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Jan Joel Andersson

Armed and Ready?

The EU Battlegroup Concept and the Nordic Battlegroup

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FOREWORD

This report traces the origins of the EU decision to set up battlegroups, describes the underlying political and military concepts and analyses the challenges that the EU and its member states face in realising the Headline goal 2010, the plan adopted by the European defence ministers in June 2004 with the aim of improving European military capabilities. It also discusses the broader question of whether or not a military capability allows the EU to better achieve its goals.

The Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, SIEPS, conducts and promotes research and analysis of European policy issues within the disciplines of political science, law and economics. SIEPS strives to act as a link between the academic world and policy-makers at various levels. By issuing this report, we hope to stimulate the European discussion on how the role of the European Union on the global scene is related to its military capabilities.

Stockholm, March 2006

Annika Ström Melin
Director
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY

The capability to deploy military forces on short notice during crises is an essential aspect of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The European Union Battlegroup concept lies at the centre of this capability. An EU Battlegroup consists of a battalion-size force package of around 1,500 troops, complete with combat support and logistics units as well as the necessary air and naval components, ready for rapid deployment around the world. The EU's ambition is to be able to launch a Battlegroup operation within five days after approval by the Council. Once the decision has been made, troops should be on the ground implementing their mission within ten days. To date, the EU Member States have agreed to the establishment of thirteen Battlegroups. Every six months, two of these will be on stand-by to deploy within 5-10 days. Limited operational ability is already in place but full operational capability is expected to be reached by 2007. At that time, the EU should be able to undertake the simultaneous or near-simultaneous launch of two concurrent single battalion-size rapid response operations. The Battlegroups will be capable of managing the full range of response tasks, including humanitarian assistance, traditional peacekeeping and peacemaking by force. In support of the ESDP, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Estonia have agreed to establish a joint Nordic Battlegroup (NBG) under Swedish leadership, which will be on standby during the period 1 January – 30 June 2008.

This report traces the origins behind the EU's decision to establish these Battlegroups, discusses the political and military concepts underlying the EU's decision and analyses the challenges facing the EU and its Member States in realising the Headline Goal 2010. Moreover, the report will review the current build-up of the Nordic Battlegroup (NBG), which comprises units from Sweden, Finland, Norway and Estonia. In conclusion, the report addresses the fundamental question of whether the development of the Battlegroup concept in fact enables the EU to better achieve its goals. The report then discusses three alternatives by which the EU might achieve its goals and examines how the EU Battlegroup Concept functions within each. The three alternatives are as follows: 1) remain a civilian great power and rely on civilian means; 2) become a traditional great power and develop the full range of tools for international statecraft, including an army and 3) attempt to square the circle by acquiring a limited military capability as a complement to mainly civilian tools.

While the Battlegroup concept has won wide acceptance in Europe, the question remains whether rapid deployment of 1,500 light infantrymen will be the right answer to the next crisis. If military force is to be an instru-

ment in achieving the EU's strategic goals set in the European Security Strategy - counteracting terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, promoting security in the neighbourhood and assisting the UN in the management of international crises - the EU will need far more than two battalion-size Battlegroups at its disposal to meet these goals. While the EU may not necessarily need an entire army, it will need at minimum a few standing brigades. If not, the Member States may eventually find themselves in a Union whose bark is much worse than its bite.

PROLOGUE: OUT OF EUROPE – INTO AFRICA *

In the summer of 2003, the European Union (EU) initiated its first independent military operation outside of Europe. In response to deteriorating security conditions and the worsening humanitarian situation in the Ituri province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the EU launched Operation Artemis, which sent 1,800 soldiers some 6,000 km away to Central Africa. By the spring of 2003, Ituri province was in utter chaos with more than a dozen ethnic militias and regular military forces from Rwanda, Uganda and the DRC fighting each other for control of the resource rich province. In the course of a two-week period, more than 400 people were killed in and around the town of Bunia and at least 12,000 civilians sought protection from overwhelmed peacekeepers at the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) in Bunia. Unable to stem the violence, the group of 700 lightly armed Uruguayan peacekeepers based in Bunia quickly found it impossible to uphold their mandate to protect the civilian population. In early May 2003, the United Nations warned of an impending disaster and the risk of "massive killings of civilians" in Bunia and asked UN member states to provide an interim force that could stabilise the situation until a more robust UN presence could be established.[1]

On 30 May 2003, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1484, authorising the temporary deployment of an interim emergency multinational force in Bunia in the Democratic Republic of Congo, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Within a week of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1484, the first EU troops were on the ground.[2] The major part of the EU force consisted of approximately 1,700 French troops. Sweden in turn provided about 70-80 Special Forces soldiers. Other countries contributed logistics and support services such as air transport (United Kingdom) and medical aid (Belgium). Altogether, sixteen countries contributed to Operation Artemis, including three non-European countries – Brazil, Canada and South Africa.[3] The EU force quickly began patrolling Bunia. While several clashes took place between local

* I would like to thank Stephanie Buus and Stefan Borg for their valuable comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this report and Maja Novak for her excellent research assistance.

[1] Ulrikesen *et al.* 2004, p. 511; Operation Artemis 2004.

[2] Although the European Council officially launched Operation Artemis on 12 June 2003, the first French combat troops arrived in Bunia as early as 6 June. See Ulriksen *et al.* 2004, p. 516; United Nations 2004.

[3] Lindstrom 2004.

militias and EU troops, the town was eventually secured and Operation Artemis ended on 1 September 2003. After returning full responsibility to the UN mission in the Congo, all remaining EU forces left Bunia on 6 September 2003.[4]

Operation Artemis was the EU's first autonomous military operation and it was conducted without recourse to NATO assets.[5] It was also the first EU operation to take place outside of Europe and the first EU operation conducted under chapter VII of the UN Charter.[6] Operation Artemis turned out to be a poster child for the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), demonstrating that the EU was capable of reacting rapidly and forcefully in international security affairs. The success of Operation Artemis subsequently led to a Franco-British call for the EU to createbattle-group size forces of around 1,500 troops to significantly bolster the EU's autonomous rapid reaction capability.[7]

[4] Lynch and Missiroli 2005.
[5] Mace 2003.
[6] Ulriksen, Gourlay, and Mace 2004, p.508.
[7] Franco-British Summit Declaration, London, 24 November 2003.

1 INTRODUCTION

The European Union is sharpening its teeth. The question is how sharp those teeth are and how powerful its bite will be. As Operation Artemis in the summer of 2003 showed, the EU is now able and willing to send combat troops to the scene of a crisis and is prepared to use lethal force when deemed necessary. The capability to deploy military forces on short notice during a crisis is an essential aspect of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The EU Battlegroup concept lies at the centre of this capability and is fleshed out in the Headline Goal 2010, which outlines the development of EU military capabilities. An EU Battlegroup consists of a battalion-size force package with combat support and logistics units as well as any necessary air and naval components, ready for rapid deployment to nearly anywhere around the world. The EU defines a Battlegroup as follows:

> The Battlegroup is a specific form of rapid response. It is the minimum military effective, credible, rapidly deployable, coherent force package capable of stand-alone operations, or for the initial phase of larger operations. The Battlegroup is based on a combined arms and battalion sized force and reinforced with Combat Support and Combat Support elements. A Battlegroup could be formed by a Framework Nation or by a multinational coalition of Member States. In all cases, interoperability and military effectiveness will be key criteria. A Battlegroup must be associated with a Force Headquarters and pre-identified operational and strategic enablers, such as strategic lift and logistics.[8]

The EU's ambition is to be able to launch a Battlegroup operation within five days after approval by the Council. Once the decision to launch an operation has been made, troops from a Battlegroup should be on the ground implementing their mission within ten days.[9] To date, EU Member States have committed to the organisation of thirteen Battlegroups, two of which will be on constant 5-10 day readiness standby duty. Limited battlegroup operational ability is already in place, but full operational capability is expected to be reached by 2007. At that time, the EU should be able to launch two concurrent single battalion-sized rapid response operations almost simultaneously. The Battlegroups will be capable of managing the full range of tasks listed in the Treaty on European Union (Article 17.2) and the European Security Strategy, including humanitarian assistance, traditional peacekeeping missions and peacemaking by force.[10] In support of

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[8] Declaration on European military capabilities, EU Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.

[9] Headline Goal 2010.

[10] Declaration on European military capabilities, EU Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.

the ESDP, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Estonia have agreed to establish a joint Nordic Battlegroup (NBG) under Swedish leadership, which will be on standby during the period 1 January – 30 June 2008.[11]

This report traces the origins behind the EU's decision to establish these Battlegroups, discusses the political and military concepts underlying the EU's decision and analyses the challenges facing the EU and its Member States in realising the Headline Goal 2010. Moreover, the report will review the current build-up of the Nordic Battlegroup (NBG), which comprises units from Sweden, Finland, Norway and Estonia. In conclusion, the report addresses the fundamental question of whether the development of the Battlegroup concept in fact enables the EU to better achieve its goals. The report then discusses three alternatives by which the EU might achieve its goals and examines how the EU Battlegroup Concept functions within each. The three alternatives are as follows: 1) remain a civilian great power and rely on civilian means; 2) become a traditional great power and develop the full range of tools for international statecraft, including an army and 3) attempt to square the circle by remaining a civilian power but acquiring a limited military capability as a complement to mainly civilian tools.

1.1 Development of the European Security and Defence Policy

Defence policy was long a non-existent issue in the EU. Although the Maastricht Treaty (1992) marked the first inclusion of provisions for EU responsibilities in the areas of common security and defence policy, little more happened in the years that followed. However, the failure of the EU to intervene effectively during the break-up of Yugoslavia in the 1990's and the ensuing Balkan wars led many observers to conclude that a viable EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) required the inclusion of a European defence policy. Although the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) expanded EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) to include humanitarian and rescue operations, peacekeeping and the use of combat forces in crises management as well as peacemaking operations, little of substance occurred. While the CFSP aimed at asserting the EU's identity on the international scene, "in particular through the implementation of a common foreign and security policy, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence", the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was first realised in 1999.

[11] Memorandum of Understanding 2005.

Any serious European defence initiative would necessarily have to include Britain and France, the two leading EU countries in terms of security and defence. For many years, these two countries held diverging views on how a strengthened European defence identity should relate to NATO, a disagreement that made progress on the issue of European defence very difficult. Whereas Britain has traditionally emphasised the transatlantic partnership with the United States and the pre-eminence of NATO in European defence, France has emphasised instead the importance of the EU as an independent security actor and a counterweight to the United States. However, shared frustration over the European failure in the Balkans during the 1990s and several positive experiences of Anglo-French military cooperation during the Yugoslavian conflict led to a willingness on the part of both Britain and France to reach a compromise. To the surprise of many, the two countries managed to reach a joint position on European defence at a bilateral meeting in St-Malo in December 1998. At St-Malo, Britain supported the development of an independent European military capability while France acknowledged the importance and legitimacy of NATO and the Atlantic Alliance.[12] In the declaration following the summit meeting, Britain and France issued the following joint statement:

> The European Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises…in strengthening the solidarity between the member states of the European Union, in order that Europe can make its voice heard in world affairs, while acting in conformity with our respective obligations in NATO, we are contributing to the vitality of a modernised Atlantic Alliance, which is the foundation of the collective defence of its members.[13]

The agreement on European defence between Britain and France was later presented to the other EU countries, all of which supported the idea. The European weakness later displayed in the Kosovo conflict in 1999 only reinforced the view that a stronger European role in international conflict management required the creation of a European defence policy.

