ESDP @ 10:
what lessons for the future?

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Thank you for organising this seminar where we should reflect on ten years of experiences with the ESDP and then sort of think ahead in the future. Starting immediately where Javier Solana ended, agreeing very much where he ended, not having very many disagreements on how we got there by the way, I think one striking thing at the moment is that we have a severe supply-demand mismatch at the moment. The demand that Mr. Solana pointed out, the demand for Europe across the world, is increasing. The demand for our operations, for our policies, for our voice, for our presence. I think that is striking. Javier was in the ASEAN nations in Phuket, I was in Kabul. Mr. Solana was there previously, and I was in the South Caucasus. Wherever we go, they say "we want more of Europe". Whatever that means - it means somewhat different things.

But the demand is greater than the supply that we are able to achieve. So, severe demand-supply mismatch at the moment. And I think that is something that we must deal with.

Going back 10 years, we were still – very much – in the Balkans. The CFSP was born in the Balkans, once upon a time. The ESDP was born in the Balkans. I think you can probably say that the CFSP was born in Bosnia and the ESDP was born in Kosovo. When the decisions or discussions were there, it was the immediate aftermath of the Kosovo war, seventy eight days bombing campaign, more than a million refugees, serious political problems of where we were heading. We had not a clue where we were heading at the time, to be absolutely precise. And then the decisions were taken by the Europeans who felt there had been too much of an American show. And they decided to go for the Headline Goals in Helsinki. Now, the Headline Goals at the time were coming out of the right instincts but the wrong policies, I would say. Because, one thought at the time that our major problem in the Balkans had been our lack of military capabilities, while I would argue that our major problems in the Balkans had been lack of software policies. If we have got the software of policies right, then the instruments normally follow. Then, you need less instruments than if you don't have the soft-ware of policies, and have to compensate with a lot of instruments. And of course, the decision was taken in Helsinki to go for the Headline Goals and it was really the capability to be able to conduct an army corps level operation, somewhere in the world, at a fairly short notice.

Now, an army corps is nice to have, but what we have learnt is that that is really too small for a serious war, and too big for a stability operation. And, hardly surprising, what we have seen during the last ten years is that there has never even been a talk of using the corps-level operation of the sort that was envisaged in the Headline Goals. So we started with something that was coming from the right instincts, but not necessarily the right instruments in that particular respect.

We have since developed different capabilities. Mr Solana alluded to the, I think twenty-two operations, that have been undertaken since then. They have all been of somewhat different nature, but they have all been of a smaller, quicker scale than what was envisaged in 1999.

If we look at the situation now, in the world, looking ahead, I think we can say that the world is now more difficult, more demanding, and, to a certain extent, more dangerous than it was just a couple of years ago. The security and defence policy, we can divide perhaps into two different components: the external security and the homeland defence. And I will leave the homeland defence out of it, but it should not be forgotten. When we discuss the policies that we are discussing here, we are discussing what we would like to do in the outer part of the world, in order to prevent threats from developing against the homeland – that is the half a billion Europeans for which we have an immediate responsibility. The classical homeland defence was a territorial defence. And then we go to the Article V-operations of NATO, that is how most of the member states of the European Union take care of the classical defence function - the territorial defence. Whether that is the thing that is most relevant, in the future, that is an irrelevant discussion. Because we want to have that security guarantee at the bottom of things.

But we have other things that are developing, that are somewhat outside of what we are discussing within the classical ESDP. We have the cyber-defence needs that are beginning to be even more important. Increasing parts of our society are dependent upon the smooth functioning of cyber systems. And they are developing cyber attack capabilities, not only by states that are operating them but also by independent networks. And they can have devastating effects to our societies. That is a homeland defence function that we need to address in the years to come, not only at the national level, but also perhaps on the European level. We have the question of – which is very much in the media these days – infectious diseases, that could originate somewhere else, but affects us. Now, that requires global response mechanisms. But we have them to a certain extent: WHO and the Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta, and we are developing European instruments to a certain extent. But, I am saying that we should not neglect, both the classical and the new homeland defence - and terrorism should we mention as well – they are both the classical territorial defence and the new homeland defence functions that must be there. They also belong in the discussion of the future of the ESDP.

