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CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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The Need for Civil-Military Coordination in the EU

The purpose of this short essay is to assess the debate on civil-military coordination in the EU and to illustrate how it reflects the wider debate on coordination between different EU actors as seen in the discussion on the Lisbon Treaty. Ever since the EU started to include security and defence issues into the integration process, there has been a debate on how the EU should coordinate its traditional civilian instruments with the new military ones. As stipulated in the European Security Strategy from 2003 (ESS 2003), the aim of the EU's common foreign and security policies (CFSP) is on the one hand to build security in the EU's own neighbourhood and to further develop an effective multilateral system. On the other hand, an overarching aim is to bring the different instruments and capabilities of the EU closer together. The ESS 2003 underlines the following: "We have instruments in place that can be used effectively, as we have demonstrated in the Balkans and beyond. But if we are to make a contribution that matches our potential, we need to be more effective, more coherent and more capable".

Since 2003 when the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) became operational, the EU has conducted 21 different civilian and military missions. In this respect, it is important to take into consideration that the fundamental distinctiveness of CFSP and ESDP is its combination of military and civilian instruments, which makes the EU a unique actor in international politics. The Lisbon Treaty, which still is pending due to the No-result in the Irish referendum, is a step in the direction of coherence between the different EU actors and enhanced democratisation of the EU institutions. The essay will try to illuminate what kind of security actor the EU is by looking into the debate in the EU on how to bring the different instruments of the EU more efficient together.

What Kind of Actor – The EU and Comprehensive Security

The debate on CFSP and ESDP and the role of the EU as a security actor has to be related to a wider debate on the content of international peace operations. In this respect, we have since the end of the Cold War witnessed a shift in focus from peacekeeping, which was about maintaining the status-quo, to peace building, which has to do with managing transitions. With the development from peacekeeping to peace building, civilian elements have been added to traditional military peacekeeping mandates. This description reflects the gradual development from the early 1990's, as envisaged for example in the UN report "An Agenda for Peace" from 1992, which underlined the increased complexities in peace-operations. Within this context a wide range of concepts and new approaches have been developed to deal with the complex challenges of current crises. "Civil-military cooperation", "security and development", "comprehensive approach", "integrated missions", "whole-of-government approach" and "effect-based approach to operations" (EBAO), are all current concepts being applied in the debate on international operations.

This broad range of concepts illustrates that military operations has become more and more multi-functional and is carried out alongside a wide range of civilian actions.

In the EU Presidency Report on ESDP from 2005, the comprehensive character of peace-operations is illustrated. This is underlined in the paragraph on the EU's engagements in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH):

"The EU force deployed in [BiH] in the framework of the UN-authorized ALTHEA military operation has continued to guarantee a safe and secure environment in the country and enjoys the confidence of the local population and authorities. In addition to its primary mission of providing deterrence, reassurance and

a safe and secure environment, the force has also provided assistance to the fight against organised crime and capacity building for local authoritities and law enforcement agencies, and support to the Mission Implementation Plan of the Office of the High Representative (OHR) as well as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Co-ordination between the force's activities and the activities of other EU players in [BiH] continues to be ensured largely by the EU Special Representative, thereby strengthening the EU's co-ordination and internal cohesion in [BiH]."

This example highlights the need for a systematic approach for the cooperation and coordination between the military and civilian actors involved in the handling of the security challenges, thereby fulfilling the aim of the ESS 2003 to secure the EU's neighbourhood. The EU has in several planning documents underlined the need to take the issue of foreign and security policy coordination forward as a matter of urgency.

However, ever since the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, it has been rather evident that the pillar structure, established by this Treaty, is not the optimal architecture for a coherent and integrated approach to conflict and crisis management. Within the foreign policy field under Pillar 1, the European Commission implements its external relations responsibilities through five Directorates-General (External Relations, Trade, Enlargement, Development, and Humanitarian Aid) headed by four commissioners. According to the treaties, the Commission has a relatively unchallenged role in trade, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, but a more modest one in CFSP and ESDP, which still is the domain of intergovernmentalism. Still, Article 27 in the Nice Treaty confirms that "the Commission shall be fully associated with the work carried out in the common foreign and security field".

