

Rencontres EURODEFENSE des Jeunes Européens
Young Europeans EURODEFENSE Conference
Paris – Saint-Cyr-l'École
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Her Excellency
Baroness Catherine Ashton
High Representative of the European Union for
Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Rue de la Loi, 175 – B-1048 Brussels

Your Excellency Lady Ashton,

By way of this letter we are honoured to present to you the results of the 2010 Young European EURODEFENSE Conference which took place this July at the Saint-Cyr College in France. The Young European conference takes place in a different country every year under the auspices of the appropriate EuroDéfense association. On this occasion 59 young professionals in universities, legal agencies, political sciences, international relations, police, defence industry, etc....., as well as students and young military staff assembled to reflect on the future of a common European defence identity. Under the direction of French retired General Jean Rannou, President of Eurodéfense-France, seven committees produced the following series of recommendations that we hope will give you and your staff at the nascent European External Action Service a sounding of the priorities that European youth consider important.

The following recommendations are summaries of each committee's reflections at the 2010 Young European EURODEFENSE Conference.

1.- Cyberspace: the fifth domain.

We hold it truth Europe must have a common strategy for cyberspace considering that it has arrived at a central stage of everyday life. Although it constitutes myriad of new possibilities, cyberspace is also a domain of potentially deadly threats since every sector runs, now, at a virtual level.

Organized crime, as well as terrorism, have both found refuge in virtual network. Several attacks on both private companies like banks and insurance firms, and on public infrastructures have been reported over the past years. Pirates are hired by states and companies in order to access adversary networks with the aim to impart with information or to compromise critical sectors. Cybercrime is a genuine threat and one meritorious of urgent response. There is an imperative for Europe to establish a Cyberspace Task Force with a Cybercrime Police force in order to meet this challenge.

Cyberspace is virtual, but the infrastructures use to log in are very real, thus needing protection. Europe must view the digital infrastructure as a strategic national asset doing to its nature as a critical sector for providing essential services to society and economy. The safety and robustness of other critical sectors, as energy and economy, are directly related to the protection of the digital configuration.

Just like sea, air, and space, cyberspace needs to have limits and rules. Though difficult to legislate about, due to its abstract nature (no physical boundaries or jurisdiction) it is essential that the international community put into force the existing legislation for cyberspace as well as redefining the parameters as the network changes. Europe can set herself in the front row of this investigation and dictate the rules of the game.

Cyberspace is a new and an unknown field but it is not a virgin area. Europe can take advantage of her allies' know-how and exchange experiences.

2.- Military Interoperability.

Article 42 of the Treaty of the European Union defines the CSDP as an aspect of the EU that draws on both civilian and military assets to create an operational capability for external action. A close reading of Article 43 of the Treaty elucidates the significance of interoperability once faced with the realities of multinational civil military operations.

Despite the importance of the legal framework, the reality of the missions already demonstrates that the interoperability is not a rhetorical demand. We propose to facilitate and strengthen communication between militaries and industry in order for suppliers to better understand the specific needs of European military operations and simultaneously increase awareness of European industrial capacities in research and development. The aim of this is to help in defining harmonized European specifications in order to generate a link between military needs and the production capabilities of European military suppliers.

However, we also have to keep in mind that interoperability does not only concern the materials sphere but it also refer to the qualifications and competences which allow persons with the same level of education to be set in different positions or areas above national borders.

An effective Europe of Defence would not only count on the industrial cooperation because of the business aspect but will actually increase the cooperation and the communication, on capacities and capabilities issues, between MOD (Ministry of Defence) of EU members' states and European industries by outlining the need and the possible interoperability.

To this end, we recommend the creation of a permanent comity of communication to make possible the European coordination on the needs of the military. This comity will work in three steps : first, a cooperation between the EU member states on their common needs ; second, a common position of the industries on their capacities ; third, cooperation, coordination and communication between the needs and the capacity. The knowledge of what Europe of Defence needs and of what the European defence industry is able to produce is the key.

And as we specified the interoperability doesn't stop with products, but also concerns capabilities. But it might be a part of the coordination of the European Union Intelligence.

3.- Coordinating European Union Intelligence.

This recommendation concerns EU Intelligence capabilities. We would like to recommend a programme that could strengthen the EU Intelligence cycle by developing trust among Intelligence professionals early in their careers.

The creation of the EEAS anticipates a mushrooming of European actions abroad. Any actor on the world stage, and especially European leaders, must have access to the highest quality Intelligence in order for Europe to stay complete. Currently, national-level Intelligence agencies maintain a statist tradition of secrecy and are generally hesitant to share key information in a forum that would disseminate Intel to 27 different countries. In particular, because most agencies are bound by constitution to serve specific Intelligence needs related to the integrity of the member state.