To make the ESDP possible in practical terms, a number of institutional steps had to be taken. At its summit meeting in Cologne in June 1999, the European Council established the Political and Security Committee (PSC) consisting of Member States' ambassadors to manage CFSP and ESDP on a daily basis. The European Union Military Committee (EUMC), consisting of the Member States' chiefs of defence staff or their representatives,

[12] Howarth 2000.
[13] Quoted in Haine 2004a, p. 43.

in turn advises the PSC on military issues. Military expertise is also provided by the EU Military Staff (EUMS), which is responsible for planning and executing military crisis management training and operations. Today, the PSC, the EUMC, and EUMS are the permanent political and military structures responsible for an autonomous, operational EU defence policy under the Council.[14]

The ESDP would have been further strengthened had the recent proposal for the European Constitution been ratified. In the draft Constitution, the goal of establishing a genuine common European defence is clearly stated. In addition, the draft Constitution included updated versions of the Petersberg Tasks, a clause on mutual defence and a solidarity clause in the event of terrorist attacks or natural or man-made disasters. The draft Constitution would also have provided for the possibility of allowing military tasks to be assigned to a group of Member States and the establishment of "permanent structured cooperation" in the defence field. Such measures would have enabled some Member States to move faster towards the goal of a common European defence.[15]

1.2 Helsinki Headline Goal

The decision to establish ESDP led to a discussion about military capabilities in the EU. At the Helsinki European Council meeting in December 1999, the EU Member States agreed to set themselves a military capability target subsequently known as the Helsinki Headline Goal (HHG). The ambitious goal set for the EU was to be able to rapidly deploy and sustain forces capable of the full range of "Petersberg Tasks" by the year 2003. These tasks included the most demanding types of peacemaking operations up to army corps level (around fifteen brigades or 50,000 – 60,000 troops). The EU force was to become a self-sustaining military entity with all the necessary command, control and intelligence capabilities, logistics and other combat support services as well as air and naval components as needed. In voluntary cooperation, the Member States would be able to deploy in full at this level within 60 days, while smaller rapid response elements would be available and deployable at very high readiness. The Member States were also expected to be able to sustain such a deployment for at least one year.[16]

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[14] In the Treaty of Nice, the European Council put the PSC in charge of crisis management operations, although the Council retained responsibility. See European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) 2005.

[15] European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) 2005.

[16] Helsinki European Council (December 1999).

The HHG made it clear that the Union was not forming an EU army. Any EU-led force mobilised in response to a crisis would last only for the duration of that crisis and it would be up to the Member States themselves to decide whether, when and how to contribute troops.[17] The "voluntary" nature of Member States' commitments quickly became problematic.[18] Most European countries had at best few, if any, trained troops available for international crisis management and almost none of these countries had any rapid deployment capability. Furthermore, many of the trained troops available were already earmarked for several other force-registers to be used by NATO and the UN, among others. The available capabilities were documented by the EU Member States in three catalogues: the Headline Goal Catalogue (goals for the number of troops and capabilities), the Headline Force Catalogue (list of currently available forces) and the Headline Progress Catalogue (how to meet the difference between goals and currently available forces). These catalogues helped to identify gaps in key capabilities such as strategic lift and support.[19] To make up for the gaps, the EU launched the European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP) in November 2001. However, since ECAP focused primarily on coordinating procurement, structures and doctrinal development, it did nothing to directly improve European crisis management capabilities. Nevertheless, at its meeting in Laeken in December 2001, the European Council declared the EU to be "militarily operational". Despite such a declaration, the lack of any real European military capability remained obvious. Although it was declared at the end of 2003 that the quantitative goals of the HHG had now formally been met, the reality was that the HHG process had yet to result in any new European military capabilities and certainly not any credible EU rapid response capability.[20] The Helsinki catalogues were merely lists of units and resources on paper without any guarantee that actual troops would be trained and ready for rapid deployment when the situation called for it.

[17] Lindstrom 2005.

[18] Volunteerism was a key feature of the HHG, a feature that NATO was quick to adopt under its Prague Capabilities Process and to apply to the NATO Response Force. See Quille 2004b.

[19] Other identified shortfalls were, for example, attack helicopters, ISR-capabilities, air-to-air refuelling tankers, airborne electronic warfare capacity and anti-missile defence. See Quille 2004a.

[20] Many policymakers and researchers have argued that the EU's lack of political unity and ability to deploy military forces was an important aspect in the deterioration of the transatlantic relationship before and during the war in Iraq 2003.

1.3 European Security Strategy

The lack of European military capabilities and common strategic thinking on international security issues was again revealed during the crisis leading up to the Iraq war in spring 2003, when a politically divided and militarily impotent EU was sidelined by the United States during the crisis. The European failure on Iraq caused concern among European leaders, who recognised that an enlarged Europe of 450 million people could and should not abandon its obligations and responsibilities in the world. In an effort to show the world that the EU could function as a strategic actor, Secretary General/High Representative Javier Solana was given the task of drafting a European Security Strategy (ESS) in spring 2003. The resulting document, "A Secure Europe in a Better World", was presented in draft form at the Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003. Following a consultation process that included experts and academics as well as European diplomats and politicians, the document was adopted with minor changes at the European Council meeting in Brussels in December 2003.[21] The strategy paper outlines five major threats to European security – international terrorism, WMD proliferation, regional conflicts, failed states and organised crime – and pledges a more robust European response to these threats.[22] While the wording of the ESS is rather ambiguous and leaves room for disagreement, the document is still crucial to an understanding of the purpose and mission of an EU military force, since it provides a strategic framework for the formulation of all subsequent European foreign and security policy.[23] Any military operation will therefore be based on the general vision of the EU's role in the world as outlined in the ESS.[24]

The ESS is a unique document, since it clearly states that there are real threats to the Union, a point rarely made in such explicit terms. At the same time, the ESS makes clear that the traditional form of border defence is a thing of the past and that the first line of defence now lies abroad. While there are many similarities between the ESS and the US National Security Strategy of September 2002, both in terms of the threats described and the need to act abroad, there are also differences.[25] Perhaps the

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[21] Discussion papers, reports and other documents regarding the consultation process on the draft European Security Strategy are available at http://www.iss-eu.org

[22] European Security Strategy 2003.

[23] While the draft text was adopted with only minor changes, the contentious section referring to the use of force to respond to threats received an important change of words, replacing the term "preemptive engagement" with "preventive engagement", which many claim favours the use of civilian tools over military ones.

[24] Ortega 2005.

[25] For an analysis of the differences between the US and European Security Strategies, see Berenskoetter 2005.

clearest differences lie in the analysis of how to manage these common threats and the use of force. Although the ESS does not exclude the use of force, it emphasises a broader approach than the US National Security Strategy, one explicitly combining political, economic, civil and military means. The ESS conceptualises future security challenges as negative effects of globalisation and is closely tied to the concepts of "human security" and "global common goods", which must be protected or promoted by a mix of political, economic and military means. Nonetheless, the ESS clearly stresses the need for more flexible military forces to meet the new security threats facing Europe today.

Moreover, the ESS builds on the EU's heritage of rules and multilateral negotiations. Security will be achieved by extending the zone of security around Europe and strengthening the international order through "preventive engagement" and "effective multilateralism". The ESS stresses that the fundamental framework for international relations is the United Nations Charter. Strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively is thus a European priority.[26] Multilateral cooperation does not only mean cooperation with the UN, but also the WTO, the IAEA and NATO as well as individual allies, in particular the United States. The transatlantic relationship is also identified as a core element of the international system, which is not only in the EU's "bilateral interest but strengthens the international community as a whole".[27]

1.4 Headline Goal 2010

In June 2003, the European Council declared that the EU had reached operational capability across the full range of "Petersberg Tasks". While the Helsinki Headline Goal (HHG) was thus formally met, the Council also acknowledged that this capability remained "limited and constrained by recognised shortfalls".[28] In response, Britain and France introduced a new European defence initiative at their bilateral summit meeting a few months later. The two countries argued that the EU should be able and willing to deploy military forces in an autonomous operation within fifteen days of a crisis.[29] To do this, Britain and France proposed, the EU needed to form coherent and credible battlegroup-size forces of about 1,500 troops with appropriate transport and logistical support. These battlegroups would give the EU a real rapid reaction capability and could be offered to the EU

[26] Haine 2004, pp. 51-52.
[27] European Security Strategy 2003.
[28] Thessaloniki European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 19-20 June 2003, no. 56.
[29] Franco-British Summit Declaration, 24 November 2003.

either by a single Member State or by two or more cooperating Member States. Moreover, the battlegroups ought to be equipped for and have the capacity to operate under a UN chapter VII mandate. They ought to be ready for deployment in response to a UN request to stabilise a situation or to meet other short-term needs until peacekeepers from the United Nations or regional organisation acting under a UN mandate arrived or until other reinforcements arrived. Britain and France also declared that they would continue to cooperate on developing a new Headline Goal to be implemented by the end of 2010 targeted at improving the EU's ability to undertake the full range of missions envisaged under the draft Constitution.[30] Germany supported the Anglo-French proposal, and it was subsequently presented as a trilateral Anglo-French-German initiative before the EU's Political and Security Committee in February 2004. Two months later, in early April 2004, the Battlegroup initiative was approved by the EU defence ministers.[31] Following approval of the Anglo-French-German proposal, the Council requested that the "relevant Council bodies" overseeing ECAP develop a clear roadmap for what had earlier been a relatively ad-hoc process.[32] The adoption of the European Security Strategy in December 2003 also meant that the original Helsinki Headline Goal and capability generation process required review. It was further decided that the Petersberg Tasks would also have to be revisited and redefined and a new Headline Goal established for the Member States.[33]

In June 2004, exactly a year after the European Council declared that the Helsinki Headline Goal had been met, EU defence ministers adopted a new plan for improving European military capabilities. The plan, subsequently known as Headline Goal 2010 (HG 2010), built on the earlier goals set by the European Council in Helsinki in 1999 and identified the gaps that still need to be addressed, among them strategic air transport and logistics.[34] HG 2010 also reflects the spirit and substance of the European Security Strategy (ESS) as well as the lessons of previous experiences garnered from EU-led operations like Operation Artemis.[35] The new plan therefore emphasised interoperability, deployability and sustainability and stated that by 2010, the Member States would be able to carry out rapidly

