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EUROPEAN UNION'S CURRENT APPROACH TOWARDS
CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

AZ EURÓPAI UNIÓ KÉPESSÉGFEJLESZTÉS TERÜLETÉRE VONATKOZÓ ELGONDOLÁSAI

So long as a man imagines that he cannot do this or that, so long is he determined not to do it; and consequently so long is it impossible to him that he should do it.

Benedict Spinoza

The aim of this article is to introduce last trends and possibilities of the EU countries in the area of capability development from the short-, mid- as well as the long-term aspects. As the most of the countries are facing quite significant budget restraints and subsequently reducing defence expenditures, EU is looking for the way to maintain its ability to act at the high level standard.

Within its chapters, the article indicates several approaches of the EU as a whole, as well as the bilateral and multilateral initiatives its member states, how to cope with the trend of decreasing defence spending and use the available resources as effective as possible. Moreover, the article also outlines the civil-military synergies and cooperation between different organisations as a promising way in capability development area.

A cikk szerzőinek célkitűzése, hogy bemutassák az Európai Unió országai képességfejlesztési területének rövid-, közép- és hosszú távú trendjeit és lehetőségeit. Tekintettel arra, hogy az unió országainak többségére költségvetési megszorítások és a védelmi kiadások csökkenése jellemző, az Európai Unió keresi az utakat és módokat, hogy az erőik bevetési képességét magas szinten tartsák.

A cikk áttekinti az Európai Unió néhány erre vonatkozó elgondolását, valamint az egyes országok két-és többoldalú kezdeményezéseit, hogyan lehet megbirkózni a védelmi költségvetés csökkenő trendjével és hatékonyan felhasználni a rendelkezésre álló forrásokat. A cikk szerzői kitérnek a civil-katonai együttműködésben rejlő szinergiákra, valamint a különböző szervezetek közötti együttműködésre, amely a képességfejlesztés területének ígéretes útja lehet.

European Union is nowadays confronted with the difficult role. On one side, the member states are challenging the pressure to expand the ability to deliver better usability of their forces, on the other side member states are facing to the impacts of world economic and financial crisis and following defence budget cuts. These circumstances demand the countries, fulfilling their internal commitments within the state security system as well as their international commitments, to find the ways how they could meet the given requirements along with necessary budget constraints and to fulfil tasks with the high effectiveness of used means and resources.

EU MEMBER STATE'S MUTUAL COOPERATION ON CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

During discussion at informal meeting of EU defence ministers at the end of 2010 in Ghent, countries expressed mutual understandings for the need of broaden cooperation between member states in the field of capability development. Based on that understanding, Sweden and Germany subsequently proposed the way how the capability gaps could be

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overcome – the principle of close cooperation.¹ The main idea of the initiative was (and still remains) to identify the fields of cooperation, driven by the purpose of spending European resources more efficient, maintaining broad areas of military capabilities in the framework of national political ambitions together with European ability to take reliable steps in crisis situations.

To achieve these goals, keeping in mind the impetus of close cooperation, Sweden and Germany suggested conducting an analysis of military capabilities and supporting structures by all EU member states according the 3 categories:

- To 1st category shall be included capabilities and support structures which the countries could consider for sensitive and therefore they might maintain them strictly on national level. This could include e.g. combat, combat support, intelligence, fighters...
- 2nd category shall consist of capabilities and support structures where the closer cooperation could be possible without creating too strong dependencies. These capabilities could be summarized under the idea of pooling. This could include e.g. operational training forces, strategic and tactical airlift or logistic capabilities.
- 3rd category is created by the capabilities and support structures where reliance on European partners in the framework of role and task sharing is acceptable. To this category could be included education, training, exercises, sensors dedicated to EU surveillance and reconnaissance...

The main criteria for this whole cooperation should be operational effectiveness, economic efficiency and, last but not least, political implications. Of course, it requires the agreement of each participating member state on all modalities of providing and using these capabilities.

To be fully fair, it is needed to say that the pooling and sharing of the capabilities is not a brand new idea. It sounds across the Europe already for some times. This idea always used to give to the potential parties many opportunities with the wide variety of provisions based on sharing the costs and advantages of close cooperation. Nevertheless, the Swedish - German proposal we can consider for the most concrete proposal which has been dedicated till now. The main benefit of its application could be seen on the integrity and complexity by division which capabilities shall be kept on national level and which could be provided by or together with partners.

EDA'S ROLE IN CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

Quoting the text of Joint Action from 12 July 2004 establishing the EDA,² the mission of the agency is *"to support the Council and the Member States in their effort to improve the EU's defence capabilities in the field of crisis management and to sustain the European Security and Defence Policy³..."*.