In order to change this, our recommendation is to form Intelligence professionals at the inception of their Intel training by means creating of a *European Intelligence college*. This would permit member states to participate in a programme where their starting Intelligence professionals will be immersed in a common training of best practices and tradecraft. As a result these professionals will develop a European Intelligence identity. In a natural fashion trust will develop early in their careers that will eventually translate into a greater possibility for genuine collaboration in Intelligence collection across the European Union.

4.- Resources and Means.

The EU-Institutions and Member state governments must develop precision on CSDP especially in terms of providing civilian and military capabilities for current and future European missions.

The current economic crisis is an opportunity for CSDP to develop a stronger position. We have to make a concerted effort on the common use of resources, including human resources as well as industrial resources. Europe must also take advantage of all possible synergies, like, for example, Common procurement for military equipment is a way member state governments can cut costs.

Increased information sharing by using common databases and information technology will also reduce costs. Sharing of information is, however, insufficient; the EU must also have staff to analyze this information from an EU perspective in advance of strategic decisions.

The costs of EU-operations are sustained by the member states willing to participate in these operations with human and material resources. The Young Europeans Eurodefense Conference holds that the financing mode of EU lead operations has to be reviewed. That is to say that financial burden of EU-Missions should be shared equitably by all member states.

5.- Rationalization of equipments market of Member States.

Rationalisation means the integration of industry objectives with national and multinational needs.

Unfair subsidies prevent industrial cooperation. Compensating one country's economy instead of the entire EU amounts to depriving ourselves of an integrated technology market based on shared European engineering, man-power, material resources, and production tools.

Currently, a few European Member States dominate the defence market, and virtually control the entire of production and supply chain. However, many less influential Member States possess specialised technology which is deprived of attaining its rightful market position. This leads to a loss of efficiency, contrasting with the fundamental aims of the common market. Further rationalization of the European market for defence equipment is a logical step, especially while Governments are drastically reducing defence expenditures. Implementing rationalisation will require profound political courage.

Although we currently lack a culture of cooperation between Member States all countries at the European level recognise the necessity for rationalisation of the European defence market in order to increase our competitiveness.

We propose a policy which encourages furthering rationalisation. The advantage of such a policy would be a transfer of knowledge and production of more ambitious projects at lower costs through the process of cost-sharing. Also, rationalisation ensures interoperability, increases the return of investment and improves markets' competitiveness. Only with a strong defence industry will Europe finally be able to evolve from a global actor to a global strategic player.

6.- NATO–EU Cooperation.

At first, countries in Europe tend to strive to maximize interest on a national level. If a CSDP wants to succeed then more power must be transferred to the European Union, and certain structural legislation put in place. However cabinets still have the executive power over decision making in areas such as defence. This will not change in short measure and therefore we should apply caution when considering CSDP.

Secondly, countries in Europe spend on average 1,4 percent of GDP. The current credit crises will restrict budgets further.

Thirdly, under article 42 of the Lisbon treaty the obligations of NATO member states will still exist, and will not go at the cost of further European integration. However there actually might be military shortages coinciding with overlapping missions.

It would perhaps be a good idea to redefine the CSDP so that it includes NATO as a strategic partner. In this light, NATO and CSDP would together be guarantors for European security.

The strategic priorities are numerous for Europe at a moment where the international system is in a period of change. In order for Europe to face existing and emerging powers and ensure military independence, it is imperative to create the necessary conditions in order to develop a solid defence identity.

7.- Nuclear.

In an age where terrorism represents a growing danger to the European Union, it becomes increasingly evident that indispensable civilian nuclear sites in Europe can constitute potential targets.

In order to mitigate this danger and to shield the EU from this threat, it becomes imperative to establish common goals for the next 20 years corresponding to the set of security needs of member countries.

Simultaneously, in order to limit externalities, we must envision the establishment of instrument to prevent crises – for instance, cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency – in particular under conditions of armed conflict. These tools would facilitate disarmament and arms control and encourage a slow-down of nuclear proliferation.

It is in this framework that the EU member-countries should encourage discussions on the means best suitable to perform this task in a concerted, academic fashion.

The EU should also emphasize cooperation with and among other nations in the aim to increase mutual trust, thus generating a world less dependent on nuclear power, and developing a climate of confidence among states.

In closing, Your Excellency, we avail our expression of the highest consideration.

The participants of the 2010 Young Europeans EURODEFENSE Conference