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[30] Franco-British Summit Declaration, 24 November 2003.
[31] Council of European Union 2590th Council Meeting General Affairs and External Relations, Brussels 14 June 2004 (10189/04). See also Quille 2004a.
[32] Earle 2004, p. 5.
[33] Quille 2004a, p. 2.
[34] Council of the European Union 2582nd Council meeting, Brussels, 17 May 2004 (9219/04).
[35] After approving HG 2010, the European Council underlined the importance of developing the potential of ESDP in both its military and civil aspects to assist in effective conflict prevention and management. See Council of the European Union (9219/04) (Presse 149).

and decisively the entire spectrum of crisis management missions covered by the Treaty on European Union, including humanitarian and rescue missions, peace-keeping tasks and peacemaking involving combat forces. As indicated in the ESS, these missions might also include joint disarmament operations, support to third countries in combating terrorism and security reform missions.[36] Moreover, HG 2010 emphasised that the EU must have the ability to sustain several operations simultaneously and at different levels of engagement.[37] For this to work, interoperability, deployability and sustainability needed to be at the core of Member States' efforts.[38] Some of the milestones identified in the HG 2010 are:[39]

- The establishment of a European Defence Agency in the field of defence capability development, research, acquisition and armaments (completed in 2004)[40]
- The establishment of a civil-military cell within the European Union Military Staff capable of rapidly establishing an operation centre for a particular operation (completed in 2004)
- Developing a European Airlift Command for interested Member States
- Completing the development of rapidly deployable EU Battlegroups (to be completed by 2007)
- Ensuring the availability of an aircraft carrier with air wing and escort vessels (to be completed by 2008)
- Improving the performance of EU operations at all levels through appropriate compatibility and network linkage of all communications equipment as well as terrestrial and space based assets (to be completed by 2010)
- Developing quantitative benchmarks and criteria that national forces are required to meet in the field of deployability and training

In particular, the establishment of the European Defence Agency (EDA) has great potential benefits for the development of European military capabilities. The EDA's mission is to deliver the military capabilities required for ESDP by organising existing European armaments cooperation organisations into a more coherent whole in order to achieve more cost-effective capability development.[41] The Agency will serve as a link between military

[36] Headline Goal 2010, paragraph 2.
[37] European Security Strategy 2003, Headline Goal 2010, paragraph 2.
[38] Headline Goal 2010, paragraph 3.
[39] Lindstrom, 2005, p. 5.
[40] The European Defence Agency (EDA) was established in July 2004. With the exception of Denmark, all EU Member States confirmed their participation in the EDA. The EDA's mission is to assist Member States in their efforts to improve military capabilities.
[41] Schmitt 2004, p. 110.

planning, armaments production and defence research and procurement among its Member States. This is particularly important for harmonising capability requirements, promoting standardisation of equipment and turning common capability requirements into common procurement projects.[42] The EDA is therefore being developed in cooperation with the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) and the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) as part of a systematic and comprehensive capability development process. EDA's broad scope also ensures the involvement of Armaments, Research and Technology and Industry and Market in the capability process. Specifically, the EDA will coordinate the implementation of ECAP utilising the Capability Development Mechanism (CDM), promote and co-ordinate harmonisation of military requirements, and identify and propose collaborative activities in the operational domain.[43] Once the EDA becomes fully operational, it will have particular responsibility for the integration of existing capabilities and between operational aspects and the acquisition and development of new capabilities. The EDA will incorporate or absorb the principles and practices of the relevant elements of pre-existing arrangements such as OCCAR, LoI, Framework Agreement, and WAEG/WEAO.[44]

[42] ESDP Presidency Report, 17 December 2004.
[43] Declaration, Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.
[44] Schmitt 2004.

2 THE BATTLEGROUP CONCEPT

The capability to rapidly deploy military forces when faced with an international crisis is a key component of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and the Headline Goal 2010 (HG 2010). The Battlegroup concept, in turn, forms the core of this capability. The origins of the Battlegroup concept can be traced back to an Anglo-French summit meeting in February 2003 during which the need for a stronger European crisis management capability was discussed. In November 2003, Britain and France, drawing on these early discussions and the success of Operation Artemis in the summer of 2003, called for the establishment of a number of joint European tactical battlegroups of approximately 1,500 troops to provide the EU with real military rapid reaction capability. The Anglo-French proposal was quickly supported by Germany, and the Battlegroup initiative was presented to the EU's Political and Security Committee as a trilateral Anglo-French-German initiative in February 2004. The Battlegroup initiative was subsequently approved by the EU defence ministers in early April 2004.[45]

Following the approval of the Battlegroup initiative by the EU defence ministers, SG/HR Javier Solana drafted a document providing political guidance for the development of the Battlegroup concept. The main focus in the document was on how to rapidly deploy and sustain interoperable forces. The stated ambition was to have an initial operational EU capability already by 2005 with full capability by 2007. The document also stated that the EU should be able to launch an operation within 5 days of the approval of the "Crisis Management Concept" by the Council. Troops, in turn, should be on the ground to start implementing their mission no later then 10 days after the EU decision to launch the operation.[46] An operation itself should be sustainable for an initial 30-day period but should be able to last up to 120 days if properly re-supplied.[47] The Council approved Solana's draft document in May 2004 and the text was integrated into the HG 2010.

Once the political parameters were set, the EU Military Committee and Staff began working on the military aspects of the Battlegroup concept. In order to adhere to the strict timetable, a number of difficult issues had to be resolved relatively quickly, among them what the required number of Battlegroups should be, how the Battlegroups should be generated, how the

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[45] Council of the European Union, 2590th Council Meeting General Affairs and External Relations, Brussels 14 June 2004 (10189/04). See also Quille 2004a.

[46] Council of the European Union, 2582th Council Meeting General Affairs and External Relations, Brussels 17 May 2004 (9210/04).

[47] Declaration, Military Capabilities Commitment Conference, Brussels, 22 November 2004.

initial operational requirements should be filled and how the Battlegroups were to be designed in order to meet strict deployment requirements.[48] Other important issues to resolve included the relationship between the Battlegroup concept and NATO's Response force concept as well as the Battlegroup concept and UN's peacekeeping requirements. To be able to meet the initial operational capability deadline, the EU Military Staff developed a "roadmap" outlining the processes and procedures necessary for the development of the Battlegroup concept. During spring 2005, issues such as Command and Control, military standards and criteria, training and certification processes and support and logistical concepts were also discussed. While some of these issues have yet to be resolved, the EU was able to point to initial operational capability in early 2005, when Battlegroup packages were provided by Britain and France during the first six months of the year and Italy during the next six months. During 2006, Germany and France will provide joint Battlegroups with alternating leadership. This Franco-German force will be supplemented with a multinational Battlegroup, based on the framework of the Spanish-Italian amphibious landing forces (SIAF) with Portuguese and Greek capabilities attached.[49] However, Battlegroups will be formed through Battlegroup Generation Conferences beginning in the year 2007. At that time, the EU should also be able to undertake two battlegroup-size operations simultaneously, both of which will be sustainable for a maximum period of 120 days.[50] In support of the EU Battlegroup concept, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Estonia have agreed to establish a joint Nordic Battlegroup (NBG) under Swedish leadership. This new Nordic Battlegroup will be on initial standby during the period 1 January – 30 June 2008.

Despite some unclarities, the formation of EU Battlegroups remains a remarkable EU achievement. At the Military Capabilities Commitment Conference in Brussels in November 2004, 21 EU Member States and Norway (as a third State) agreed to form thirteen Battlegroups. In less than two years, what started as an Anglo-French idea in February 2003 was transformed into a concrete rapid reaction capability in January 2005. The tremendous speed with which the Battlegroup concept has developed is truly impressive. Although the EU's initial operational capability relies on existing troops and units from the larger Member States, almost all of the EU Member States have committed to participating in the EU Battlegroups in one way or another.

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[48] EU Battlegroup Concept (10501/04).
[49] Declaration, Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.
[50] Headline Goal 2010.

2.1 The Battlegroup

A Battlegroup can be formed either by a single EU Member State or by a multinational coalition of EU Member States. Such a coalition may include in their Battlegroup non–EU European NATO countries as well as other countries that are candidates for accession to the EU.[51] An EU Battlegroup (EUBG) is a combined arms battalion-size force package with accompanying combat support and logistics units ready for rapid deployment to almost anywhere around the world. The EUBG is capable of managing a full range of tasks from humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping missions to high intensity combat operations.[52] The central component of the Battlegroup concept is a mechanised infantry battalion with attached Combat Support and Combat Service Support units. Relevant air and naval capabilities will also be included. A Battlegroup may require tailoring for a specific operation but each Battlegroup will have pre-identified strategic and operational resources at its disposal such as strategic and tactical transport resources and logistics, intelligence and Special Forces units.[53] The Battlegroups will also be fully supported by EU's institutions and command and control structures.[54]

In its basic form, a Battlegroup consists of approximately 1,500 troops, half of which are attached to the core battalion and half of which will serve in various tactical support roles. While no Battlegroup may look exactly the same, each one will most likely consist of a mechanised infantry battalion with three or four companies, headquarters and a logistics company. Attached to each battalion will in turn be smaller elements from various other specialities, such as engineers, air defence and reconnaissance units capable of providing combat support. In addition, combat service support elements will also be attached to provide non-combat support functions, including medical services, maintenance and construction and transport functions. Another 150 – 200 troops will serve in the Force HQ. The total number of personnel involved in any specific Battlegroup mission may vary greatly depending on where a Battlegroup is deployed and how long it stays. If a Battlegroup has to deploy, for example, deep inland in Africa or Central Asia, the provision of strategic support alone may require thousands of staff and large numbers of transport aircraft and trucks.

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[51] Declaration, Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.
[52] Declaration, Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.
[53] The EU battlegroups and the EU civilian and military cell. European Union fact sheet. February 2005.
[54] Headline Goal 2010, Paragraph 4.

A generic Battlegroup may consist of the following units, elements and functions:

Force Headquarters
Force Commander with staff

Battlegroup
Mechanised Infantry Battalion
– Commander with staff
– Headquarters Company
– 3 x Mechanised Infantry Company
– Logistics Company
Combat Support
– Fire Support Company (Mortars/Light Artillery)
– Combat Engineer Platoon
– Air Defence Platoon
– Reconnaissance Platoon
– Intelligence Platoon
– Helicopter Support Unit
Combat Service Support
– Logistics Company
– Medical Service Platoon
– Military Police Platoon

2.2 Capabilities

A Battlegroup is considered by the EU to be "the minimum military effective, credible, rapidly deployable, coherent force package capable of acting alone, or for the initial phase of larger operations".[55] This battalion-size formation should be flexible enough to rapidly undertake combat operations in distant crisis areas and in extremely demanding environments, including mountains, desert, and jungle settings for at least 30 days but should be able to operate up to 120 days if re-supplied appropriately.[56] While its limited size and the need for reserve forces should be taken into account, a Battlegroup is expected to be capable of performing the full range of tasks outlined in the Treaty on European Union (Article 17.2) and those identified in the European Security Strategy, including high intensity combat in a crisis management situation.

[55] Declaration on European military capabilities, EU Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.
[56] Declaration, Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.

