



The Headline Goal

Gustav LINDSTROM

(Updated April 2006)

Background

At the December 1999 Helsinki European Council meeting, EU member states set themselves a military capability target known as the Headline Goal. It called for EU member states to be able to deploy 60,000 troops, within 60 days and sustainable for a year in support of the Petersberg Tasks. The Petersberg Tasks presently include humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking (referred to as ‘peace enforcement’ in some contexts). EU-led forces assembled in response to a crisis would last only for the duration of the crisis and it would be up to the member states themselves to decide whether, when and how to contribute troops.

Civilian assets were pledged at the June 2000 European Council meeting held in Santa Maria da Feira. At the summit, EU member states agreed to be able to provide 5,000 police officers for international missions across the range of conflict prevention and crisis management operations by 2003. In addition, member states also agreed to identify and deploy up to 1,000 police officers within 30 days when needed.

According to the 28 February 2000 “Food for Thought” Paper, the Headline Goal was to be met by June 2003 if possible and by December 2003 at the latest. In December 2001, the Laeken Presidency Conclusions noted that the “Union is now capable of conducting some crisis-management operations.” This position was confirmed and reinforced at the May 2003 General Affairs and External Relations Council: “the EU now has operational capability across the full range of Petersberg tasks, limited and constrained [only] by recognised shortfalls.”

Missions and operations

While a variety of missions are possible under the military dimension of ESDP, it is set to be able to conduct at least two types of concurrent operations:

1. A single corps sized crisis management task while retaining enough assets to conduct a small-scale operation such as a non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO).

2. A long-term operation at less than maximum level of effort while conducting another operation of a limited duration.

On 1 January 2003, the EU launched its first civilian crisis management operation – the European Union Police Mission (EUPM). Based in Sarajevo, it is a follow-on operation to the United Nation’s International Police Task Force. Consisting of approximately 500 police officers representing over 30 countries, the objective is to establish sustainable policing arrangements under BiH ownership.

On 31 March 2003, the EU launched its first military peacekeeping mission. Known as Operation CONCORDIA, it succeeded NATO’s *Allied Harmony* operation in Macedonia. It consisted of roughly 350 personnel representing 27 different nations with access to NATO capabilities and assets. The mission objective was to guarantee a secure environment to facilitate the FYROM government’s implementation of the August 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement. The operation was terminated on December 15, 2003, giving way to the follow-on operation EUPOL PROXIMA. As the EU’s second police mission, PROXIMA aims to monitor, mentor and advise the Macedonian police force. The yearlong mission is made up some 200 police officers and has its headquarters in Skopje. The PROXIMA mission was extended for an additional year starting on 15 December 2004.

On 5 June 2003, the EU Council formally gave the go-ahead to a second military peacekeeping mission. Operation ARTEMIS was launched to secure the town of Bunia in the Congolese province of Ituri. With France as the Framework nation, a total force of about 1,700 personnel participated in the time-limited operation that concluded on September 1st, 2003.

On 16 July 2004, the EU launched its first rule of law mission – EUJUST THEMIS. Lasting 12 months, it was designed to support the Georgian authorities as they addressed challenges in the criminal justice system. In addition, the mission assisted the Georgian government with the development of a coordinated approach to the reform process. Approximately eight international experts were deployed to Georgia, led by the French judge Sylvie Pantz,

On 2 December 2004, the EU took over the NATO SFOR mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina. ALTHEA, as the mission is known, has a number of short, medium, and long-term objectives, including:

- Ensuring a secure environment for the implementation of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement
- Strengthening local capacity building
- Supporting BiH’s progress towards EU integration by its own efforts
- Contributing towards a stable, viable, peaceful and multiethnic BiH

Additional details on these and other more recent ESDP missions are available on the ESDP operations page.

