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Presentation of the COMECE report on Europe's Vocation to Promote Peace in the World

Brigadier General Heinz Krieb

*Director of Concepts & Capability Directorate of the European Union Military Staff
(EUMS) of the European Union External Action Service (EEAS).*

---Check against delivery---

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Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Personal introduction (not on behalf of the EEAS)

- First of all thanks for the invitation and the possibility to contribute to the discussion by representing the military perspective of a successful peace policy.
- If topics are supposed to become difficult it is very often me to be sent by the EU Military Staff as I am supposed to be a good diplomat and far away from blocking positions and not accepting considerations which may not fit into what people are thinking is the military world.
- **This military world, however, has changed significantly. The military culture of the 21st century cannot be compared to what our parents and grandparents have learned about military.**
- European Soldiers of our century are part of their respective societies and as such they are supposed to contribute to societal development, to establish families, to be good neighbours and even to act as politicians, if time permits.
- For all these reasons there is **no special interest of soldiers to go abroad and to do a warfighting** for or against someone or something for which neither they nor the Union or the sending nations are responsible for.
- In our system it is up to the politicians and the parliaments, elected by democratic societies, to decide whether soldiers are to be employed or not.

- In general, soldiers clearly stick to **the ethical imperative to avoid the use of force whenever possible**; or does someone mean it's fun to deploy to AFGHANISTAN to establish a stable and secure environment in a total non – permissive environment where you as a soldier – on a daily base - run the risk to be wounded or even killed by people sometimes supposed to be on your side.
- No, that is not what soldiers wish and this is not what we have been trained and educated to do. When the AFG operation started, German soldiers have been blamed to bore wells rather than to fight. However, what to fight? *Are we really talking about insurgents supported by the local population fighting a corrupt political system as it was at the beginning of the western engagement?*
- Due to a lack of a clear political – strategic objective at the start of the operation it was never really clarified who in this failing state was wrong.
- In addition to that, the implementation of civil instruments did not work as it should which consequently did not lead to improve the social life in Afghanistan. **A CATCH 22 situation.**
- And this applies for many situations military force has been used for in the past. That means prior to the deployment of a military force, its purpose should be clarified and measured against the background of the effect of a **pre – emptive Peacebuilding** and your considerations discussing **Peace through justice**.
- **Military cannot resolve conflicts within failed or failing states. It is one instrument to inform a comprehensive process but not more and this is hopefully clearly expressed in the upcoming Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy.**
- Therefore and again, from a military point of view the "**Three Pillars of the European Peace Policy**" are fully in line with our perception. This includes all measures described and analysed in the respective chapters and from the military point of view in particular the need to **reinforce EU's early – warning systems** but also the need to be enabled to contribute to capacity building; and some of you may have heard that severe discussions are still ongoing related to the provision of funds to meet this civil – military challenge.
- However, this is one side of the coin related to operations and missions abroad and thus related to Common Security and Defence Policy as defined in the Treaty on the European Union.
- The other side of the coin is the defence – related issue which may be discussed in more depth after the approval, endorsement or just notification of the new **Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy** by the Heads of States and Governments end of June.
- Where is the dividing line between defence on the one hand and provision of security abroad on the other side. There is a **nexus between internal and external security**

which may result in the development of additional strategies to minimize risks for Europe and European citizens.

- Before this can be achieved we may ask: Does the execution of a **training mission in SOMALIA** contribute to stability at the European borders?
- What about the purpose of our training and advisory mission in the Central African Republic?
- Do Europeans even know what their military is supposed to do other than to contribute to the Save of Lives at Sea (SOLAS) operations in the Mediterranean.
- Do our people, our citizens know the real purpose of EUNAVFORMED SOPHIA which is to prevent human trafficking, to deter smuggling and – if respective decisions are finally taken – to reduce the flow of arms into Libya.
- A decisive decision, e.g. to separate the fighting militia in Libya by force has not been taken as this might lead to a loss of lives of European soldiers, which politicians cannot and do not want to afford.
- However, state and societal Resilience to our east and south is one of the 5 priorities described in the latest draft of the Strategy. Together with sustainable Regional Orders and a working Global Governance for the 21st century it forms the backbone of our interests related to Security, Prosperity and Democracy. We will see how this is going to be implemented.
- What is the way ahead? Having all these open issues in mind and acting in this way the European Union and its Member States may play their role as a global security provider and this is what Europe should stand for. And I guess, this will finally be in line with **"Europe's vocation to promote peace in the world"**.

Thanks for your attention!