Any mechanised infantry battalion is an impressive force. A complete EU Battlegroup will be an even more impressive force. Each of the three or four mechanised infantry companies in a Battlegroup can be expected to field 10-12 combat vehicles armed with 30-90 mm cannons. The mechanised infantry will in turn be supported by an additional fire support unit with 6-9 light howitzers or 120 mm heavy mortar systems. Additional firepower may also be provided by anti-tank missiles, air defence systems and helicopter gunships. Moreover, given the high political profile and public attention that the deployment of a Battlegroup is almost certain to receive, it is likely the Battlegroup will be provided with all of the necessary firepower, intelligence and force projection capacity available to the EU. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that the EU Battlegroups are only reinforced battalions in size: they are tactical units with limited capability. It is therefore instructive to compare these Battlegroups with the much larger EU Crisis Reaction Force envisioned in the original Helsinki Headline Goal as well as NATO's Response Force (NRF).

The main reason for the creation of the EU crisis reaction force was the lack of useable military assets during the Balkan-wars in the 1990s.[57] In response, the EU Member States launched the ESDP, which culminated in the European Council meeting in Helsinki in December 1999 and the formulation of the Helsinki Headline Goals (HHG) at this meeting. A centrepiece of the HHG was to make a crisis reaction force available to the EU in units up to the army corps level to fulfil the Petersberg Tasks. The missions assigned to the Crisis Reaction Force are the same as those assigned to the EU Battlegroups, i.e. "humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking". However, in contrast to the 1,500-strong Battlegroup Concept, the EU Crisis Reaction Force Concept consists of a massive force of up to fifteen brigades - 50,000 to 60,000 troops - and is to be militarily self-sustaining with the necessary command, control, intelligence, logistics and other combat support services necessary for crisis missions of up to one year. The EU Crisis Reaction Force was conceived along the model of a Kosovo-type of conflict in which an EU expeditionary force would be able to prevent large-scale ethnic cleansing and undertake the rebuilding of long-term security in a war-torn country. These type of "strategic" missions in which EU political ambitions such as preventing genocide, sepa-

[57] It is generally agreed that the European NATO allies were unable to make any significant contribution to NATO's air war in Kosovo. European military planners at the time were especially concerned over exclusive US control of satellite-based target information gathering capacities.

rating warring parties or building long-term security in a conflict zone are at stake require large military forces with considerable staying power. For these types of missions, an EU Battlegroup is far too small.

The development of the EU Battlegroup concept was the European answer to a lack of deployable forces with sufficient flexibility and mobility to match the capabilities of the American armed forces. Not surprisingly, then, the EU Battlegroup concept shares many more similarities with the NATO Response Force (NRF) concept, which was launched by NATO at its Prague Summit in November 2002. Both forces are technically advanced joint force packages consisting of multinational units at high readiness to deploy for out-of-area missions. Both force concepts are driven by the underlying principle, "first force in, first force out" in humanitarian assistance missions and military crisis management tasks and both forces can be used as initial entry forces preceding the arrival of larger follow-on forces. Both forces will also be able to deploy as a demonstrative force to show determination and both will be available on stand-by rotation for a six-month period and ready to deploy within a few days notice.

However, while the EU Battlegroups and NATO Response Force (NRF) may seem rather similar on paper, there are nonetheless some key differences between them. First, there is a major difference in capability between the two force concepts. In 2006, a fully-operational NRF is to consist of a brigade-size land component with forced entry capability, a naval task force composed of a carrier battlegroup, an amphibious task group, a surface action group and an air component capable of 200 combat sorties a day.[58] In contrast to the planned NATO Response Force of approximately 20,000 men, the EU Battlegroup is a much smaller battalion-size force package of around 1,500-2,000 troops with limited naval and air support capabilities. Second, there is a major difference in the types of missions envisaged for each. The NRF will be capable of being deployed for the entire spectrum of crisis management tasks, including NATO Article 5 collective territorial defence missions. Since the brigade-sized land component will be up to five battalions strong, of which three will be airborne or airmobile and supported by a major air component, the NRF will have the capacity to engage in expeditionary force-type missions as well as in limited peacekeeping and peace-enforcement missions. In contrast, the EU Battlegroups will lack the capability to engage in anything beyond tactical missions suitable for a battalion-sized unit.

[58] NATO Response Force 2005.

Given that most of the EU Member States also are members of NATO, close coordination between the EU and NATO is essential in order to avoid the risk of overstretching forces. Since many of the Member States rely on a single set of forces for both the NRF and the EU Battlegroups, standards, practical methods and procedures developed for one of the forces will have to be compatible with those developed for the other.[59] To facilitate this process, an EU-NATO Capability Group has been formed. By continuously exchanging information, this group is meant to ensure coherent, transparent and mutually reinforcing development of the capability requirements common to both organisations.[60] To avoid the problem of overstretch and in compliance with the terms of the Berlin Plus arrangements, NATO could also, if requested, make the NRF, or elements of it, available to the EU as a trained and coherent tailored package. In such a scenario, it is important that the two force concepts use similar standards and procedures to avoid any duplication of efforts. Training the NRF and EU Battlegroups together in co-ordinated exercises represents yet another area of possible cooperation between the EU and NATO in the future.[61]

2.3 Decision-Making and Command and Control

Rapid deployment of forces requires rapid decision-making and planning. As mentioned earlier, the ambition of the EU is to be able to make the decision to launch an operation within five days of the approval of the Crisis Management Concept by the Council. The ultimate decision to deploy an EU Battlegroup rests, therefore, with the Council. In the event of a Battlegroup operation, however, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) will play a central role. The PSC consists of ambassadors representing the Member States and was formed in January 2001 to support the establishment of CFSP and ESDP.[62] On the authority of the Council, the PSC is responsible for managing crisis situations and day-to-day decision- making on CFSP and ESDP.[63] In the case of a Battlegroup operation, the PSC will

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[59] ESDP Presidency Report, Endorsed by the European Council, 17 December 2004.

[60] Declaration, Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.

[61] NATO Response Force 2005.

[62] During the Cologne Meeting in June 1999, the European Council decided to establish permanent political and military decision-making bodies within the Council to support the CFSP and ESDP. Following that decision, three such bodies, the Political and Security Committee, the EU Military Committee and the EU Military Staff, were formed in January 2001.

[63] The tasks of the PSC are defined in Article 25 of the Treaty on European Union and include monitoring the international situation, drafting opinions of policy for the Council, monitoring implementation of agreed policies and providing guidelines on CFSP to other committees. See Council Decision of 22 January 2001 establishing the Political and Security Committee of the European Union (2001/71/CFSP).

be responsible for providing the Council with a proposal for a document, a so-called Crisis Management Concept (CMC), in which the political and military objectives of the operation are laid out. As it prepares the Crisis Management Concept, the PSC will in turn be advised by the EU Military Committee (EUMC), which is the EU's highest military body and consists of the Member States' chiefs of defence or their military representatives. The EUMC is in turn supported by the EU Military Staff (EUMS). Although the EU Military Committee is responsible for providing advice on all military aspects of an operation, it is the PSC who will have final discretion over proposals to the Council for operational plans, chains of command and Rules of Engagement.

Once the Council has approved the political and military objectives formulated in the Crisis Management Concept, the Political and Security Committee will direct the EU Military Committee and Staff to rearticulate these political and military objectives in military terms in the form of so-called Military Strategic Options (MSO). These MSOs will include risk and feasibility assessments, command and control structures, force requirements and the identification of forces available for deployment. The EU Military Committee will then submit to the Political and Security Committee said MSOs together with the Committee's recommendations on who might lead the operation and from which headquarters. After evaluating the various Military Strategic Options provided by the EUMC, the Political and Security Committee will present a draft decision to the Council on which MSO to follow, which Operation and Force commanders to appoint and which headquarters to use for the operation. The actual decision to launch a Battlegroup operation ultimately rests with the Council.[64]

After the Council decides on a Military Strategic Option and appoints an Operation Commander and a Force Commander, the Political and Security Committee will request that the EU Military Committee and the EU Military Staff draft a planning directive for the operation, otherwise known as an Initiating Military Directive (IMD). The planning directive has to be approved by the PSC before it can be issued to the Operation Commander. The Operation Commander is then tasked with drawing up detailed plans - a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and Operation Plan (OPLAN) - outlining how the operation is to be executed. Unfortunately, the EU's lack of a permanent Operational Headquarters (OHQ) means that the institutional memory and lessons learned at the military operational level will likely be lost every time a new OHQ is designated. Since no detailed planning for a

[64] See Kerttunnen 2005, p. 42.

mission can begin until the Council designates an OHQ, the EU has decided to establish an "Operations Centre" by January 2006 to provide planning capability for Battlegroup-scale operations while a particular OHQ is being determined.[65] While it does not constitute a full-fledged Operational Headquarters, the Operations Centre will facilitate the timely preparation of the CONOPS and OPLAN.[66] The EU Military Committee and the Political Security Committee will then review these plans before they are forwarded to the Council for final approval.[67] Once the Council has approved the CONOPS and OPLAN, the operation may be officially launched.

Once the Council has launched a Battlegroup operation, the Political and Security Committee instructs the chairman of the EU Military Committee to assign the mission to an Operational Commander. The Operational Commander is the general or admiral who will lead the operation at the military strategic level from a designated Operational Headquarters (OHQ) located somewhere in Europe. Since the EU does not have any standing Operational Headquarters, all EU Battlegroup operations will have to be led from a Member State's national Operational Headquarters. Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Greece have all offered, for example, to make OHQs available to the EU. At the military operational level, a Battlegroup mission will in turn be led by a Force Commander from a Force Headquarters (FHQ) in the actual region of deployment.[68]

While the Political and Security Committee has clear authority over planning and drafting the Crisis Management Concept for a Battlegroup operation, there are other EU bodies that may influence the final outcome of the document. For example, it is likely that the Committee of the Permanent Representatives (COREPER), which also consists of Member States' ambassadors, will push to be involved. Since most crisis management missions involve civilian as well as military aspects, it is also very likely that the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) and the European Commission will want to be involved and have a say in the formulation of the Crisis Management Concept. Moreover, while political control of an EU Battlegroup operation rests with the PSC, we can expect to see its authority challenged by the foreign and defence ministers of the

[65] Kerttunnen 2005, p. 45; Wedin 2004, pp. 119-153.
[66] Although the EU has no standing Operational Headquarters, it has established a permanent planning cell at NATO's Supreme Headquarters (SHAPE) in Mons outside of Brussels that can be used for EU-led operations drawing on NATO assets under the "Berlin Plus" arrangement. The EU-led Operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina is conducted under the "Berlin Plus" arrangement and is led from SHAPE.
[67] See Kerttunnen 2005, pp. 40-42.
[68] Sjöden 2005, p. 60-61.

Member States in the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAREC), many or all of whom may wish to exercise direct political control in times of a sensitive ongoing operation. Rapid decision-making is central to the EU Battlegroup concept. In order, then, to accelerate the decision-making process in EU rapid response operations, it is likely that the planning process will have to be simplified and that operational planning will have to be initiated even before the Council officially launches an operation. For example, key documents and operational plans can be prepared even as the initial Crisis Management Concept is being drafted as a means of speeding up the process. Joint meetings between the Political and Security Committee and the EU Military Committee would also streamline the decision-making process.

