

EU as a Global Actor*

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There is now less than two months left of the Swedish Presidency. For this six-month period we had set two main priorities - and the two main challenges for the EU - the international economic crisis on the one hand, and the global climate negotiations on the other hand.

A third priority has been the strengthening of the EU's relations with its neighborhood and the outside world. for increased security and increased democracy.

In this context, it has been our ambition to promote the EU as an open project and continue the process of enlargement. Accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia are right now on our agenda. Moreover, the Council has referred Iceland's membership application to the Commission to prepare an avis. We continue to encourage the EU-integration of the countries in the Western Balkans, in accordance with the reform progress in each country.

The European Neighborhood Policy and the implementation of the Eastern Partnership, as well as the development of our cooperation with our neighbors in the Mediterranean region, are also an important part of our work to build security and democracy in our neighborhood.

Preparedness to deal with unexpected events is an important responsibility of every Presidency. So far, no major crisis has occurred, but we continue to be ready to respond proactively to sudden developments on the global stage.

Already on our agenda, we have of course the developments in i.a. Afghanistan/Pakistan, the Middle East, Iran, North Korea and Burma which continue to call for our attention and partial involvement.

We are now on the eve of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and intense consultations are going on regarding the appointment of a new SG/HR and the setting up of the European External Action Service. The Treaty will make the EU a more capable, coherent and effective actor on the global scene.

And this is timely, in view of the increasing demand for EU action and engagement in different parts of the world.

The EU has, during the last decade, proven that it has the potential to be a truly global actor, with a number of policy instruments at its disposal. Instruments for military and civilian crisis management are complemented by development, trade and other policy instruments. But improvements are

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needed and the Lisbon Treaty will enable the EU to enhance its contribution to international peace and security.

Looking back at the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), there are reasons to be proud, and to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the groundbreaking decisions taken by the European Council in Cologne and Helsinki in 1999. With an impressive speed, the institutional structures, the concepts and the civilian and military instruments have been developed. Not to speak of the over 20 missions and operations that have been carried out or are carried out until now.

At the same time, in spite of the progress made, there is still a discrepancy between the demand for EU action and the EU's ability to respond to this demand. This is a challenge we should be ready to take on.

Admittedly, this is not an easy task. We are facing a more complex global environment than just a few years ago. New threats and challenges have emerged – cyber security, energy security, infectious diseases, climate change, piracy – just to name a few.

We also see that internal and external security are becoming increasingly interlinked – which calls for a more flexible view on the development and use of different instruments and policies. The financial crisis has made us painfully aware of the security implications of financial collapse, something that calls for concerted action on the part of the EU.

The Lisbon Treaty gives us the hardware of institutions, which is very important. But we also need the software of policies. A common policy framework is a cornerstone in building capacity to act on the global stage. If we agree on what our policy should be, it is much easier to come up with the necessary resources – both in financial terms and in terms of capabilities. Therefore, we should develop the software of policies, with an ambition to foster a common strategic culture among the 27 Member States.

Certainly, we are not starting from scratch. We have the European Security Strategy and the Implementation Report from last year. This is a good basis to build upon.

Furthermore, by carrying out crisis management operations with broad participation from the Member States, we are gradually acquiring experience and building up a common strategic vision.

But more is needed. We also have to develop our analytical and policy planning capacity at EU-level and make sure we learn from our successes - but more importantly - from our failures. A closer cooperation and exchange with think-tanks and academic institutions is key in this context.

Matching resources with priorities is very important task. We have to make sure that there is a strong coherence between our policy-making on the one hand, and the budget processes on the other hand. However, there is insufficient flexibility in budget allocations to respond to new or changing priorities. The Budget review and the next Financial Perspective constitute important opportunities for realignment of the EU's external spending.

We also need to make sure that we have the right instruments at our disposal. For different reasons, our crisis management instruments are not always well-suited for the tasks we are expected to carry out.

We have to continue to work on the development of capabilities, civilian as well as military and a lot has been done during the Swedish Presidency.

The French Presidency contributed to a renewed impetus for the ESDP with the Capability Declaration as part of the conclusions at the European Council in December 2008. The Capability Declaration is important also for the development of civilian capabilities. The Czech Presidency has made an important work in following-up on these commitments and paved the way for a continued development of civilian and military capabilities.

In fact, this week the Foreign and Defence Ministers of the European Union met in Brussels and taken a number of important decisions, based on the work carried out during the last few months.

Among other things, the Ministers have adopted a declaration on the future development of the ESDP, in light of ten years of experiences and in light of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. This declaration provides a future-oriented and ambitious agenda for our further work in this field in order to make us a more relevant and efficient international actor.