As far as the capability development is concerned, for the 'overall strategic tool' of EDA at this area is generally considered the document named Capability Development Plan (CDP). The initial version of CDP, endorsed in July 2008, contained 12 actions. The recent version, agreed during the last EDA Steering Board in Capability Directors Format in March 2011, has been extended from earliest 12 actions up to 19, reflecting the current EU needs as well the long term vision at the capability area. Some of the agreed actions remained unchanged (in comparison with the initial CDP) other were renewed and renamed, and some actions were newly identified.

Overall overview of new CDP, including division of the actions into 3 main groups, is stated in the following table.

¹ European Imperative Intensifying Military Cooperation in Europe "Ghent – Initiative". Food for Thought. Berlin and Stockholm. November 2010.

² COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2004/551/CFSP of 12 July 2004 on the establishment of the European Defence Agency.

³ After Lisbon treaty: Common Security and Defence Policy

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| CDP „Top 10“ Priorities | Maturing / Mature Actions |
|--|--|
| Counter Improvised Explosive Devices | Maritime Mine Counter - Measures |
| Medical Support | Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Defence |
| Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance | Counter – Man Portable Air Detection System |
| Increased Availability Helicopters | Military Human Intelligence |
| Cyber Defence | Core drivers / Environments |
| Multinational Logistic Support | Comprehensive Approach |
| CSDP Information Exchange | Network Enabling Capabilities |
| Strategic and Tactical Airlift Management | Radio Spectrum Management for EU Capabilities |
| Fuel and Energy | Space |
| Mobility Assurance | Single European Sky |

Moreover, in the present time, labelled by the impact of financial crisis to the defence budgets of European member states, is needed lay the impetus to the projects based on pooling and sharing principle. Nevertheless, it is needed to change the way of general thinking towards such as initiatives.

The long term vision of the European Air Transport Fleet (EATF) is to establish a linking across various European air transport entities aiming at the efficient employment of the air transport capabilities made available by the member states for military needs, regardless of type or origin. The main objectives of EATF are focused to improve the airlift provision within the European Union as well as to develop concrete solutions for better use of existing and future airlift assets made available by the member states for military needs to meet operational requirements. Moreover, one of the results shall be developed means for optimisation of existing and future air transport organisations and structures and assets included to the project to be able to transport any personnel/equipment with a minimum of constraints. Nevertheless, the main problem of the EATF fleet remains not the investment issues, but the organisation's, conceptual and legal aspects. At the present time, the question of diplomatic clearances is at the working tables.

As the successful example of such a project could be highlighted the activation of EATC (European Air Transport Command), the common project of France, Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. The EATC has been created with the aim to coordinate air transports of participating countries and, moreover, it also shall gain the control of air military transport assets (except helicopters) including the existing fleet of C-160 Transall, C-130 Hercules as well as all A-400M in the future.

As another example of EDA's pooling and sharing is the long-term period project SESAR⁴ (Single European Sky Air Traffic Management /ATM/ Research). The SESAR is a major European programme which is starting at the present time. The end-state conception of SESAR shall be supported by new key functions such as the Network Operation Plan (a dynamic rolling plan for continuous operations that ensures a common view of the network situation), full integration of all airport activities and their planning within Air Traffic Management (ATM) and management of flying corridors. SESAR shall complete its development phase by the year 2020. It will enhance the implementation of Single European Sky (SES), the initiative to reform the European ATM organisation ruled by specific legislative framework. SES and SESAR are expected to deliver benefits to the aeronautical community in terms of increasing the airspace capacity, reduce the environmental impact by 10% per flight and cut the ATM costs by 50%.

The new idea, presented by previous Chief executive of EDA Alexander Weis during the informal meeting of EU defence ministers in Ghent, was the proposal of creating multinational helicopter wing. By his assumption, such a wing could be

⁴ EDA engagement in the SES/SESAR, Presentation by EDA's Armaments Directorate. 14 October 2010.

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deployed within the CSDP operations, supporting EU Battle Groups or reacting on the needs at humanitarian crisis. Quick wins also could be reached in the area of Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED), medical and logistic support or training.

COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER PARTNERS AND ORGANISATIONS

The European Union has been since its establishment more and more recognized by international community as trustful partner in security sector. Nowadays, it is more and more invited to conduct appropriate steps within crisis management, alone or in cooperation with other partners, entities, such as OSCE, NATO and UN. As we want to sustain the EU as relevant partner we should broad its range of instruments with the aim of enhancing the contribution to international peace and security. This also goes hand-by-hand with building its response mechanisms and capabilities to deal with the internal and external security challenges.

Taking into account geographical aspects and the reality of overlapping EU and NATO membership, cooperation between these two organisations shall be despite some small discrepancies more than natural. From the practical point of view, this cooperation should not be just limited to the political level; it also should be delivered to the practical steps towards the capability development. Mentioned cooperation should be welcome at the both sides to increase the effectiveness of using all available resources. Moreover, it will result into more effective European engagement in global affairs. As one of the practical steps we can just agree on the *“building the key partnership between European Defence Agency and Allied Command Transformation”* as it is stated in the common letter of France, Germany and Polish ministers of Foreign Affairs letter to the High Representative of the EU lady Catherine Aston.⁵ This approach also will lead toward mutual reinforced cooperation as well as to facilitate the delivery needed capabilities.

