

**EDA CONFERENCE 2010 - "BRIDGING EFFORTS"**

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**Intervention of General Håkan SYRÉN****Chairman of the European Union Military Committee**

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**Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to contribute to the yearly EDA-conference.

The topic for today's conference is timely and indeed fits well into the current discussion on how to further develop and implement a comprehensive approach within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union.

We need this discussion because the challenges that we are facing - as part of the global community - demand comprehensive response. Security measures, military as well as civilian, are inextricably linked to strengthening governance structures and economic development.

We need it also as a way of economising with scarce resources. The economic crisis has served to further enhance this dimension. Within the EU we have to develop a much closer cooperation among the Member States. It applies equally to the military and the civilian dimensions and it also applies to our common efforts.

We simply have to look at efficiency and apply an effect based approach.

My starting point today will be the military capability development process as it has evolved as a part of ESDP.

It is a comprehensive and iterative process to which all parties have to contribute their essential parts. We have to work together, we have to keep a clear sight of the common goal: successful operations, supported by cost effective capabilities that can support the tasks to which the European Union is committing itself.

Our problem is not an abundance of expertise and resources but the absolute opposite. The EU Military Staff, the European Defence Agency, the EUMC and particularly the Member States and industries all have important roles and responsibilities.

### *How successful have we been?*

I think that we have been fairly successful in identifying the requirements, needs and shortfalls. We have established robust methods, which provide credible conclusions. Of course many conclusions were already well recognised.

The fact that almost all the Member States are deeply involved in similar processes in NATO from the start has been an important aspect when developing the EU Capability Process. Naturally more can be done to improve the overall efficiency. The EU-NATO Capability Group, for example, has a great potential that has not yet been fully used.

The real test of the efficiency of the EU process of course is not the quantity and the quality of the documents produced, but the resulting net capability enhancement. Results have to be assessed both in terms of immediate and long term effects. Obviously we are working towards both goals.

In the short term we have some clear results. We have the Helicopter Availability Initiative that was well covered during this conference last year. We have different actions taken to increase the European Air Transport Capabilities. We can also see that different national plans

and priorities have been influenced by the priorities and assessments in the Capability Development Plan (CDP).

However, I would also like to underline that we should not limit our assessment only to the CDP. The EU Battle Groups fall outside of the CDP and has evolved from theory to practice in a remarkably short time. I know from my own experience as Swedish Chief of Defence, that the Battle Group Concept has played an essential role as catalyst for transformation of the armed forces in several Member States.

### ***What are the problems and the difficulties?***

Capability development almost by definition is a long term process. Capabilities are built step by step over long periods and are planned to be used during decades. The process from the conception to the fielding of new advanced systems often spans decade-long periods.

Most important, the decisions in the end are almost entirely national. It is the sum of the political will of the Member States, which is reflected in the capability development!! And it is also the political will of the Member States that in the end is reflected in the actual force generation.

However, that said, the inertia of the process is still much too great and the established structures are still too much reflecting yesterday's requirements. Today we are all engaged in challenging operations, where new capability requirements and needs are immediate and urgent. The time it takes to change course remains too long. We have to be responsive to the critical needs of our operational commanders.

The CDP has responded to some of these new requirements. For example one of the 12 action areas as I already mentioned is directed to countering Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), which is today one of the most pressing capability needs in our international operations. Another example is Third Party Logistic Support Actions which facilitate for all the Member States to gain better cost-efficiency in the logistic support to the operations and missions.

So we are improving, but more is needed. We have to simplify procedures. We have to develop "fast tracks" for rapidly integrating lessons identified in the field into our capability development processes. The lessons learned should be "the oxygen" in our capability development!

We have accumulated a lot of common experience and insights during the last years. All in all we have a methodology that works. Now we must focus on the problems that we are ready to try to solve and we must avoid process and trivia.

### ***Funding and resources***

The most important factor influencing real capability development in the next years is the economic realities and constraints facing us. The present deep economic crisis is severely constraining public spending and defence budgets in most European States. I do not expect any substantial changes in this trend.

Average defence expenditure among the EU Member States is now about 1,6 percent of GDP and the percentage is decreasing. We are facing a very different situation.

Equipment that we earlier expected to last for decades in storage today are intensely used in demanding operations. As a result the operational life time is sharply reduced.

The budgetary pressure is hard felt already today and budgets are generally not allowing for long-term renewal programs that match perceived future needs. Low levels of R&D and low renewal rates implies that we are mortgaging the future in ways that raise fundamental questions of leadership responsibilities.

The implications are great and demanding. We have to be smarter both in our national and in our common efforts and instead convert this adverse pressure into a positive opportunity. We cannot complain all the time!

Pooling of resources, national specialisation and harmonisation of capabilities to achieve affordable economies of scale will be important elements. A lot of this of course are hot political issues involving perspectives on national sovereignty as well as on how to establish closer connections between the use of military and civilian capabilities. It unavoidably involves balancing different contradictory national priorities.

EU can be a catalyst for change by formulating common guidelines and help formulating viable alternatives to a continuing marginalisation of the capabilities of individual MS

### *Which are the new challenges?*

Of course we have to adapt to a changing environment and to changing requirements. There are a number of new urgent tasks that have emerged since the European Security Strategy (ESS) was originally formulated in 2003 and thus since we formulated the current Headline Goal 2010. Most were introduced by the report on the implementation of the ESS in 2008.

We have the expanding dimensions of terrorism, which raise new security concerns on a global scale. Combined with the risks of proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, international terrorism is emerging as the most serious security threat to Europe as well as to large parts of the world.

We have the rapidly growing cyber threats, which today impacts on everyday-security in all societies.