Developments Post-Helsinki

The 20-21 November 2000 Capabilities Commitments Conference: Reinforcing Military Capabilities and Identifying Shortcomings

To operationally meet the requirements established by the Headline Goal, a Capabilities Commitments Conference (CCC) was organized in late 2000. A 'Headline Goal Task Force' (HTF) carried out the preparatory work. When EU-NATO relations were addressed, the HTF was reinforced through the participation of NATO experts under the 'HTF-plus' arrangement. Building on the initial reviews of available, expected, and required forces and assets discussed in July 2000 by means of a confidential Helsinki Headline Catalogue, the CCC specified the following assets in support of the Headline Goal (the Catalogue was updated prior to the CCC in mid-September 2000):

- 100,000 personnel
- 400 combat aircraft
- 100 naval vessels

The Conference also made it possible to identify a number of areas in which efforts are needed to upgrade existing assets, investment, development, and coordination to enhance the capabilities required for autonomous EU action.

The 19 November 2001 Capability Improvement Conference: Addressing the Capability Gaps

At the Capability Improvement Conference (CIC), member states identified additional shortcomings and agreed on a plan of action to remedy them. Identified challenge areas include force protection, logistics, and operational mobility. Improvements were similarly suggested for specific mission requirements, including the acquisition of related technologies.

By the end of 2001, five of the 55 major shortfalls identified by the CIC had been resolved.¹ To remedy these gaps, a European Capability Action Plan (ECAP) was set-up by member states (see the section on ECAP for details on the EU Capability Development Mechanism, ECAP, and some of the more recent capability conferences).

The 22 November 2004 Military Capabilities Commitment Conference

In the Declaration on European Military Capabilities – endorsed by the Council on 22 November 2004 – EU member states committed themselves to the further improve military capabilities. They also offered contributions to the EU Battlegroups as part of Rapid Response elements. Specifically, member states made

¹ *Military Balance 2002-2003.*

initial commitments to the formation of thirteen battlegroups (see Table 1 for formations). In addition, certain EU member states committed niche capabilities in support of the battlegroups (Table 2).

Table 1: EU Battlegroup Commitments

	Country/Countries contributing to battlegroup formations
1.	France
2.	Italy
3.	Spain
4.	United Kingdom
5.	France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and potentially Spain
6.	France and Belgium
7.	Germany, the Netherlands and Finland
8.	Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic
9.	Italy, Hungary and Slovenia
10.	Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal
11.	Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Latvia and Lithuania
12.	Sweden, Finland and including Norway as 3 rd state
13.	United Kingdom and the Netherlands

Table 2: Niche capabilities offered in support of the EU Battlegroups

EU Member State	Niche Capability Offered
Cyprus	Medical group
Lithuania	Water purification unit
Greece	Athens Sealift Co-ordination Centre
France	Structure of a multinational and deployable Force Headquarter

Current status

Towards the Headline Goal 2010

With the adoption of the European Security Strategy in December 2003, EU member states decided to set themselves a new Headline Goal that reflects the evolution of the strategic environment and technology. In May 2004, the EU defence ministers adopted a new plan known as the ‘Headline Goal 2010’. Building on the Headline Goal 2003, it envisions that member states “be able by 2010 to respond with rapid and decisive action applying a fully coherent approach to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations covered by the Treaty of the European Union.”² The Headline Goal 2010 plan was endorsed by the June 2004 European Council summit meeting held in Brussels.

² Council of the European Union, doc. 6805/03.

Among the milestones identified within the 2010 horizon are:³

- Establishing a civil-military cell within the European Union Military Staff (initiated summer 2005). The cell should have the capacity to rapidly set-up an operations centre for a particular operation.
- Establishing a European Defence Agency (July 2004).
- Implementing EU strategic lift joint coordination.
- Developing a fully efficient European Airlift Command for those member states who want to be part of the EAC.
- Completing development of the rapidly deployable EU Battlegroups (force package of approximately 1,500 troops)
- Ensuring the availability of an aircraft carrier with its associated air wing and escort by 2008.
- Improving the performance of all levels of EU operations through appropriate compatibility and network linkage of all communications equipment and assets (terrestrial and space based) by 2010.
- Developing quantitative benchmarks and criteria that national forces declared to the Headline Goal have to meet in the field of deployability and training.