But then, of course, our focus is primarily on the external security policies, where we try to further strengthen the security of Europe by promoting the stability of the rest of the world, and primarily the world that is adjacent to us. And we do that by trying to promote the development of well-governed states. In the periphery, and increasingly, a widely defined periphery of the European Union. We started in the Balkans, and we are still busy in the Balkans. We have during the last year developed and launched the concept of the Union of the Mediterranean, which, at the bottom, is about our security. And the Eastern Partnership, which at the end of the day is about our security as well. By promoting the well-governed states, in the periphery of the European Union in order to increase our security, prevents threats or challenges to our security from developing in these particular areas.

But if we go beyond those particular policies and those particular areas, we can look at areas from Guinea-Bissau where we have a small operation, and if we look at West Africa, it is an area where we can see increasing challenges, where weak states are being eroded by smuggling networks of different sorts, and migration; Chad, where we had an operation, and Central African Republic, which is not necessarily the most stable of places that I can think of. And then we jump from there to southern Sudan and Somalia, which we very much discussed in the Council yesterday. We can jump from there over to Yemen, and then you end up in the entire area from Palestine to Punjab, with the increasing geopolitical tensions that we have seen building up in that area. We need to be active – not necessarily alone – but clearly active in order to safeguard our interests. And also influence the activities of other actors, so that it works in a way that is not to the detriment of our security interests – which is also a possibility that could be there. I often made the case that I think the software of policies is more important than the hardware of instruments. If we have got the software of policies, we can normally find the hardware of instruments. Not always, but we should not forget that we have a good resource base to draw from, that is fairly massive. We are half a billion people, we are 27 nations, we are the biggest integrated economic area of the world. We have military, we have around 40,000 diplomats deployed around the world, from the European Union. That is a fairly impressive resource base. We have lots of militaries, that might not be particularly relevant to the threats of today, but it is a resource base to draw upon – if we develop the software of policies that are right.

When we discuss what to do, looking ahead, I would take that into three or four different categories.

Starting really then with developing the software of policies. I have obviously not read the book about "What Ambitions for the European Defence in 2020?", but I notice on the introductory page, a quote from the famous history of the Peloponnesian War, which goes very much in line with what I am thinking. It is written: Those who make wise decisions are more formidable to their enemies than those who rush madly into strong action. We can take that as one of the guiding principles for what we should do. So, the first thing we should do is to – when we get the Lisbon Treaty (which we all hope we'll get) – start building up the External Action Service in Brussels and around the world. We must build up the analytical, the information, the policy-planning and policy-developing capabilities that are key to the software of our policies. We have a beginning of that, no question about it. We adopted the European Security Strategy of 2003, we did a review of that in 2008. It is a good document, it is not necessarily a strategy – a strategy is rather an ambitious name – but it is a good document. It is part of a process of developing, and that is the most important part of it, a process of developing a common strategic outlook among the 27. Which is part of an effort to develop over time a common strategic culture of the 27. That is going to take its time, because that comes not only from intellectual efforts of developing policies, but also from the very down to earth experiences of conducting operations together - doing the failures that always comes with operations, but also experience the successes that will come. But that is of course important. To develop the analytical information, policy-planning instruments – Brussels-based to a large extent – is a key factor.

Secondly, as Mr Solana and I came from another seminar this morning where we discussed more the mediation, conflict-resolution, instruments and capabilities and willingness and personalities that we need to develop. I would stress that very much. We need to develop the wider network of networks, that makes it possible for us to upgrade not only the white, but also perhaps in the grey and also black areas. When it comes to looking at different situations, interacting with the different actors, and do the policy things that are necessary. Think tanks, academic institutions, NGOs etc, this institution (EUISS) is part of it. I have also advocated for a long time setting up what I call a European Institute of Peace, to a certain extent along

the American model, to be able to do also informal diplomacy, and to link in with a lot of things that we need to do, to do the lessons learnt. We are very good at talking about all of the successes we have done. I think we have to be better at talking about our mistakes. Because at the end you learn more for the future by your mistakes than by your successes. Acknowledging that it is a somewhat more difficult discussion.

Then, of course the instruments that needs to be developed. We often talk about 'military instruments', 'military operations' or 'civilian operations'. I mean, there are no 'military operations' or 'civilian operations': there are political operations that we undertake. Why you deploy a mix of military-, civilian- and economic instruments – the mix is somewhat different depending upon the nature of operation, but the mix must always be there and it must always be clear that it is not a military, not a civilian, not an economic, but a policy operation. It has a policy objective and should have a policy lead. And then you deploy the different instruments according to that. That being said, we obviously need to develop the instruments, in spite of what I've said.