We have the emerging international piracy threats, a new form of transnational crime, that threatens the trade flows on which the global economy is dependant.

We have the rising concerns linked to energy security with asymmetric dependencies and vulnerabilities.

We have growing security concerns related to global climate change. They are immediate as well as long term.

We are talking about these emerging threats, but I can not yet find them in our organised CDP process. Are we dealing with the real contemporary threats?

The international community also has a growing bank of experience from recent complex multifunctional peace-building operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and in various parts of Africa. Our lessons learned now are carrying a unified message: peace, security and development can only be achieved by a comprehensive approach building on a concerted use of military and civilian capabilities and tools.

All those new factors are reflected in the general political guidance by the European Council but they have not yet been transformed into concrete capability requirements.

A common denominator of all the examples I have just given, is that the new security threats have to be met by comprehensive efforts by the whole of our societies, efforts that to a some extent will have to build on civilian capabilities and activities. This is bridging efforts!

We also have fresh memories of a number of large scale disasters in different parts of the world, the tsunami in South East Asia, the flood in New Orleans, the earthquake in Pakistan and in the recent weeks the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti. They have all contributed to a new awareness of inherent vulnerabilities and of a growing need for rapid response capabilities.

They have also brought the attention to an inherent difference between civilian and military resources. While civilian security resources are constantly in use, military resources to a large extent are still primarily designed to be held in preparedness rather than to be permanently used in their ultimate tasks. They are trained and equipped to be able to act swiftly and to be able to deploy in new environments.

The Haiti situation is an extreme case. The destruction has hit also the core of national capabilities, that would normally coordinate the disaster relief efforts. The immediate needs were only to a small extent military, but only military resources had the inherent capabilities needed to respond with short notice to the tremendous challenges raised in Haiti. Unless we develop new ways of organising civilian rapid response capabilities, the conflict with everyday use and cost efficiency will remain a serious constraint.

### ***Conclusions***

Our further capability work has to be based on realistic assumptions. There is no room for wishful thinking. The budget constraints are and will be extremely tight. I repeat myself: we have to translate pressure into opportunity!

We have to prioritise and we have to find smarter, more cost efficient ways, of developing and sustaining capabilities. At the same time we must not lose sight of the long term responsibilities.

We have to cooperate closely. This has long been an established truth on the industrial level, but the same perspective should be applied on our armed forces.

Individual armed forces find it increasingly impossible to maintain the full range of capabilities. We have to do more together. By pooling we can get a broader base and we can share scarce capabilities. This is a model that is now being developed among the Nordic countries and that I think could be more generally applied. We have a successful example in SAC, the Strategic Airlift Cooperation, where twelve nations are currently sharing a pool of three C-17 aircraft. And the EDA European Air Transport Fleet initiative is providing an even wider set of pooling and sharing opportunities.

National specialisation is another approach. Although a lot can be achieved without undermining the sovereignty of the individual states, it is equally clear that the long term development points towards closer multinational integration and greater mutual dependencies.

This broad background about the challenges facing military capability development provides a relevant starting point for discussing connections between civilian security and military capability development. This is bridging efforts!

Let me conclude with a few observations

*First:* There is now a general agreement that we need a comprehensive civilian-military approach to meet most of the security threats that we see today and tomorrow. It is evident that this provides a strong incentive to look for synergies in the development of capabilities.

The Lisbon Treaty has offered us new opportunities, which we now have to use.

We have to ensure that we have the equipment, methods and training that facilitates efficient coordination and cooperation in operations and missions. Interoperability has been a key priority in the development of military capabilities for multinational operations in the last decades.

We should now expand the concept of interoperability to include also efficient civilian - military and inter civilian cooperation. Building on our military experience there should be a broad scope for connecting civilian and military capability development.

Some of the areas where it is natural to search for common approaches have already been mentioned. The list could be made long: maritime surveillance, intelligence, situation awareness, communications- and information systems, cyber-security, maintenance, education and training & exercise, just to mention some of the most important..

*Second:* Many of the systems that have been designed for the armed forces are equally useful in civilian missions. There are also a number of areas where we could draw on the same resources that is where resources could be pooled. Where appropriate, we should enhance cost efficiency through closer civil and military cooperation. Medical facilities, logistic support including air transport capabilities and



communications networks are all areas where only marginal adjustments would be necessary. Good examples were provided a few weeks ago when military air lift capabilities were used for bringing rapid disaster relief to Haiti.

*Third:* Cooperation is a two-way street. Just as we search for synergies by adapting military capabilities to civilian requirements, we should of course constantly look at the opportunities to use civilian resources and capabilities for military tasks. That is something we have always done, but nevertheless I am convinced that the need to search for cost efficiency by building on civilian capabilities has never been greater.

So the question is: should we then aim at a comprehensive civil-military Capability Development Process built on common Headline Goals and common illustrative scenarios?

My answer is that we should strive for careful pragmatism. I think it is important to keep our processes as simple as possible. We must be realistic. It is easy to dream of new wide-ranging capability goals to meet all sorts of broad common tasks, but in the end the tight budgetary constraints will have to be met.

We have to coordinate civilian and military efforts wherever we see clear opportunities.

Transparency and openness to new ways of cooperation is key, fundamental to success. Together we have to learn the lessons from ongoing operations and missions. It is the common results that counts.

Finally: this is not a conference on leadership, but I know from quite a long experience about the culture gaps and hidden barriers to efficient military-civilian cooperation. A change of mindset in those deep trenches is imperative as we go forward with the comprehensive approach. It is one of the most demanding challenges for leadership on all levels.

It starts here!