



Presidents' Council

## EURODEFENSE

Paris, 20 June 2013

**Mr. Herman Van Rompuy**  
**President of the European Council**

Dear Mr. President,

These last years, the EURODEFENSE network has sent to you several proposals on the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty in the area of the *Common Security and Defence Policy*.

This year, with the aim of helping prepare the "Defence Agenda" for the European Summit scheduled for December 2013, the 13 EuroDéfense national associations have worked to prepare a number of propositions likely to correspond with the Council's wishes, as expressed in the conclusions of the meeting held on 13 and 14 December 2012.

As a first step, it is essential **to be clear on the level of ambition and the range of the CSDP**. While the aim of this policy is to cover the security and defence of the EU, with a perspective of a common defence, today's policy is merely the coming together of 26 autonomous national policies<sup>1</sup>, none of which makes mention of the need for the global defence of the Union seen as a whole.

This is why we propose that, as well as having national analyses (a bottom up approach), the External Action Service should carry out its own analysis (a top down approach) of the need for the defence of the EU and its member states, with no taboo or restriction. For in today's context, the various restrictions imposed on the competences and capacities of the EU with regard to military operations, strike us as counterproductive and prevent we Europeans from fully assuming our defence responsibilities. Our defence, ideally, should be considered as a whole and merits a more global approach, bringing together security, territorial defence and external defence. The whole range of dispositions in this area included in the Lisbon Treaty should be exploited and, in particular, the *permanent structured cooperation*. We also believe, for example, that the importance of CSDP justifies the holding of regular, formal meetings of Defence ministers.

<sup>1</sup> Denmark is not a participant in the CSDP (*opting out*)

The risk of duplication between the CSDP and NATO appears unlikely, we believe : the two bodies, different in character, are only frameworks for using military means provided exclusively by the nations on a voluntary basis. Our American friends hope that we will develop our ambitions and reinforce our operational capabilities ; as ever, they are keen to see a rebalancing of the European security burden. Operations in Libya, Mali and the Red Sea give a good indication of what the EU's minimal strategic ambition should be in our own neighbourhood and further afield.

Also essential is that **the EU reinforces the credibility of its capability for rapid reaction, particularly where the Battle Groups are concerned.** We recognise that the Battle Groups 1500 (BGs 1500) represent a force for integration, but we note that not one has ever been used operationally, in spite of the fact that the EU really does need such a tool for rapid intervention in international crises. EURODEFENSE has a number of proposals to make, with the aim of reinforcing the political and operational necessities for the engagement of such forces.

From a political point of view, a serious analysis needs to be undertaken to identify our common European Security interests, which could require military rapid reaction forces : the risks at stake, the geographical areas concerned, the means of action... as well as the determining factors for Member States to decide on when engaging their forces.

On the operational plane, we suggest that the flexibility and the modularity of rapid reaction forces at the disposal of the EU at the combined forces level should be considerably improved. We also believe that it would be useful to co-locate all the components of a given Battle Group in the same geographical site, on a temporary basis, so as to improve its operational readiness, its collective training, with exercises to help improve its operational efficiency, and so as to re-affirm the principles of pooling and sharing, so often paid only lip-service in political-military circles.

**Improving the operational capabilities of the EU cannot be done without a permanent and dedicated structure for planning and command of its civil and military operations.** Such a capability which would increase the confidence level of political decision-makers in the ability of the EU to take action, could with advantage be part of a reinforcement of the External Action Service's defence structure which would also have the advantage of rationalising the roles of the different components, including the Crisis Management Planning Directorate, the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, the EU Military Staff...

As for the reinforcement and development of *defence capabilities and means*, per se, which the Council continues to stress, it is necessary now to move from pious hopes to concrete reality. To take ideas forward, an inventory of examples of pooling and sharing by the nations, to remedy shortfalls, should be included in the Capabilities Development Plan, with a road map drawn up, to be monitored by the European Defence Agency.

Finally, where **defence industry** is concerned, the development of a more integrated European industrial and technological base is needed to meet our capability needs with a sufficient level of technological independence. In this respect, EURODEFENSE is looking forward to taking into account the content of the expected European Commission Communication on defence.

Our suggestion is to strengthen the authority of the European Defence Agency at the political level and to increase its funding in due course; for the moment, a line should be opened in the EU's Budget for the period 2014-20, dedicated to Defence Research and Technology, and a further line opened for Defence Research and Development. These two budgetary lines would also be used to finance cooperative ventures agreed by the Member States in the context of the EDA. The first line could also incorporate funding for defence-oriented programmes within the European R & D Framework Programme, provided that funding would be shared only between the EU and the states concerned, and also that the intellectual property rights remain with the participating governments and firms.

The proposals outlined above are further detailed in the enclosure 1 to this letter. They have been fully approved by 12 out of the 13 national associations of the network, and by EuroDéfense-United Kingdom with some reservations ; those reservations are given in the enclosure 2.

Unless you raise an objection, this whole letter might be copied to the *High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*, to the *President of the European Commission* and to the *President of the Sub-committee Security and Defence of the European Parliament*.

EURODEFENSE wishes in this way to help bring a useful contribution to the thinking of those responsible for preparing the December meeting of the European Council. The quality and expertise of the members of the 13 national associations EuroDéfense are a testimonial to the merits of the above proposals. Thank you for giving your attention to our ideas; should you wish, EURODEFENSE stands ready to help develop these ideas with the appropriate institutions.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Willem van Eekelen  
President, EuroDéfense-Nederland  
*President in Office, EURODEFENSE*

Jean-Paul Perruche  
President, EuroDéfense-France  
*Chairman of the Working Group*  
*« Preparation of the European Summit 2-2013 »*

Encl : Annex 1 : EURODEFENSE proposals (7 pages)  
Annex 2 : ED-United Kingdom Comments.