

Workshop on ESDP Civilian and Military Capabilities
At the CESEDEN, 22 June 2009

The **Fundación Alternativas**, through its **Observatory of Spanish Foreign Policy (OPEX)**, and the **General Direction for Institutional Relations of the Spanish Ministry of Defence**, organized a workshop for presentation of the Opex Working Paper “**Civilian and Military Capabilities of the ESDP: the 2010 Helsinki Headline Goals**”. The event took place in Madrid on June 22, at the CESEDEN.

The aim of the seminar was to evaluate the progress and limits of the European Security and Defence policy (ESDP), a decade after its inception, bearing in mind the future Spanish Presidency of the European Union. The meeting allowed for an interesting and fruitful debate not only about the different propositions put forward by the Working Paper but also on the future of European defence.

Admiral **Rafael Sánchez-Barriga Fernández**, Director of the CESEDEN, **Nicolás Sartorius**, Executive Vice-president of the Fundación Alternativas, and **Santos Castro**, General Director for Institutional Relations at the Ministry of Defence, introduced the seminar. They underlined the importance for the European Union to build a common defence as a necessary condition to play a significant role on the international scene. Nicolás Sartorius expressed his desire of an **effective multilateralism** within which Europe would be a global actor working alongside the United States. Santos Castro pointed out that the Opex Working Paper develops thought-provoking ideas in order to reinforce European defence as well as useful material for the 2010 Spanish presidency of the EU. Rafael Sánchez-Barriga Fernández underscored the potential impact of Spain in the formation of a European Army. As explained by Nicolás Sartorius, European defence is a slow, step-by-step process that requires Member States’ support. The Executive Vice-president of the Fundación Alternativas also stressed four major ideas contained in the Working Paper: the establishment of a Council of Ministers for

Defence, the preparation of a White Book on European Defence, the creation of a common fund to finance operations and of EU Operational Headquarters.

Then, the authors of the Working Paper, **Beatriz Pérez de la Heras** and **Cristina Churruga**, presented the main points of the document, starting with a summary of steps towards **ESDP military capabilities** since the European Council of Helsinki (1999), which launched the idea of a **Rapid Response Force** of approximately 50 000 to 60 000 men, that could be deployed within a period of 60 days and could stay on the ground during 1 year. The force was to carry out the **Petersberg missions**, and was officially operational in 2003. Despite this declaration and several EU military missions, such as “Concordia” in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and “Artemis” in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Beatriz Pérez de la Heras explained that *the forces provided by the Member states were not really a Rapid Response Force*. Indeed, some limits have to be outlined, such as the fact that *these forces were nothing more than a group of national forces and that the deployment of the Rapid Response Force was not automatic*. **The European Security Strategy (ESS)**, of 2003, promotes an extension of the missions range and an increase of capacities to cover the needs resulting from these new missions. Other measures were discussed, such as the transformation of European armed forces into more flexible and adaptable units, the **Battlegroups**, or the creation of the **European Defence Agency (EDA)**, which has elaborated a long-term vision of European Defence.

The EDA also carried out the **Capability Development Plan** to identify shortages and the necessary actions leading to a reinforced European defence, such as the increase in availability of helicopters, or the medical support to military operations. The Plan also asks for the transfer of all ongoing initiatives regarding European defence within the supervision of the EDA. Finally, Beatriz Pérez de la Heras said that the French presidency of the EU had had a positive impact on the European defence, as shown in the different declarations of the European Council of December 2008.

Following this short summary, the author dwelled on both the achievements and limits of European defence in the field of military capabilities. As regards the former, Beatriz Pérez de las Heras addressed the political will of the Member States to give the EU military capabilities, the European Security Strategy, the EDA, together with the deployment of several operations since 2003 (which gives visibility to the EU and reinforce its crisis

management identity). On the other side, the author said that progress toward a European defence was limited for several reasons: *a lack of political will to deploy the battlegroups, a shortage of strategic focus and a fragmentation of planning and direction of the different operations.*

Cristina Churruca then carried out an assessment of the **civilian capabilities**. The civilian aspect of European defence was developed parallel to the military side. This relation between militaries and civilians is characterized by a *lack of coordination*, a point that was further addressed in the debate. Member States' objectives in the domain of civilian crisis management were expressed in 2000 and 2001, and comprise four different fields: police, improvement of the rule of law, civil administration and civil protection. After the first civil operation of 2003 in Bosnia, an **Action Plan for Civilian Aspects of ESDP** was adopted by the European Council in 2004 with the aim of solving the remaining issues of the civilian crisis management. More recently, the **Civilian Headline Goal 2008** sought to develop the civilian capabilities of the ESDP. Among the achievements resulting from the Headline Goal, Cristina Churruca focused on some of the most important ones: the creation of a **Management Mechanism of Civilian Capabilities** in order to plan the missions and to hire personnel, numerous recommendations about the increase of personnel for EU civilian missions, a development of **rapid response civilian forces**, etc.

There remain shortcomings and a new document was thus drawn up in order to respond and solve them: the **Civilian Headline Goal 2010**. To conclude, Cristina Churruca painted an overview of EU civilian capabilities and pending issues. According to her analysis, *the progress in the field of civil crisis management is not sufficient and the European Union faces a lack of personnel and yet a growing number of civilian missions.* As a consequence, some issues are left unsolved: it remains difficult to find rapidly the adequate workforce required for the missions and it is still necessary to develop strategic associations with NATO or the United Nations.

After this presentation of the Working Paper, the participants took part in an intense debate. The impact of the **Lisbon Treaty** in this area was highlighted: more weight would be given to the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, a real common defence policy that could give rise to a common fund to support operations, or the constitution of pioneer groups for those Member States that want to assume more demanding commitments.

It was also agreed that it is not yet possible to ask too much to the EU in the field of the ESDP given that this policy is relatively recent. The debate also dealt with the issue *of the lack of human resources in order to carry out civil crisis management missions*. The authors of the Working Paper acknowledged that the EU required more judges, policemen and civil servants for its civilian missions. Several proposals were made, such as the creation of a European civil force or the establishment of a reserve civil force.

Jordi Marsal, Deputy to the Director of CESEDEN, closed the event with observations regarding two necessary conditions for an effective European defence: a strong political will of the Member States and the existence of sufficient military and civilian capabilities.

Madrid, July 2009

Summary prepared by **Xavier Mathieu**

Opex, Fundación Alternativas