Despite of some successful common collaborative projects (such as helicopter capability improvement, medical support, C-IED), there is always the possibility for any pragmatic initiatives and operational cooperation within the framework of enhancing capabilities building and development.

EU CIVIL – MILITARY SYNERGIES

Civilian – military cooperation and development of civil-military capabilities of the European Union beyond 2010 planning cycle are the key topics after Lisbon treaty. Nevertheless, the member states are not in favour to accept new goals and increasing of the Level of Ambition of European Union. Their priority is to focus on eliminating long-term capabilities shortfalls. Regarding the civil-military synergies⁶, there is also needed better coordination during the preparation phase of the EU missions, improving the logistic support of civilian and military operations, better intelligence exchange, sharing and using of operational Lessons Learned.

Based on the document „EU Civilian and Military Capability Development Beyond 2010”⁷ Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD), in close cooperation with EUMS, EDA and other relevant EU bodies, elaborated report which shall result in the application of the mentioned document into the praxis. The outcome of analysis provides basic overview on present state of play, expectations, restrictions a possible future steps. CMPD emphasised that comparison of civilian and military requirements is feasible only up to the certain level. But, despite mentioned fact, the synergies as

⁵ Letter of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of France, Germany and Poland to High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ms. Catherine Ashton. Berlin, Paris, Warsaw. 6 December 2010.

⁶ Promoting Synergies between the EU Civil and Military Capability Development – Way ahead; Council of The European Union/Secretariat; Brussels, 6 December 2010

⁷ EU Civilian and Military Capability Development Beyond 2010; Crisis Management and Planning Directorate; Brussels, 9 November 2010

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themselves are possible. And that is the main driver to promote this workstrand in the future. As the step forward, there is an intend to introduce the implementation of concrete actions aimed to increasing the synergies in the middle of this year. The implementation itself shall last till the Jun 2012 when also the evaluation report should be elaborated.

CONCLUSIONS

All these described approaches have one common impetus – to mitigate with decreasing financial resources by simultaneous keeping the existing and/or even developing new military (civilian-military) capabilities. Improvement of interoperability provides most political and operational flexibility taking into account each nation individual circumstances. The success and viability of cooperation, we can show at several examples. For all of them, let us mention the United Kingdom – French Defence Cooperation, and Cooperation of Nordic countries.

United Kingdom – French Defence and Security Cooperation⁸, based on shared common values, strategic assessment and needs was signed in November 2010. The main reasons was to strengthen cooperation between the armed forces by the maximising capabilities, reinforcing defence industries and ensuring viability of national deterrents. At the defence area, the cooperation is focusing into developing Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, creating integrated carrier strike group, air transport and air-to-air refuelling as well as maritime technologies. The other potential areas cover for example cyber security, counter-terrorism and other international threats.

Another example of existing multi-national cooperation based on common interests and build on regional principle is the Cooperation of Nordic countries signed by Norway, Sweden and Finland. In February 2009, during the meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of Nordic countries the 13 recommendations targeted on increasing military and civilian cooperation was suggested. These recommendations were focused on military education, common medical and transport capabilities, creating amphibious units, maritime surveillance, cyber defence and others.

Reading and comparing the previous both initiatives and its collaboration areas we can find clear commonalities, either in approach developing new or/and enhancing existing capabilities or even the areas of cooperation themselves. Anyway, the cooperation doesn't have to necessarily mean just the bilateral or multilateral states driven activity on pooling and sharing. These activities should be, and for higher success even shall be coordinated at the Europe-wide level. Good example of such a wider project is the EDA's Collaborative Database (so called CODABA). Mentioned database allows participating Member States to publish opportunities to cooperate over the entire acquisition cycle. CODABA aims to provide an overview of all existing national collaborative opportunities and, moreover, it is used by the member states as an information tool for national project proposals or already existing projects. As a result, inputs in the CODABA are permanently updated. Its successful using has been approved by Austria while withdrawal its forces from EU operation in Chad and, more recently, using by member states during ongoing EU naval operation against piracy EUNAVFOR ATALANTA.

From these entire mentioned projects, initiatives and plans, for the most promising we consider the Pooling and Sharing idea. It seems that it has its great potential as well as needed the political support. But, as it is used to say: "the devil is in details". The main risk within this concept is in partial losing of autonomous decision-making by the individual member states. The states have to accept that their own capabilities are used by another structure and, furthermore, that they are depending on another partners in using their specific capabilities (within the set and agreed conditions). Therefore, the sharing idea requires the high level of mutual trust, transparency and communications between the states. The integral part of the discussion has to be co-financing of the involved activities. The devil is in details...

⁸ UK-French Defence and Security Co-operation Treaty of 2 November 2010.

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