According to the International Crisis Group (ICG) report on CFSP from 2005, the Commission's comparative advantage is in conflict prevention and management in areas closely linked to long-term structural issues or immediate humanitarian needs. The same report underlines that the Commission will continue to be the main, sometimes exclusive, purveyor of EU foreign policy in those regions of the world that member states do not consider to be strategic priorities.

Pillar 2 encompasses the CFSP and ESDP. This pillar is mostly of an intergovernmental nature. The main bodies within this pillar are the General Affairs and External Relations Committee (GAERC), the Secretary General/High Representative (SG/HR), and the Political and Security Committee (PSC). The role of the SG/HR is to assist the Council in foreign policy matters, by contributing to the formulation, preparation and implementation of European policy decisions. The SG/HR also acts on behalf of the Council in conducting political dialogue with third parties. The PSC furthermore plays an important role in the formulation of EU foreign policies. Article 25 in the Nice Treaty underlines that the PSC shall monitor the international situation in the areas covered by the CFSP and contribute to the definition of policies by delivering opinions to the Council. Additionally, the PSC exercises political control and strategic direction of crisis management operations. Due to the high meeting frequency within this Committee, PSC is quite tellingly referred to as the "workhorse" of CFSP and ESDP.

Pillar 3 encompasses police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters which includes combating crime, organised or otherwise, in particular terrorism, trafficking in persons and offences against children, illicit drug trafficking and illicit arms trafficking, corruption, and fraud (in accordance with Article 29 in the Nice Treaty). This pillar is also of intergovernmental character. The fight against terror is by some commentators regarded as the first "cross-pillar" test of the Union´s role as a security actor, involving not only the second and third pillar, but also the first insofar as the fight was against the financing of terrorism.

However, different decision-making procedures within the different pillars prevents well-functioning coordination and cooperation measures and prevents the EU from becoming an effective and well coordinated comprehensive security actor. Hence, there is a need for enhanced intra- as well as inter-pillar coordination and cooperation. As has often been pointed out, the issue of coherence is not only confined to the integration of security tools, but also touches on the relations between the community pillar and the intergovernmental pillars within the EU, between the EU and its member states, and between the EU and other organisations.

Bringing Together the Instruments in Practise

The aim of the prospective Lisbon Treaty is to strengthen the EU as an actor at the global level,

including enhanced efforts to bring together the different means the EU has at its disposal. In this respect, the proposed High Representative for the Union in Foreign Affairs and Security Policy will also become Vice-President of the European Commission. The goal is to increase the impact, coherence, and visibility of the EU´s external action. A new External Action Service will also provide support to the High Representative. With these institutional reforms, including the establishment of President of the European Council elected for two and a half years, the institutional framework for the establishment of a "culture of coordination" is, at least in theory, in place.

However, even without the Lisbon Treaty, there have been several attempts both at the conceptual as well as on the institutional level to foster closer coordination within and between the pillars. Conceptually, inside the EU, Civil-Military Coordination (CMCO) and comprehensive planning has emerged as two concepts intended to bring the different instruments of the EU closer together. Indeed, CMCO and comprehensive planning are two concepts that not only form the basis for the EU's crisis management planning, but also concepts that to an increasing extent frames the debate on what kind of security actor the EU is. In 2005, the Council defined CMCO as the "... need for effective coordination of the actions of all relevant EU actors involved in the planning and subsequent implementation of EU's response to the crisis". In the same document, comprehensive planning is described as a "systematic approach designed to address the need for effective intra-pillar and inter-pillar co-ordination of activity by all relevant EU actors in crisis management planning". Central to CMCO and comprehensive planning is enhanced intra-institutional complementarities between the Commission and the Council, which at the practical level includes strengthened contacts between the military and the civilian actors of the Council Secretariat and the Commission. Therefore, in the internal EU debate, CMCO is regarded as synonymous with a comprehensive approach to operations which takes into account the increased complexities in today's peace-operations which stretches far beyond traditional peacekeeping. In this respect, comprehensive planning will also relate to internal EU measures so that the Union enhances its ability to address complex crisis in a coherent manner. It is important to note that there is an increased focus amongst policy-framers who stress the need for coherence, coordination and synergies both in and between the pillars. This reflects a development where inter-agency battles will be strongly resisted.