Progress towards the Headline Goal 2010 has continued with the finalisation of the Requirements Catalogue 05. A refinement of previous catalogues, it identifies the military capabilities and force requirements needed to fulfill the Petersberg Tasks and meet the strategic objectives contained in the European Security Strategy. It also contains strategic planning assumptions and five illustrative scenarios to further facilitate the identification of military requirements and capabilities. As such, it also provides a baseline for military visions up to 2010. In its current form, the catalogue focuses on developing qualitative (e.g. sustainability) rather than quantitative (e.g. manpower) capabilities. The emphasis is on rapidly deployable and interoperable forces that can be sustained as needed through rotations – taking into account the possibility to run more than one operation concurrently.

Concerning the EU Battlegroups, an initial operational capability was achieved in 2005. France and the United Kingdom each made a battlegroup available for the first half of 2005. Italy offered a battlegroup for the second half of 2005. Spain, serving as a framework nation with contributions from Italy, Portugal, and Greece will make a battlegroup available during the first half of 2006. In 2005, two Battlegroup Coordination Conferences (BGCC) were held to finalise the scheduling of battlegroup contributions, confirm the composition of individual battlegroups, and identify potential operational headquarters. Once full operational capability is reached in January 2007, the EU should have the capacity to undertake (and launch nearly simultaneously) two concurrent single battalion-sized rapid response operations.

Looking beyond 2010, the EU is also working on a Long Term Vision to identify key influences on the future military environment and implications for the conduct of ESDP military operations around 2025. Spearheaded by the European

³ Ibid.

Defence Agency, the Long Term Vision is organised into three different strands involving the EU Institute for Security Studies (Strand 1), the European Union Military Staff (Strand 2), and the European Defence Agency (Strand 3).

The Civilian Headline Goal 2008

With respect to civilian ESDP capabilities, a Civilian Headline Goal 2008 was endorsed at the December 2004 European Council. The Civilian Headline Goal will be elaborated under the auspices of the Council. The Political and Security Committee, with support from the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM), will oversee the overall process. Civilian missions are foreseen to handle various types of monitoring missions as well as providing support to Special Representatives of the EU. Examples of activities the civilian missions may carry out include security sector reform and support to disarmament, demobilization/reintegration processes.

The civilian ESDP capabilities should be deployable within thirty days of the decision to launch a mission. Such undertakings could be deployed autonomously, jointly or in close collaboration with military operations. Important steps (some of which have already been completed) towards the establishment of the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 include:

1. Elaborating key planning assumptions and illustrative scenarios.
2. Creating a Capabilities Requirement List.
3. Assessing national contributions to the Civilian Capabilities Requirements List and the identification of capability shortfalls (to be completed by the end of 2005).
4. Ensuring a Civilian Headline Goal follow-up process.

Relying on a methodology similar to that of the Headline Goal 2010, a Civilian Capability Commitment Conference was held in November 2004 to identify member state contributions. A comparison of the commitments with the needed requirements facilitated the identification of shortfalls (such as forensic specialists, judges and administrative staff). The November 2005 Civilian Capabilities Improvement Conference highlight these shortfalls that are to be addressed through a Civilian Capabilities Improvement Plan.

In June 2005, modalities were outlined for setting-up and deploying “multifunctional civilian crisis management resources in an integrated format, including rapidly deployable Civilian Response Teams” (Council of the European Union, doc. 10462/05). It is foreseen that the exact composition and functions of such packages would vary according to the needs of the crisis situation at hand. Potential tasks include carrying out assessment and fact-finding missions in a crisis or impending crisis situation; deploying as bridging measure prior to the launch of a full ESDP mission; or reinforcing existing EU crisis management mechanisms (e.g. by supplying appropriate expertise in areas such as mediation and monitoring).

Civilian Response Teams (CRTs) would be drawn from a pool of experts comprising initially about 100 experts nominated by Member States. Examples of

expertise areas include border policing, administration of justice, management of public administration services, civil protection, logistics and operations support (Council of the European Union, doc. 14745/05). As a rapid response tool, it is envisaged that a CRT would be mobilised and deployed within five days of a request by the Secretary General/High Representative, Political Security Committee, or the Council. The duration of such a deployment would normally not exceed three months.

An initial readiness for deploying CRTs might be available before the date of the full implementation of the Civilian Headline Goal 2008. A CRT capacity of up to 100 experts with completed CRT induction training is presently envisaged for the end of 2006.