2.4 Deployment

The EU Battlegroup Concept requires a Battlegroup to begin implementing its mission on the ground no later than ten days after the decision to launch the operation has been made. Such a grand ambition requires a Battlegroup to be built on units, assets and capabilities, all of which must be held at very high readiness. The EU Battlegroup concept also requires considerable strategic lift and combat support capabilities, since its Battlegroups are to be able to deploy to almost anywhere in the world, including Southern Africa and Central Asia, and be sustainable for an initial period of operation lasting at least 30 days. In order to meet the time, range and sustainability requirements implied in the Battlegroup concept, a Battlegroup must be able to deploy both troops and materiel simultaneously to its mission area. Deploying a single Battlegroup with armoured vehicles and 30 days of supplies may require the transportation of around 150 standard-size containers of equipment and stores with a combined weight that is somewhere between 1,500 and 3,600 metric tons.[69] In operations on the European continent, an EU Battlegroup could be deployed by land, since existing railroads and highways make it possible to reach almost any part of the continent within the stipulated ten days. Deployment by land, however, also requires heavy road transport units for outsized cargo like larger armoured vehicles. Fortunately, EU Member States should be able to find enough transports to move a Battlegroup over land.

Air transport is by far the fastest way of deploying troops over long distances. For example, a light brigade of around 2,000 troops was airlifted

[69] To transport a complete Battlegroup requires about 150 standard-size containers and 17,000 square meters of deck space. The lower weight estimate is without water and the higher is with water. See Kerttunnen 2005; and von Weissenberg 2002.

from the United States to Bosnia-Herzegovina in four days for the IFOR operation in the Balkans.[70] Even if it is possible, airlifting an entire Battlegroup nonetheless represents a major challenge for the EU. In Operation Artemis, the EU airlifted 1,500 troops and 2,410 metric tons of equipment from Europe to Uganda in 50 flights by An-124 Condor transport aircraft; 20 flights by Airbus 300 aircraft and 72 flights by C-130 Hercules transport aircraft. An additional 276 flights by C-130 Hercules transport aircraft were required to move the troops and equipment from Entebbe in Uganda to their mission area in Bunia in the Democratic Republic of Congo.[71] The main challenge for the EU is therefore not technical but logistical: a serious lack of suitable European transport craft in European airlift fleets.

Collectively, the EU Member States have some 300 military transport aircraft at their disposal (mostly C-130 Hercules and C-160 Transall), and if pooled, these aircraft could be used for deploying Battlegroups. The problem is that almost all of these aircraft are tactical transports with limited payload capacity and range. The C-130 Hercules type transport aircraft is in the service of most European air forces but is only able to load 19 metric tons and has a range limited to 3,200-5,000 km. The C-160 Transall type transport aircraft predominantly found in the service of the French and German air forces is equipped with an even smaller payload of 16 metric tons and has a very short range of 1,800 km. Both types of planes are therefore too small for outsized cargo such as armoured combat vehicles. An initial deployment of a single Battlegroup would require approximately 200 flights on a C-130 Hercules transport type aircraft - too many flights to be practical. A more realistic alternative is the larger C-17 Globemaster type transport aircraft, which, since it can load 78 metric tons and has a 5,000 km range, would only require approximately 30 flights for initial deployment of a Battlegroup. However, Britain is the only EU member to own C-17 transports, and with only four such aircraft available (a fifth has been ordered); the C-17 does not yet represent a particularly plausible option for the transportation of EU Battlegroups, either.[72]

The lack of strategic airlift has been a long-standing issue in the European defence debate.[73] After much hesitation, several EU Member States have recently ordered new and larger transport aircraft, such as the A-400M, but

[70] Airlifting the brigade required 288 flights by C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft. See *European strategic lift capabilities – reply to the annual report of the Council*, WEU Assembly Defence Committee, 5 December 2001.
[71] French Ministry of Defence 2003.
[72] Kamp 2004, p.4.
[73] For a discussion and overview, see Vlachos-Dengler 2002.

this will not solve the situation in the short term. Deliveries of the first A-400M are expected to begin in 2008 and the last of the 80-200 planned aircraft are unlikely to arrive before 2020. More importantly, although the A-400M is considerably larger than most current European transport aircraft, it is still only capable of loading 29 metric tons and so hardly qualifies as suitable strategic air transport.[74] Strategic mobility is a crucial issue in the EU Battlegroup Concept. If full operational capability for the EU Battlegroups is to be achieved by 2007, strategic mobility must be greatly improved. Although many EU Member States have now ordered new and larger transport aircraft like the A-400M, this will only soften, not solve the problem.

An interim solution must therefore be found to the EU's airlift problem. One option is to rent or charter American, Russian or Ukrainian air transport capacity. American aircraft, such as the large C-17 Globemaster and the even larger C-5 Galaxy aircraft could be made available under the "Berlin Plus" arrangement whereby the EU is allowed to draw on NATO resources for EU-led operations. Another option would be to rent Russian An-124 Condor aircraft on an ad-hoc basis. Both of these options, however, would make an EU Battlegroup operation dependent on American or Russian goodwill. As a way of solving the problem, several EU and NATO Member States have instead opted for an interim agreement to buy strategic airlift services from the Ukraine. The agreement, called the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS), stems from a NATO Summit in Brussels on 12 June 2003 at which the participants came to the conclusion that renting capacity on Ukrainian AN-124-100 Condor planes would be the most cost efficient way of guaranteeing EU strategic airlift capabilities in the near future. Initially, five or six An-124 Condor aircraft will be rented for seven to nine years. These gigantic aircraft are capable of carrying 120-150 tons of cargo each up to 5,000 km. On 15 December 2005, NATO signed an initial three-year agreement with Ukraine's Antonov Airlines and the Russian company Volga-Dnepr stipulating the start of strategic airlift activities by An-124-100 planes in early 2006.[75] The SALIS agreement will be operational until 2011-2012, at which time the EU anticipates that it will have achieved the necessary capacity for conducting its own strategic airlift activities.

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[74] In comparison, the American C-5 Galaxy transport aircraft can load 120 metric tons and fly 5,200 km. The Russian and Ukrainian An-124 Condor transport aircraft are in turn able to load 120-150 metric tons and fly 5,000 km.

[75] *Moscow News*, 15 December 2005 (http://www.mosnews.com/money/2005/12/15/natoruslan.shtml).

Although deploying by sea is more time consuming than deploying by air, EU Member States have far more ships available for sea transport. There is also far more sea transport capacity available on the commercial market. However, the strict deployment deadlines laid out in the EU Battlegroup Concept mean that ships and crews will have to be held at very high readiness, since it will take seven to eight days for a transport ship to cover 4,000 km (2,100 nautical miles).[76] Extra time must also be allocated for reloading and transportation between a suitable port and the mission area. However, the Battlegroup Concept does not require the entire Battlegroup to be in place within ten days after the launch of an operation, but rather that the Battlegroup should start implementing its mission within that timeframe. Although there is no exact definition of what constitutes "to start implementing its mission," most analysts agree that one soldier with a flag is not enough to qualify. However, it is also unnecessary that all 1,500 men in a Battlegroup be immediately in place in order to fulfil this requirement. A first wave of one or two companies with supporting elements would be enough to start implementing the mission, these analysts suggest. Such an initial force could be deployed by air. The remaining companies and support units of the Battlegroup could then be deployed by sea or land and arrive within the following days or even weeks. Given the challenges of deploying an entire Battlegroup by air, a combination of air, sea and land transport will most likely have to be used in Battlegroup operations. With enough preparation and planning, deploying by sea alone may even meet the deployment deadlines of the Battlegroup Concept in certain scenarios.

The European Capability Project (ECAP) groups on strategic transport are working on the shortfalls in strategic lift and seek solutions to improve both airlift and sealift capabilities. The target for strategic lift as stated in Headline Goal 2010 is that "necessary capacity and full efficiency in strategic lift (air, land and sea) in support of anticipated operations" should be achieved by 2010. In support of this goal, the Global Approach on Deployability (GAD) was included in the ECAP in 2003. GAD is tasked with coordinating all strategic lift assets and initiatives in support of EU-led operations, in particular EU Battlegroup operations.[77] To enhance coordination, the EU will be able to draw on the services of the European Airlift Centre (EAC) and the European Sealift Co-ordination Centre, both located in Eindhoven. The Greek Sealift Co-ordination Centre in Athens will also offer its services to the EU to further co-ordinate, charter and monitor

[76] von Weissenberg 2002, International Crisis Group 2005.
[77] Declaration, Military Capability Commitment Conference. Brussels, 22 November 2004.

sealift capability. In addition, a Strategic Airlift Co-ordination Cell (SALCC) is embedded within the EAC to function as the "tasking authority" for the use of Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) contract.[78] All of these organisations, then, will help the EU to co-ordinate strategic sea and airlift. While the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) may be satisfactory in the short term and the addition of A-400M aircraft will improve the situation, if the EU is serious about its ability to rapidly deploy Battlegroups in the future, it will have to acquire more strategic transport aircraft. Since each Battlegroup Framework Nation is responsible for finding transport for its own Battlegroup, this poses a common problem across most of Europe. Sweden, for example, has no strategic transport aircraft and will lack any funds for the procurement of such aircraft until 2016.[79] Along the lines of NATO's AWACS fleet, one solution, perhaps, is for EU Member States to procure a fleet of strategic transport aircraft jointly to be available for all EU Battlegroup missions.

2.5 Missions and Scenarios

The missions assigned to all EU military forces, including the Battlegroups, are commonly referred to as the "Petersberg Tasks".[80] The Petersberg Tasks cover the complete range of possible military missions, from the most modest of search and rescue operations to major military interventions between warring parties to keep the peace. For some time, EU Member States debated about whether to focus on the "lower" or "higher" end of the mission spectrum.[81] However, the Helsinki Headline Goal

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[78] These organisations have also been made available to NATO. Declaration, Military Capabilities Conference, Brussels, 22 November 2004.

[79] Försvarsmakten 2005.

[80] These missions were outlined in the declaration that was issued by the WEU Council of Ministers at their meeting in Petersberg outside of Bonn in June 1992. They are currently described in Article 17 (2) under Title V of the Consolidated Treaty on European Union and include "humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking." A thorough reform of the Petersberg text was initiated in 2002 with the discussion of a draft Constitutional Treaty in the European Convention. The convention decided to create a working group to deal with defence issues, which began meeting in September 2002. The report of the working group (December 2002) was followed by the final text of a draft Constitutional Treaty adopted by the convention (July 2003). This led in turn to the Intergovernmental Conference. In the texts that resulted from this conference, four major issues were identified as relevant to the definition of any EU military mission: (a) a general description of the ESDP, (b) a collective defence clause, (c) a solidarity clause in case of terrorist attack and (d) a statement of the CFSP's objectives and principles. With the ratification process of the Constitutional Treaty now indefinitely on hold, Article 17.2 will remain the legal description for EU military missions for the foreseeable future. See, Petersberg Declaration 2002; Ortega, 2004, p. 78; Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union. Title V, Article 17.2. 1997.

