



## ESDP: from Cologne to Berlin and beyond

### OPERATIONS — INSTITUTIONS — CAPABILITIES

#### Closing remarks by Michael SCHAEFER (Political Director, German Federal Foreign Office)

Dear colleagues and friends,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It has become a truism: the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has matured very rapidly since the Cologne Summit 1999 and is a remarkable success story of the EU. The Kosovo example illustrates this development impressively. While the EU frustration about its role in the Balkans, particularly in Bosnia and in the early Kosovo conflict, contributed to creating the ultimate political impetus to create ESDP in 1998 and 1999, we are now preparing to launch the biggest and most complex civilian ESDP mission ever to Kosovo.

We have come a long way. ESDP has become ever more operational during these past 9 years, both in terms of military and civilian crisis management. This holds true for the geographical expansion in the EU's sphere of operational activity as well as for the scope and type of ESDP missions we are undertaking. However, let me stress that as far as geography is concerned, for us the framework of the European Security Strategy remains our main orientation. But no rule is without exception. Aceh is a good example for that.

Despite these impressive developments, there is no reason for complacency. We must rather protect ESDP from becoming the victim of its own success. The discussions yesterday and today as reported by the three rapporteurs have underlined the wide-ranging scope of challenges that lie ahead of us in the near future. Tackling these challenges will have to, and eventually will change the face of ESDP. The rapporteurs have alluded to the most prominent challenges in the immediate future: Kosovo, Afghanistan, Battle Groups, post Hampton Court, efficiency and coherence in developing military and civilian capabilities and our relations with key partners. Needless to say that this list is far from being exhaustive.

The idea of this conference has been to step aside from our day-to-day work and to take a fresh look at some basic questions with regard to ESDP.

Allow me to take the opportunity of this closing session to highlight three key points which – in my view - merit closer inspection and follow-up in a middle- and long-term perspective.

Firstly, drawing on the operational conclusions from EUFOR mission in the DR Congo, we need to further improve our planning and command capabilities for autonomous ESDP operations in terms of efficiency, speed and clarity. We are, of course, aware that this lessons learned process has only just started in Brussels, and indeed we should take the necessary time to bring about a thorough,

comprehensive and honest analysis. But some questions clearly seem to call for an answer: Do we need to identify the military command structures earlier in the process? Can we expect early commitments of personnel from EU member states without an early assessment of the operational requirements by a designated Operations Commander? Do we, consequently, need the early identification of the OHQ and FHQ including early planning authority? Or do we need to use our permanent planning capabilities in Brussels more effectively? And if so, for the initial phase only or for the whole operation? At this stage, it would be premature to expect final answers to these questions. But we should do our utmost to examine them in an open and constructive way.

Secondly, the working groups raised the question whether the current EU crisis management structures will be in a position to successfully conduct the ever more complex civilian mission in Kosovo in a non-benign environment. In this vein, Javier Solana and the Director of the policy Unit, Helga Schmid, elaborated on innovative options to restructure the Council Secretariat with a view to creating a new civilian operations headquarters capacity. The option of a civilian operations commander at the strategic level of command of civilian ESDP operations has been introduced. It was suggested that this operations commander could – in analogy to military ESDP operations – be responsible for the planning and conduct of all civilian ESDP operations. There seemed to be agreement in principle to create this post. I would suggest that, if possible, this suggestion should be implemented prior to the launch of the ESDP mission in Kosovo.

Thirdly and lastly, a word on the future development of military and civilian capabilities. There seems to be agreement that this development must be based on a long-term vision of where we want to see the EU, say in 10 to 15 years, as an actor in maintaining international peace and security. I would draw one basic assumption: there is a necessity of clear political strategic objectives, in particular concerning the relationship between the EU and NATO, before being able to answer the question of further development of capabilities.

With a view to the more short- and medium-term demands posed by the EU's comprehensive civilian and military approach to crisis management, it seems advisable to try to further link the processes for the development of civilian and military capabilities. Of course, we need to achieve the objectives that we have set ourselves in the two separate headline goals - the Military HLG 2010 and the Civilian HLG 2008 - in the first place. But how do we proceed after that? Should we continue to have two different headline goal processes with two different time lines? Or is there scope for harmonizing the two processes in terms of timing, content, interoperability and cohesion? This, again, is not a question we need to answer in the short term.

But I do feel we should continue to examine this question in due course. I would agree with those who have pointed out that it is crucial to take forward work on the military and civilian Headline Goals in close co-ordination. Better coherence and complementarity between the civilian and military sides will be vital.

This brings us to the end of our conference. Let me thank, in the first place, the ISS and Nicole Gnesotto and her team for co-organizing this event. I am grateful that you have offered to reflect the discussions and conclusions in an ISS report to be published soon.

Thanks to all of you for engaging in very serious, substantive and constructive discussions. We have all profited from your contributions.

We certainly did not have in mind to reinvent ESDP. But we are grateful that this conference has reflected an impressive amount of political will by member states and our relevant EU structures to intensify efforts to adapt our institutional and operational capabilities, enabling the EU to use its civil-military instruments ever more effectively and thereby contributing to achieving our CSFP goals.

Thank you all for a thought-provoking exercise.

*Berlin, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007*