On the military side, I would like to draw your attention to the use of Battlegroups – a potentially very useful tool to the support of international peace and security. The Battlegroups also play an important role in the transformation of the Armed Forces in many countries, not the least in Sweden.

However, as you are well aware, the Battlegroups have not yet been used. Sweden has initiated a discussion on the usability and flexibility in the implementation of the Battlegroup concept and Ministers will agree on conclusions to this effect.

During the Swedish Presidency, we have also worked on the area of maritime surveillance. There are obvious synergies between military and civilian maritime surveillance and a need for close cooperation in order to avoid duplication. At this week's Ministerial Meeting, conclusions supporting a more integrated approach to maritime surveillance has also been adopted.

In addition to these priorities, there is a need for continued work to promote a more competitive and innovative defense industry. Important initiatives have been taken by the EDA and the European Commission, creating the basis for the continued development of the European defense industry. Sweden supports this work and has focused on transparency and harmonization – in order to achieve a stronger European Defense and Industrial Technological Base. Also in this field, the Ministers adopted conclusions at their Brussels Meeting.

On the civilian side, we are trying to improve the supply of personnel, lessons learned processes, mission support and training etc. Rule-of-law missions – a niche capacity of the EU – is an instrument with a particularly important potential that should be further explored.

And we have to ensure the adequate financing is available for the planning and start-up of operations.

We are also promoting civilian-military cooperation and trying to make the use of different instruments more integrated – at strategic level as well as in the field. The aim should be to carry out `policy operations`, not purely defined `civilian` or `military` operations. During this week's Ministerial Meeting, the Ministers agreed on the importance of more coordinated civilian and military capability development processes, as is also reflected in the Declaration.

Moreover, we must pay due attention to the closer link between security, development and human rights, as well as to the work on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 (Women peace and security) and 1820 (Sexual violence in conflict) and the two recently adopted UNSCR 1888 and 1889.

The Swedish Presidency is making efforts to advance the agenda in these areas. The EU's unique capacity to act as a mediator at different levels should be developed further, and a process that is now well under way with a concept to be adopted by Ministers.

As for ongoing crisis management missions and operations, we are engaged in discussions on EU's future military presence in Bosnia. The aim is to gradually transfer it to a non-executive mission, intended to strengthen local defence structures.

At the same time, political developments, including upcoming Bosnian elections, point to the need for EU to be ready to respond to security challenges also during 2010. In addition, we are discussing a broader engagement in Somalia to complement our naval operation, Atalanta. Specifically, we are now looking at opportunities for EU to engage in out-of-the-country training of Somali security forces. Given the situation in the country, many challenges are involved. French experiences from training conducted in Djibouti will have to be taken into account.

Furthermore, we are trying to make sure that EUPOL Afghanistan becomes fully staffed – this is long overdue – and that the EULEX Kosovo can show results and play a stabilizing role in the country.

Despite the wide range of instruments at its disposal, the EU cannot act in isolation. Effective multilateralism, with the UN at its core, is a cornerstone of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. We have seen improvements in the EU's cooperation with other international organizations, like the UN, NATO, OSCE as well as with other global and regional powers.

But more can be done. We have important experiences to draw upon. At the Ministerial Meeting in Brussels the new NATO SG met with our Foreign and Defence Ministers to discuss challenges of common interest. It became a rich and animated meeting. Both sides want more and smoother cooperation

Within the broader framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, we have to deepen our strategic partnerships. We should continue to build a true transatlantic partnership with the US, and work closely on issues like climate, energy, trade and crisis management. We should have the ambition to conduct a comprehensive and frank dialogue with Russia, and deal with issues like human rights, common neighborhood, protracted conflicts etc. Relations with China and India should be developed further.

Last, but not least, the EU will have to continue to play an active and leading role in the discussions on the European Security Architecture, in cooperation with CiO and partners. We are now preparing for the OSCE Ministerial Meeting in Athens in December, with a focus on comprehensive security, transparency and EU-unity.

To sum up, our focus is on:

- Achieving the adoption of a new climate agreement during the international climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December; with EU in the forefront
- Addressing the international financial, economic and employment crisis;
- Developing EU's relations with its neighborhood and the world,
 - with a strong ambition to strengthen the EU as a global actor;
 - with a commitment to continue the process of enlargement and a deepening of our relations with neighboring countries;
 - with an accentuated effort to sharpen our crisis management instruments;
 - with a practical approach to broaden our cooperation with other organizations and our strategic partnerships.