[81] Ortega 2004, p. 74.

(HHG) resolved any dispute, making it clear that the EU Member States were expected to acquire the "appropriate capabilities…to be able to undertake the full range of Petersberg tasks" up to an army corps level of 50,000 – 60,000 troops and to be able to sustain such a force deployment for at least one year.[82]

There are at least five possible scenarios in which the EU Battlegroups could be deployed. These scenarios cover the full spectrum of EU involvement – from all forms of humanitarian assistance to the kinds of combat missions envisioned in both the European Security Strategy and Headline Goal 2010. The first scenario is "Humanitarian Assistance" in which the EU Battlegroup is tasked with providing assistance to a humanitarian operation. This would include, for example, preventing atrocities and protecting aid workers in the field. The second scenario is "Evacuation Operation" in which the EU Battlegroup is tasked with assisting in the evacuation of non-combatants from a hostile environment, for example a warzone. A third scenario is "Conflict Prevention" in which the EU Battlegroup is deployed preventively and tasked with conducting disarmament operations, enforcing embargoes and/or supervising counter proliferation efforts. The fourth scenario is "Stabilisation and Construction" in which the EU Battlegroup is tasked with covering traditional peacekeeping missions and maintaining security and stability by monitoring cease-fires and withdrawals. In this scenario, the EU Battlegroup would also provide military assistance to third countries in need of institution-building and security sector reform. The final scenario can be called "Separation of Parties by Force" and focuses on the highest level of violence in which EU forces would be involved: direct combat missions. In these types of missions, an EU Battlegroup would be tasked with engaging in peacemaking activities, for example separating warring parties by force or securing vital lines of communication for the EU or other affected entities.

The European Security Strategy (ESS) contains more information on what types of operations that EU Battlegroups may be deployed for. The ESS also refers at many points to the possible use of EU military capabilities. In fact, military force may be an important component in countering all of the threats mentioned in the ESS: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, failing states and organised crime. However, the ESS also makes it clear that there are three central aspects that must always be emphasised in any EU military mission. First, the ESS

[82] Ortega 2005; Quille and Mawdsley 2003, p. 19.

Figure 1 Illustrative Scenarios

Separation of Parties by Force (SOPF)	Stabilisation, Reconstruction and MA to 3rd Countries (SR)	Conflict Prevention (CP)	Evacuation Operation in a non permissive environment (EO)	Assistance to Humanitarian Operations (HA)
Basis: SOPF (HHC 02)	Basis: SS (HHC 02)	Basis: CP (HHC 02)	Basis: EO (HHC 02)	Basis: HA (HHC 02)
ESS/HLG 2010:	ESS/HLG 2010:	ESS/HLG 2010:	ESS/HLG 2010:	ESS/HLG 2010:
➢ Tasks of combat forces in crisis management ➢ Peacemaking ➢ Secure LOCs	➢ Peace Keeping ➢ Election Monitoring ➢ Institution Building ➢ Security Sector Reform Support 3rd Countries FAT	➢ Preventive Engagement ➢ Preventive Deployment Joint Disarmament Operations ➢ Embargo Operations ➢ Counter Proliferation	➢ Non-combatant Evacuation Operation	➢ Prevent Atrocities ➢ Consequence Management

Source: Swedish Armed Forces

points out the need to react rapidly, but also with flexibility, to potential threats and challenges. Second, the ESS stresses that EU military operations will normally be carried out in close collaboration with humanitarian and civilian missions. Third, the ESS acknowledges that many EU missions will be undertaken in cooperation with NATO.[83] Moreover, while the ESS emphasises the importance of obtaining a UN Security Council Mandate, it also states that the EU might find it necessary to undertake military action in the absence of such a mandate in cases of a humanitarian catastrophe or impending genocide. However, any EU military operation must always be conducted in accordance with the UN Charter principle.[84]

While current planning scenarios are generic, humanitarian assistance missions in Africa are likely cases in which EU Battlegroups will be employed. For example, the European Council agreed in December 2004 on an "Action Plan for ESDP Support to Peace and Security in Africa". This action plan aims to support African organisations and states in building autonomous conflict prevention and management capacities, with special attention to the African Union, and it focuses on a number of practical

[83] Ortega 2004, pp. 82-84.
[84] Ortega 2004, p. 85.

issues such as capacity building, improving planning and security sector reform. The action plan also focuses on another pressing issue in Africa: the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants and child soldiers.[85] Considering the increasing attention that Africa is receiving within the EU and the developing partnership between the EU and the African Union (AU), future Battlegroup missions are very likely to take place in Africa.[86] Indeed, through the ESDP, the EU is already supporting the AU in its management of the Darfur crisis in Sudan, providing the AU with political, technical and logistical support in the form of military and civil police planners as well as observers in the planning and deployment stages of the AU's Darfur mission.[87]

There is, in fact, no longer a limit to the geographical area for EU military missions, since the previous requirement that EU forces only be allowed to deploy within a 6,000-km radius of Brussels no longer applies. Although the expectation is that EU forces will be deployed mainly in the European neighbourhood and Central Africa, the EU could also undertake operations in almost any part of the world.[88] For example, the EU launched an ESDP monitoring mission in Aceh Province in Indonesia during the summer 2005, and there are a number of other distant places where future EU Battlegroup operations might take place, among them the Horn of Africa, Southern Africa and North East Asia.[89]

[85] ESDP Presidency Report, endorsed by the European Council on 17 December 2004. For further discussion on EU crisis management in Africa, see Faria 2004.
[86] The current American focus on the conflicts in the Middle East and Central Asia may also have led to a certain division of labour between the US and the EU, with the EU concentrating on crisis management in Africa.
[87] ESDP Presidency Report, endorsed by the European Council on 17 December 2004.
[88] Ortega 2004, p. 84; Sjöden 2005.
[89] Braud and Grevi 2005.

3 NORDIC BATTLEGROUP

During the Military Capabilities Conference in Brussels on 22 November 2004, Sweden, Finland and Norway declared that they would establish a multinational Battlegroup based on the EU Battlegroup Concept: the Nordic Battlegroup (NBG).[90] Estonia joined the Nordic Battlegroup shortly thereafter.[91] As the Framework nation for the NBG, Sweden has assumed responsibility for leadership of the Battlegroup. The Nordic Battlegroup is currently the only Battlegroup composed entirely of smaller EU Member States and the only Battlegroup in which a non-EU Member State (Norway) will participate. The NBG will be available to the European Union for the initial stand-by period of 1 January to 30 June 2008.

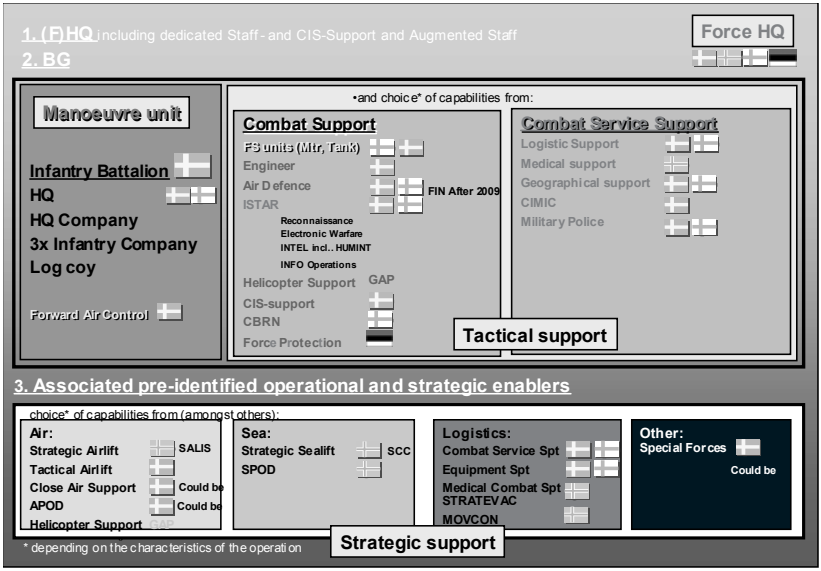
3.1 Structure and Composition of the Nordic Battlegroup

In accordance with the EU Battlegroup Concept, the Nordic Battlegroup consists of a mechanised infantry battalion with attached tactical and strategic support units. The battalion will have two light companies equipped with splinter-protected light wheeled vehicles, one heavy company equipped with Hägglunds CV9040 tracked infantry combat vehicles armed with 40-mm automatic cannon, and a logistics company.[92] Combat Support Units drawn from a ”menu” of capabilities will complement the core battalion. These capabilities include fire support (mortars, armour), engineers, air defence, helicopters, ISTAR, CIS-support, CBRN and force protection. The exact mix of Combat Support will depend on the type of mission in question. In addition, logistics, medical services, military police and civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) personnel will provide combat service support as needed. In order to enable the Battlegroup to rapidly deploy to its area of operation, the Nordic Battlegroup will also possess pre-identified strategic air and sealift resources, tactical air transport and close air support, logistics and Special Forces units.

As the Framework nation for the Nordic Battlegroup, Sweden has assumed overall responsibility for coordinating planning, preparation and training. Sweden will also contribute the majority of troops to the Battlegroup and Swedes will form its core battalion. In total, the Swedish contingent will number around 1,100 personnel.[93] Finland’s contribution to the NBG will

[90] Declaration by Sweden, Finland and Norway on the Establishment of a Joint EU Battlegroup of 22 November 2004. EU and Norway signed an agreement establishing a framework for the participation of Norway in EU crisis management operations in Brussels on 3 December 2004.
[91] Memorandum of Understanding.
[92] *Dagens Nyheter*, Saturday, 31 December 2005, p. 11.
[93] Vienna Document 2005, p.9.

Figure 2: The Nordic Battlegroup



Source: Swedish Armed Forces

consist of combat support elements, such as a heavy mortar platoon, a platoon-sized Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) detection detachment and a unit in the joint Swedish-Finnish intelligence ISTAR Company. Approximately 200 Finnish personnel will be part of the NBG, and Finland will also provide certain combat service support elements, such as logistics and military police.[94] Norway will contribute another 200 personnel serving in support functions such as medical services, logistics and strategic lift. Estonia, in turn, will provide an infantry platoon of 40-50 troops for force protection. All four countries will provide staff personnel to Operation Headquarters as well as Forward Headquarters.

3.2 Decision-Making and Command and Control

Any EU request to deploy the Nordic Battlegroup will follow the EU decision-making procedure described in the previous chapter. The final decision to deploy the Nordic Battlegroup will be made by consensus among the participating governments of Sweden, Finland, Norway and Estonia.

[94] Försvarsmakten 2005.