The internal debate inside the EU on coherence has also been reflected at the institutional level. A Civil-Military Cell has been established within the EU Military Staff (EUMS). The Cell will assist in strategic planning and operational tasks for the conduct of autonomous EU operations across the range of the military, civil-military and civilian activities. The Cell is the first standing body in the EU that fully integrates military and civilian expertise, including staff members from the Commission. One of the aims is to nurture a culture of coordination. Additionally the Cell will also function as a permanently available capacity to set up a Headquarter (HQ) for a particular operation. According to the former Director of the Cell, Brigadier General Heinrich Brauss, the Cell has worked successfully. He has further underlined that combining the professional experience from such diverse backgrounds in an integrated structure can deliver added value.

Additionally, the European Council decided in 2007 to establish a Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) under the auspices of the SG/HR. The CPCC shall provide assistance and advice to the SG/HR, the Presidency and the relevant Council bodies and to direct, coordinate, advise, support, supervise and review civilian operations. The CPCC represents the new civilian command structure and enables the civilian actors to have eye-to-eye contact with their military ESDP counterparts. Consequently, in the future, the crisis management documents including plans such as the framing of crisis management concepts, will be drafted in close cooperation with the Operation Commander for military operations, and the Civilian Operation Commander for civilian missions respectively. As such, the Civil-Military Cell will also contribute to integrated civilian-military planning when needed.
The strengthening of the planning and conduct of civilian operations points therefore in direction of enhanced cooperation and coordination between the civilian and military actors in EU crisis management. In such a perspective, it will also strengthen the comprehensive character of the EU as a security actor.

Concluding Remarks

The current crisis in Georgia is an important test case for the EU's crisis management capacity. In the

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handling of the present situation, the EU will be in need of combining its different means and instruments as underlined in the conclusions from the extraordinary European Council meeting on 1 September 2008. The EU considers it more necessary than ever "... to support regional cooperation and step up its relations with its eastern neighbours, in particular through its neighbourhood policy". Furthermore, the development of the "Black Sea Synergy" initiative and an "Eastern Partnership" which the EU wishes to adopt in March 2009, will be a test case for the effectiveness of the EU's foreign policies, and especially between the Council's short-term and high profile involvement and the Commission's long-term political and economical engagements. Concretely, this is reflected in the decision by the Council to launch a civilian ESDP mission (the EU Monitoring Mission) with the aim of overseeing the six-point agreement from 12 August, and how this operation is coordinated with a long-term vision of integrating Georgia into the EU process. In such a process, the aim is to agree upon a free trade agreement as soon as the conditions are met.

Traditionally, the political imperative not to antagonise Russia has prevented the EU from deeper involvement in Georgias's conflicts. This has now changed. The EU now underlines that the relations between the EU and Russia have reached a crossroads. The EU considers that given the interdependence between the EU and Russia, and the global problems they are facing, there is no desirable alternative to a strong relationship.

In the end, how the EU manages to coordinate its different means and instruments as regards Georgia's long-term relationship with the EU should be regarded as "CMCO in practise". In this respect it is important to note that the CMCO concept and comprehensive planning procedures, are necessary preconditions for the establishment of a coordination culture between different EU actors. Without such a culture, it will become nearly unfeasible for the EU to develop into a comprehensive security actor.

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