We have the important decisions that were taken by the Council, during the French presidency, where we broke down the old Headline Goals into somewhat more operationally relevant targets for the next 5-10 years. I think we must show seriously that we are ready now to develop, according to what we agreed then. Because then we will get, on the military side, instruments that are more operationally relevant than some of those we are having at the moment. We need to look at the battlegroup concept as well. Which is good. I mean, that's a size of units that I think is more relevant than we discussed in 1999. But we need to look at fairly basic things like "are they flexible enough?" or, an even more basic question, "do they exist?". Mr Solana alluded at our previous meeting to an instance where we had reason to look at whether we should deploy at a certain place – we did not do that, which I think was good because it would have been bad if we had done it, but anyhow – I remember then looking at whether the battlegroups that were supposed to be there, did exist. And I found out that yes, they did exist on paper, but beyond the paper it was somewhat difficult. They were clearly deployable only on paper, and that we can't have. We must make certain that the Battlegroups do exist, we must make them more flexible, and another idea which I think could be good in that particular respect, we could test their availability by actually asking them to exercise. Not only should they be in readiness to do something, but we should have a Battlegroup exercising every six months – somewhere. And we could use those exercises also to send political messages. One example: we could send a Battlegroup to exercise in Bosnia, for example, now and then. When we no longer have military operations in that part of the world, it is still useful to demonstrate that we have got the capability to deploy in those particular areas. And, exercises are a good way of demonstrating the potential capability to do something in an area like this. So that we must do.

Developing the different civilian capabilities we have talked quite a lot about, not the least from the Swedish side. The speciality that we have from the European side now, is of course rule-of-law missions. They are not police missions, we have given up that. They are integrated rule-of-law missions. We operate such in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in Palestine, in Iraq, in Afghanistan. They are very complex. We all know the problems of recruiting. We all know that these operations are fairly small in relationship to the task that is there (in the relevant area). But we also know that in terms of state-building, in governance, and all of those issues that we are dealing with in security: rule-of-law is absolutely critical to long-term success. If no one else tells you that, the military that are in the relevant areas will tell you that they will never be successful without the rule-of-law being ahead of them or behind them, or on their side. We need to develop more of that.

But we need also to develop, in my opinion, more of the economic instruments. If we look at the actual situation in the world today, one of the most imminent security threats that we face is state failure due to economic collapse. I vividly recommend to look at the web page of the IMF: they have a map there, of their stand-by agreements during the last year. You can look at where that is, and, say that half of those will succeed, and half of those will fail. Now, failure for stand-by agreements means a financial collapse, it means economic problems, which means social tensions – which means political problems, and possibly conflict. The international financial institutions are now strengthened and that is good. We should deploy those, but we should also see them within the political context. And then we should also look at whether we need new European instruments. We have now strengthened the capabilities inside the European Union. The Commission have now 50 billion Euros for macroeconomic support for non-Euro-EU members. But if you look at what we have for macroeconomic stabilisation measures beyond the European Union, it is 0.5 billion Euros. I am not saying that we do not need the money inside the European Union, solidarity among members comes first, but clearly there is somewhat of a mismatch. We need to have instruments for macroeconomic stabilisation available, operating in connection with the rule-of-law, operating in connection with the military, operating in connection with the analytical instruments. I think the economic and financial instruments are becoming more important.

Final point. We can't do anything of this alone. If we look at the different operations that we have been undertaking: we did that in Chad, where we handed over to the UN, Atalanta – obviously we are cooperating with a lot of different actors – EUMM in Georgia, to take the three most recent and the most complex operations – although we are supposed to do it with others, we are pretty alone. But if you take the more complex ones, be that in Afghanistan, be that in Palestine, we operate together with others. So the interaction with the United Nations, interactions with NATO, interaction with the United States, is something that we must develop more. I think we have learnt a lot and I think we are far better and I think we are more open to it than we were a couple of years ago. But clearly, there is room for substantial improvement, because particularly if we go into complex state-building operations, they are so demanding in terms of resources, demanding in terms of strategic patience needed that I don't think that any single actor can do it alone. My prime example is always Haiti, when I discuss with the Americans. When the United States, with all their resources, dare not do state-building and stability operations of its own even in Haiti, but has to call in the United Nations, that really demonstrates that these operations are so complex that you need to mobilise a much bigger resource base in the world, and work together. That certainly applies to the European Union as well.

Those were some remarks on where we are coming from and where I think we need to head in the years ahead.

Thank you very much for your attention.