Each of these governments will only commit troops and support to the Nordic Battlegroup following consent at the national level in accordance with the constitutional decision-making procedure of each country. In cases in which one of the participating countries refuses to commit its forces to the Battlegroup, other participants in the Nordic Battlegroup will still be able to commit their forces and deploy the Battlegroup.[95] While each participating government has the sovereign right to withdraw its own national contingent, any decision to withdraw the Nordic Battlegroup as a whole must be made by consensus among the participants and in consultation with the EU.[96] To enable rapid deployment of the Nordic Battlegroup, all four of the participating countries must make the decision to participate simultaneously at the national level. In times of emerging international crises that could result in an EU request to deploy the Nordic Battlegroup, all four participating governments have therefore agreed to engage in regular consultations shortly before and during a stand-by period. As the Framework nation of the Battlegroup, Sweden will lead these consultations, but any decisions made must be the result of consensus among the four governments.[97]

In case the Nordic Battlegroup is deployed during its first stand-by period from 1 January to 30 June 2008, an EU-appointed Operation Commander will lead it with support from British Multinational Operational Head Quarters (OHQ) located in Northwood outside of London. Since the Command and Control system within the EU is still under development, the British OHQ in Northwood was pre-identified and selected for the Nordic Battlegroup in order to ensure the presence of a trained and tested chain of command in time for the Nordic Battlegroup's stand-by period. Approximately twenty Nordic officers will be seconded to British OHQ in Northwood, and operational planning will be co-ordinated between Sweden, Finland, Norway, Estonia, Britain and the EU Military Staff in Brussels. Although each national contingent to the Nordic Battlegroup will remain under the full command of its government, participating governments in the Nordic Battlegroup have agreed to delegate operational control of the contingent to the Operation Commander for the duration of the operation.[98]

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[95] Memorandum of Understanding 2005, Section 6, Principles for the Decision to Deploy the Nordic Battle Group.
[96] Memorandum of Understanding 2005, Section 7, Principles for the Decision to Withdraw the Nordic Battle Group.
[97] Memorandum of Understanding 2005, Section 8, Principles and Procedures for Political-Military Consultations.
[98] Memorandum of Understanding 2005, Section 11, Command and Control During Operations.

Once the EU has developed a more advanced Command and Control system, any Battlegroup will be able to be commanded by any OHQ at any given time. At present, however, a system of prearranged relationships between a specific OHQ and a specific Battlegroup will be the usual course of action, as is the case here.

A Force Commander, supported by a Force Headquarters (FHQ), will lead the Nordic Battlegroup itself. Sweden, as the Framework Nation of the Nordic Battlegroup, is responsible for organising its FHQ. Of the approximately 90 staff officers in the FHQ, Sweden will contribute approximately half of these. Finland, Estonia and Norway will contribute the other half. Negotiations over the distribution of positions between Sweden and the other three countries in the FHQ and the co-ordination of other questions has been carried out within a pre-existing framework for co-operation known as the Nordic Co-ordinated Arrangement for Peace Support (NORDCAPS). This framework encompasses both political and military issues.[99] Through NORDCAPS, the four countries in the Nordic Battlegroup have reached a basic agreement on which nation will appoint which position. However, technical aspects regarding how to manage the information flow from EU institutions in Brussels to EU forces on ground remain to be settled. A number of technical standards have yet to be agreed upon and accreditation of the system still has to be completed before training can begin in earnest.

3.3 Establishment and Training of the Nordic Battlegroup

Whenever possible, the formation and training of the Nordic Battlegroup has relied upon existing Nordic channels such as NORDCAPS, and overall co-ordination of defence policy and military issues for the NBG have been conducted by national representatives in the NORDCAPS Steering Group and Military Co-ordination Group.[100] To qualify as an EU Battlegroup, the Nordic Battlegroup will have to meet EU-defined standards and criteria as well as undergo a certification process. The Nordic Battlegroup is then expected to adopt the required EU standards and criteria and to train to meet them.[101] Training is currently limited to the co-ordination of national activities with military representatives from each country that meet every five to six weeks to co-ordinate their activities. However, the Force Headquarters will commence joint training in August 2006. Six months later, the rest of

[99] Sjöden 2004, p. 60.
[100] Memorandum of Understanding 2005, Section 9, Principles, Procedures and Consultations for the Establishment Phase.
[101] Memorandum of Understanding 2005, Section 12, Exercises and Training.

the BG will begin their training, and joint training of the complete Nordic Battlegroup will begin during the autumn of 2007. As the framework nation, Sweden has a leading role in designing and co-ordinating training activities for the Nordic Battlegroup. However, Finnish participation in another Battlegroup (with Germany and the Netherlands) and Norwegian experience with the NATO's Response Force Concept will provide valuable input into planning for the Nordic Battlegroup. While Nordic military co-operation has been growing over the past few years, the establishment of a joint Nordic Battlegroup will serve to increase co-operation in the area of crisis management among countries in the region.[102]

3.4 Deployment of the Nordic Battlegroup

The EU Battlegroup Concept requires a Battlegroup to be on the ground and in the process of implementing its mission within ten days after the Council has launched the operation. The strictness of this time requirement means that a significant part of a Battlegroup has to be airlifted if the ten-day limit is to be met. However, while Sweden and Norway both have medium-range tactical transport planes like the C-130 Hercules, none of the Nordic countries possesses any strategic airlift capabilities of their own - a problem shared by most of the EU Member States. Since each Battlegroup is responsible for finding its own transportation, this presents a major challenge to the Battlegroup Concept as a whole. One possibility for the Nordic Battlegroup would be to ask Britain for help, since it is one of the few EU Member States with strategic airlift capability. As noted earlier, however, British airlift capability is limited to four C-17 Globemaster planes, and the NBG cannot assume that these will be available at short notice. The main alternative is therefore to turn to the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) agreement signed between several EU and NATO Member States, which would allow the Nordic Battlegroup to purchase strategic airlift services from the Ukraine.

Unfortunately, however, the number of flying hours available for purchase per year is limited, and, in case of emergency, it is unclear whether there will be enough flying hours available for the Nordic Battlegroup at short notice. Moreover, when they are heavily loaded, large transport aircraft such as the An-124 and C-17 require long runways only available at major airports, and the designated Battlegroup mission area may not lie close to

[102] Uttdrag fra EUs forsvarsministermøte 22. November. Available at: http://odin.dep.no/fd/norsk/aktuelt/nyheter/010051-990085/dok-bn.html

such an airport. Therefore, once the Nordic Battlegroup has arrived at the area of operations, up to four Swedish C-130 Hercules aircraft have been designated for use as tactical airlift in the actual mission area.[103] Given the uncertainties regarding the availability of strategic airlift, Sweden recently decided to adjust the composition of its core battalion in the Nordic Battlegroup. In order to facilitate rapid deployment, the battalion has been made lighter. Instead of the original plan - two heavy companies equipped with CV-9040 armoured combat vehicles, each weighing 26 tons, and one light infantry company equipped with splinter-protected wheeled vehicles, each weighing only 6.7 tons - the lighter battalion will now consist of one heavy and two light infantry companies. According to the most current plan, then, the Nordic Battlegroup will deploy its two light companies by air in a first wave to meet the ten-day mission implementation requirement. The heavy company with its CV-9040 combat vehicles will be transported by sea together with the Battlegroup's other heavy equipments and stores and will arrive in a second, later wave.[104] Sealift for the Nordic Battlegroup will be provided by Sweden and Norway using ships contracted on the commercial market. Logistical support will be provided by way of EU membership in the Sealift Co-ordination Centre in Eindhoven.[105]

[103] Interview with senior Swedish military officer, 24 October 2005.
[104] *Dagens Nyheter*, Saturday 31 December 2005, p. 11.
[105] Försvarsmakten 2005, pp. 8, 12, 19, 21. Some Swedish analysts have argued in favour of building an amphibious transport ship for the Swedish Navy that could be used for transporting and deploying the Nordic Battlegroup. If such a measure were approved, this kind of ship could be in service within 3-5 years and its services could also be offered to other EU Battlegroups wishing to deploy by sea. See, for example, Granholm 2003.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The EU Battlegroup Concept has emerged at lightning speed. In less than two years, the EU managed to transform the Battlegroup Concept from a British-French idea of February 2003 into a concrete, deployable European military capability with the first interim EU Battlegroup on stand-by and ready for operations as of January 2005. While the EU Battlegroup Concept is widely applauded and many believe that an EU with a sharper bite is long overdue, the EU Battlegroup Concept raises a number of central issues that have yet to be thoroughly addressed. Perhaps the most important of these concerns the fundamental question of whether the Battlegroup concept allows the EU better to achieve its goals.[106] In what follows, I will discuss three alternative ways for the EU to achieve its goals and discuss how the EU Battlegroup Concept operates in each. The three alternatives for the EU to achieve its goals are as follows: 1) be a civilian great power relying on civilian means, 2) become a traditional great power and develop the full range of tools for international statecraft, including an army and 3) attempt to square the circle by remaining a civilian power but acquiring a limited military capability to complement the EU's mainly civilian instruments. Each of these alternatives has its advantages and disadvantages, which will be discussed in more detail below.

4.1 Civilian Great Power EUrope

The European Union has achieved great things over the past 50 years. Peace and prosperity now dominate on a previously war-torn European continent. The EU is the world's most successful economic and trading-block with a long list of countries wishing to join it. As many bilateral agreements with other countries and organisations around the world attest to, the attractiveness and goodwill of the EU extends well beyond its immediate neighbourhood. The EU has managed to achieve all of these things while attracting virtually no enemies.

Despite its lack of military assets, then, the EU has had great success in achieving its goals of internal and external peace, democracy and prosperity. Through the power of a unified voice in trade negotiations and control of the world's largest internal market for goods and services, the EU has successfully managed to promote its interests in the global arena with civilian means. Trade is not the only instrument in the EU's toolbox. Foreign aid is another important instrument that the Union regularly relies on, making the EU the world's largest donor of development assistance.

[106] For an example of this ongoing debate, see Cameron and Moravcsik 2003; and Smith 2000.

The EU is also home to many of the world's most successful companies, popular corporate brands, sought-after tourist destinations and prestigious universities, all of which continue to create goodwill and grant the EU the ability to influence others. This appealing combination of economic strength, a massive internal market, preferential trading agreements, generous foreign aid, the allure of European culture(s) and the possibility for other countries to join the EU has provided the Union with tremendous "soft power".[107] Many argue that the addition of "hard power" in the form of the EU Battlegroup Concept would simply enhance the EU's ability to realise its goals.

While this may very well prove to be the case, it is also possible that the addition of "hard power" may undermine the power of the existing tools in EU's toolbox.[108] The lack of any serious military capabilities is, arguably, one of the central reasons why the EU is so attractive to people and countries around the world and why the EU has so often been successful in promoting its interests while attracting remarkably few enemies along the way. In fact, prior to the emergence of the EU Battlegroup Concept, the EU had no real military capability at all. Despite the development of the ESDP and the impressive list of military units in the Helsinki Headline Force Catalogues, the EU had military forces on paper only. They were not deployable in any meaningful sense, and no country or group feared being invaded by the EU or threatened with the use of force if they failed to comply with EU directives. Instead of threatening with the use of force, the EU has traditionally pursued its goals in the international system by offering or withholding rewards. Considering the success that the EU has enjoyed during its time as a civilian power, it seems reasonable to ask why the EU should add a capability it may not need and risk its comparative advantage in the international system. Moreover, any European desire for greater military capabilities could very well be satisfied within NATO, thereby allowing the EU to retain its unique role as a civilian great power. Allowing NATO and its Response Force to provide Europe with a rapid response military capability would not only avoid unnecessary duplication between NATO and the EU at a time when many countries are struggling to achieve greater military fiscal discipline, but would also affirm the vitality of the transatlantic link at a time when Washington is focused almost exclusively on the Middle East and East Asia.

