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Directors of European Defence Agency appointed

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, announced today, in his capacity as Head of the European Defence Agency, the following appointments of Agency Directors:

CAPABILITY

Major-General Pierre **HOUARDY**
(currently commanding the Concepts and Planning Division in the Belgian Joint Staff)

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

Bertrand **de CORDOUE**
Ingénieur en chef de l'Armement
(currently Director of the Economic and Trade Department of the French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry)

ARMAMENTS

Brigadier-General Carlo **MAGRASSI**
(currently Deputy Chief, Aeronautical Programmes, in the Italian National Directorate for Armaments)

INDUSTRY AND MARKET

Mr. Ulf **HAMMARSTRÖM**
(latterly Minister and Head of Defence Affairs at the Swedish Permanent Representation to the EU and NATO)

These four Directors, along with the Chief Executive (Nick Witney) and the Deputy Chief Executive (Hilmar Linnenkamp) - whose appointments were announced on 30 July - will constitute the Agency's Management Board.

Javier Solana said: "these appointments are a key step along the road to achieving a functioning Agency by the end of the year. We were fortunate to be able to select the Agency's Directors from amongst an exceptionally strong field of candidates offered by the participating Member States. I am delighted to be able to announce such a talented and well-qualified "top team" to guide the Agency through its early years."

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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The European Defence Agency (EDA) was established by the Council on 12 July 2004. It is designed "to support the Member States in their effort to improve European defence capabilities in the field of crisis management and to sustain the ESDP as it stands now and develops in the future". More specifically, the Agency is ascribed four functions, relating to: (a) defence capabilities development; (b) armaments co-operation; (c) the European defence technological and industrial base and defence equipment market; (d) research and technology.

These functions all relate to improving Europe's defence performance, by promoting coherence in place of fragmentation.

The EDA is an Agency of the European Union. High Representative Solana is Head of the Agency, chairman of the Steering Board, its decision-making body composed of Defence Ministers of participating Member States and the Commission. The Steering Board acts under the Council's authority and within the framework of guidelines issued by the Council.

The build-up of the Agency will be paced by recruitment of staff. An adequate cadre (about 25 personnel) could be in place by the end of 2004, building up in 2005 to the proposed initial steady total of around 80 personnel. This would comprise a top team, a Corporate Services branch and four directorates (Capabilities, R&T, Armaments and Defence Industry/Market).

Nick Witney was appointed EDA Chief Executive on 30 July 2004. The first EDA Steering Board meeting was held on 17 September.
