mechanisms for development. The Commission stated that it would continue its work on the technical feasibility of such mechanisms and their potential impact.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCES 2011

Over dinner, development ministers initiated preparations for the fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries and for the fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, both to be held in 2011. In that context they also briefly touched upon the development aspects of the recent EU-US summit.

IN THE MARGINS OF THE COUNCIL

EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY

A European Defence Agency (EDA) steering board meeting, chaired by High Representative Catherine Ashton, was held in the margins of the Council.

Discussion focused on on-going work on pooling and sharing in the field of military capabilities. In this regard, the Steering Board approved a Note on Pooling and Sharing. It also approved:

- a decision on the EDA Work Programme 2011;
- a decision on Defence Data and Benchmarks;
- a decision on European Framework Cooperation – R&T Joint Investment Programme on Force Protection;
- conclusions on a "Level Playing Field" (as a concept focusing on European defence companies and their ability to participate in the wider defence market);
- a decision on an EU Radio Spectrum Policy Programme.

The Steering Board also discussed implications of the Single European Sky (SES) initiative for military aviation and noted the EDA's report on defence research at European Union level.

See EDA [press release](#).

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The Council:

- approved the Single Progress Report on the Development of EU Military Capabilities for the Second Semester of 2010. This document provides a state of play with regard to progress in EU military capabilities in the timeframe from April 2010 to October 2010.
 - took note of the Report by the Head of the European Defence Agency to the Council, and
 - approved Guidelines for the European Defence Agency's Work in 2011.
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