[107] For a discussion on "Soft Power", see Nye 2004.
[108] See, for example, Smith 2000.

4.2 Military Great Power EUrope

A common argument for the necessity of a serious EU military capability reasons that a Union of 450 million people that produces a quarter of the world's GNP is a global actor in need of every instrument at its disposal to promote its interests and protect its citizens in the best manner possible. While military force is neither the only nor the preferred way to counter all of today's threats against Europe, the European Security Strategy suggests that military force can have an important role to play.[109] Indeed, independent of the EU flag, European states have already deployed troops around the world in locations such as East Timor, Iraq, Afghanistan and Central Africa as part of their effort to counter different kinds of threats and crises. Moreover, Washington has long called upon Europe to take greater responsibility for crisis management around the world, particularly if Europe wishes to become a greater partner on the global stage. All of these factors, it is argued, point the EU in the direction of an increasing military capability.

Admittedly, the EU has been very successful over the past 50 years in pursuing its interests by way of civilian means. Many would argue that this strategy was possible only because the EU did not have to be concerned with military defence - NATO preserved the peace. With the end of the Cold War, however, NATO's role in the defence of Europe has waned. Furthermore, with the United States increasingly focused on the Middle East and East Asia for the foreseeable future, American interest in the transatlantic link has also diminished. Europe may no longer have the luxury, then, of voluntarily refusing to develop greater military capabilities. In today's world, it is argued, the use of "soft power" alone is no longer enough to persuade certain actors and to protect Europe from certain threats. In this purportedly "untraditional" world, the EU may have to become a "traditional" great power relying on traditional means, including military force, to pursue its goals and protect its interests. According to this way of thinking, the ESDP and the EU Battlegroup Concept are merely the logical first steps in the development of a full-fledged EU Army. Since the EU Battlegroup Concept only provides for the presence of two battalion-size Battlegroups on stand-by at any given time, this concept by no means constitutes an army. However, the development of EU political and military decision-making processes, Command and Control functions and force generation procedures in combination with joint procurement and strategic planning could all serve as the nucleus around which an

[109] *European Security Strategy* 2003, p. 19.

EU Army eventually develops. Such an army would provide the EU with the instruments necessary to assume its rightful role as a traditional great power in the international system.

4.3 All Bark and No Bite?

Should the EU continue to be a primarily civilian power, become a full-fledged military power or can the EU have it both ways? Arguably, the EU Battlegroup Concept can be construed as an attempt to square the circle by remaining primarily a civilian power but with a military bite. The Battlegroup Concept does not represent an EU army in the making and provides less military bite than most individual EU Member States can muster on their own. Given the small size of the EU Battlegroups, the missions that EU Battlegroups are to be sent on cannot be too demanding, and with only two Battlegroups on stand-by at any given time, there is little possibility of calling for reinforcements or expanding the mission. As such, the EU will only be able to use the Battlegroups very sparingly and on limited missions. Indeed, even as an entry-force, these Battlegroups will be rather small.[110] The question, then, is how useful the Battlegroup Concept really is to the EU. Will the Battlegroup Concept help the EU to achieve its goals, or will this concept serve instead as a reminder of the colonial past of several EU Member States, undermining the EU by diminishing its "soft power" attractiveness and fuelling suspicions around the world that Europe is once again transforming into a traditional military great power with imperial ambitions? In its pursuit of the EU Battlegroup Concept, does the EU in fact run the risk of losing its considerable advantages as a civilian power without gaining the benefits of a traditional military power?

Arguably, the EU Battlegroup Concept is too modest to be of much use beyond humanitarian assistance missions, military diplomacy assignments and symbolic political action. While the Battlegroup Concept stipulates, for example, that the Battlegroups are to be war-fighting units capable of high-intensity combat, the limited size of such units makes them highly unsuitable for actual war. It may therefore be hard to find the "right" kind of missions for the Battlegroup Concept. Even if military action is called for, the EU Member States may choose not to call upon the services of one or more EU Battlegroups. In fact, most of the EU Member States have at least four options available to them in the event of a military operation: 1) they may act individually, 2) they may act in ad-hoc coalitions, 3) they

[110] Compare, for example, the size of the EU Battlegroups with the far larger and far better equipped NATO Response Force that has also been identified as a possible entry-force. See NATO Response Force 2005.

may act through the EU or 4) they may act through NATO. In those cases in which the interests of an individual EU Member State are at stake, unilateral action is likely. Mid-size military powers such as Britain and France, for instance, have clearly acted unilaterally in the recent past. Ad-hoc coalitions may in turn be the preferred alternative when two or more Member States are in agreement on a mission, but find it difficult for some reason to forge a broader political consensus. For example, several EU Member States joined the US-led ad-hoc coalition in the war against Iraq in 2003. The EU may in turn be the preferred institutional option if broad political consensus exists, but there is no direct American interest in being involved in the mission. Operation Artemis in the summer of 2003 presents an example of a situation in which broad transatlantic political consensus for action existed, but the US chose not to participate.[111] Finally, multilateral institutional mechanisms and organisations are likely to be chosen if there is broad political consensus, and NATO will be the preferred option if the political consensus is transatlantic, as was the case in Kosovo in 1999 and again in Afghanistan in 2002.

The military is often said to plan for the next war by re-fighting the last one. Not surprisingly, then, the EU Crisis Reaction Force that was envisaged at the Helsinki European Council and written into the Helsinki Headline Goal in 1999 is very similar to the hypothetical EU peacekeeping force of 50,000-60,000 troops that would have made a difference in the Balkans in the 1990s. Although the EU Battlegroup Concept was conceived of before Operation Artemis in the Congo, the mission in Central Africa clearly inspired the kinds of requirements identified as central to the Battlegroup concept that finally emerged.[112] While this concept has won wide acceptance in Europe, the question remains whether the next crisis will resemble the situation of 2003 in the town of Bunia deep in the Congo. The next crisis may very well look quite different and require a different response than a three month deployment of 1,500 light infantrymen.[113]

If military force is to be an instrument in achieving the strategic goals set in the European Security Strategy - counteracting terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, promoting security in the

[111] Ortega 2004, pp. 86-87.

[112] For a similar conclusion, see Kerttunnen 2005, p. 26.

[113] The EU's insistence on a strict, three-month deployment and a limited battalion-size force made it possible to control the town of Bunia only, which may simply have pushed the conflict outwards into the surrounding area. In fact, the EU force only became fully operational on 6 July, and the first elements began to withdraw as early as 16 August 2003. Still, the UN's overall assessment of the EU's contribution to the UN Mission in the Congo is positive, since it allowed the UN to regroup and bring in heavier.

neighbourhood and assisting the UN in the management of international crises - the EU will need far more than two battalion-size Battlegroups at its disposal to meet these goals. While the EU may not necessarily need an entire army, it will need at minimum a few standing brigades. If not, the Member States may eventually find themselves in a Union whose bark is much worse than its bite.

SAMMANFATTNING PÅ SVENSKA

En central aspekt av den europeiska säkerhets- och försvarspolitiken (ESFP) är att snabbt kunna skicka ut militära förband i en internationell kris. De europeiska snabbinsatsstyrkor som nu byggs upp kommer att ge EU en sådan förmåga. En sådan snabbinsatsstyrka består av en bataljonsstridsgrupp på cirka 1500 soldater med tillhörande stöd- och underhållsförband, samt nödvändiga flyg- och marina enheter, redo för snabb insats runt om i världen. EU har som ambition att kunna påbörja en operation inom fem dagar efter det att Rådet har gett sitt godkännande. När väl ett beslut om att starta en operation är taget skall snabbinsatsstyrkan ha inlett sitt uppdrag på marken inom tio dagar. EU:s medlemsstater har hittills beslutat om att upprätta tretton stycken snabbinsatsstyrkor. Två snabbinsatsstyrkor kommer att stå i beredskap under sex månader för att sedan avlösas av två andra. Under sin beredskapstid skall styrkorna vara beredda att sättas in efter fem till tio dagars förvarning. EU har redan etablerat en begränsad förmåga till insats men full förmåga beräknas vara uppnådd år 2007. Då kommer EU att kunna genomföra två nästan samtidiga operationer med snabbinsatsstyrkor. Dessa kommer att kunna klara hela skalan av uppgifter från humanitära hjälpinsatser till traditionella fredsbevarande operationer och fredsframtvingande uppgifter innefattande väpnad strid. Till stöd för ESFP har Sverige, Finland, Norge och Estland beslutat att upprätta en gemensam nordisk snabbinsatsstyrka (Nordic Battlegroup, NBG) under svensk ledning. Den nordiska snabbinsatsstyrkan kommer att stå i beredskap under perioden 1 januari–30 juni 2008.

Denna rapport ger bakgrunden till EU:s beslut om att upprätta snabbinsatsstyrkor och diskuterar de politiska och militära koncept som ligger bakom beslutet. Rapporten analyserar också de utmaningar som EU och dess medlemsländer står inför när de skall uppfylla ”Headline Goal 2010”. Rapporten beskriver den nu pågående uppbyggnaden av den nordiska snabbinsatsstyrkan, som består av enheter från Sverige, Finland, Norge och Estland. Rapporten avslutas med en diskussion av den fundamentala frågan om huruvida utvecklandet av EU:s snabbinsatsstyrkor förbättrar EU:s möjligheter att nå sina strategiska mål. Tre alternativa sätt för EU att uppnå sina strategiska mål beskrivs och på vilket sätt snabbinsatsstyrkorna figurerar inom varje alternativ diskuteras. De tre alternativen är 1) vara en civil stormakt och stödja sig på civila medel; 2) bli en traditionell stormakt och utveckla en komplett verktygslåda för internationell storpolitik; 3) försöka att göra båda delarna genom att upprätta en begränsad militär kapacitet som komplement till huvudsakligen civila medel.

EU:s beslut om att inrätta snabbinsatsstyrkor har fått brett stöd runt om i Europa. Frågan är dock om en snabbinsats av 1500 lätta infanterister kommer att vara det rätta svaret på nästa internationella kris. Om militära medel skall bli ett effektivt instrument i arbetet med att uppnå målen i Europeiska säkerhetsstrategin – motverka terrorism, förhindra spridandet av massförstörelsevapen, skapa säkerhet i Europas närområde och stödja FN i arbetet med internationell krishantering – kommer EU att behöva mycket mer än två bataljonsstora stridsgrupper till sitt förfogande. EU kanske inte behöver en hel armé men några stående brigader vore ett minimum. Annars riskerar EU att inte kunna leva upp till de förväntningar som upprättandet av snabbinsatsstyrkorna inger.

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