

Command and control? Planning for EU military operations

Luis Simón



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Luis Simón



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Summary

This paper assesses the effectiveness of the European Union's capability for the planning and conduct of military operations. Given the fact that the planning and conduct phases of an operation can never be fully isolated from each other, the paper does include some references to the conduct dimension, i.e. command and control (C2). However, it is with planning issues that this paper is most directly concerned. It argues that the lack of a permanent planning and conduct capability cripples the Union's planning and C2 performance as well as the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) more broadly. This capability, though, need not adopt the form of a fully-fledged Operational Headquarters (OHQ). The paper explains that the nature and evolution of the Union's planning and C2 capability is largely the result of compromises between France, Britain and Germany (the Union's 'Big Three') and argues that a coincidence in British-German objectives – the 'awkward alignment' – is particularly responsible for the continuing absence of a permanent military planning and C2 capability.

In its policy recommendations, the paper attempts to reconcile the need to address the existing deficiencies in the realms of planning (no flexibility and lack of advance planning capacity) and C2 (the unreliability of the Union's Communications and Information Systems infrastructure and the lack of situational awareness) with prevailing political caveats – principally, the general resistance to the creation of a fully-fledged and permanent military OHQ. It proposes strengthening the Military Assessment on Planning Branch (currently placed within the EU Military Staff) by setting up a *planning skeleton* (composed of some 50 officials) devoted to improving the Union's advance planning performance and increasing flexibility in the Union's planning process. This skeleton would be inserted within the future Crisis Management Planning Directorate (CMPD) structure. Additionally, an *ad hoc* group of national augmentees (drawn from a wider pool of some 80 to 100 pre-identified augmentees) could join a detachment from the skeleton and plug onto the existing OpsCentre or a national OHQ for operational planning and conduct purposes.

The paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter explains ES-DP's planning cycle and describes the evolution of the Union's planning and C2 capability. The second chapter proceeds to assess the planning and C2 performance of three military operations; EUFOR *Althea* in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR DRC in the Democratic Republic of Congo and EUFOR Tchad/RCA in Chad and the Central African Republic. The third and last chapter presents the study's conclusions and offers practical policy recommendations aimed at improving the Union's planning and conduct capability.

Introduction

Ten years after the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was initiated at the 1999 Cologne European Council, Europeans have much to celebrate, but also much yet to achieve. All things considered, in the past few years the European Union's accomplishments in the realm of security have been substantial: twenty three operations have been launched since ESDP was declared operational in 2003, including six military ones. But self-congratulation cannot stand in the way of further progress – not in an increasingly volatile strategic environment that demands *more* Europe in the security realm.

The precarious state of the Union's capability for the planning and conduct of military operations represents a particularly important obstacle to the further development and success of ESDP. Clearly, planning, command and control are areas where much progress can be achieved with little effort. Only (a lack of) political will stands in the way of an effective EU planning and conduct capability.

The way in which the nature of the Union's planning and C2 capability has developed is, arguably, the most accurate barometer of the evolution of ESDP itself. National differences over how much the Union should rely on NATO and how much it should go it alone (Atlanticists vs. Europeanists) or what the appropriate balance between civilian and military means should be in the Union's response to crisis management ('introverts' vs. 'extroverts') are almost caricaturised when projected into any discussion on the nature of the Union's planning and C2 capability. Strong politicisation accounts for a planning and C2 capability that is largely dysfunctional. Most importantly, a dysfunctional planning and C2 capability cripples the Union's promised autonomy in the security realm.

So long as Europeans lack a strong, efficient and autonomous capability for the planning and conduct of military operations the credibility of ESDP will suffer, as will the Union's image abroad and at home. This said, we should not get carried away. Clearly, a more efficient planning and C2 capability will not be a panacea for all of ESDP's problems: ongoing national discrepancies over *finalité* still raise important questions about the Union's potential as an autonomous strategic actor. Yet, a stronger, more efficient

and autonomous planning and C2 capability would substantially contribute towards bolstering the Union's credibility in the security realm.

The main liability affecting the Union's capability with regard to the planning and conduct of ESDP military operations is the lack of a permanent military-strategic level of command or Operational Headquarters (OHQ). This lack results in an artificial fragmentation of planning into politico-strategic and operational phases that precludes the flexibility that is inherent to the art of military planning and hampers the Union's potential in the realm of advance planning, so vital for rapid reaction in crisis management – a concept to which the Union attaches so much importance. Furthermore, the de-localisation that results from the existence of different, *ad hoc*, military-strategic level of command options also presents problems in the realm of C2. For one thing, the lack of a permanent C2 structure adversely affects the reliability of the Union's Communication and Information Systems (CIS) infrastructure. For another, the physical dispersion of the Union's military-strategic level of command makes it harder to maintain overall situational awareness.

Over the past few years, a number of measures have been undertaken aimed at countering the effects of fragmentation in the planning cycle and building up the Union's advance planning capacity. Their impact has been rather modest. Besides, no significant moves have been made to limit the effects of the existing liabilities in the realm of C2. As long as the Union lacks a permanent military-strategic level of command, any attempts to address the deficiencies of the Union's planning and conduct capability are condemned to remain cosmetic and largely ineffectual.

Several factors are responsible for the rather modest evolution of the Union's planning and conduct capability. Certainly, its creation and later evolution have been informed by the Headline Goal process as well as the lessons learned from ESDP operations. However, although the development of the Union's planning and C2 capability does partly stem from strategic and institutional dynamics, these are both subject to a process of political vetting: any potential reform of the Union's planning and C2 structures is locked within a rather tight box whose shape expands or contracts to the rhythm of a political tune. France, Britain and (although perhaps less visibly so) Germany, the Union's Big Three, are particularly responsible for drawing the contours of that box.

Largely building upon extensive conversations with numerous officials spread across the institutional landscape of ESDP, as well as national decision-making structures, this *Occasional Paper* describes the evolution of the Union's planning and conduct capability, assesses its operational performance and looks into politically palatable avenues for improvement.¹ Acknowledging the fact that the planning and conduct phases of an operation can never be fully isolated from each other, the paper does include some references to the question of C2. However, it is with planning issues that this paper is most directly concerned.

The first chapter describes the planning and conduct cycle and offers an overview of the evolution of the Union's planning and C2 capability. The second chapter assesses the Union's planning and C2 performance in the context of three concrete cases: EUFOR *Althea*, EUFOR DRC and EUFOR Tchad RCA. The third and last chapter offers some conclusions and practical policy recommendations aimed at improving the Union's planning and C2 capability.

1. Over twenty interviews were conducted with officials and ex-officials from the EU Military Staff (EUMS), the General Council Secretariat, the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the EU Military Committee (EUMC), the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in NATO as well as officials from various EU Member States directly involved in ESDP. In order to downplay institutional or national biases, a large sample of individuals, nationalities and institutions was chosen.



1. The Union's military planning, command and control capability

According to the EU Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level, Military Planning is an iterative process which needs to analyse all relevant factors to determine the military mission. At the political and strategic level this will include analysis of the implications of political objectives, desired end state, restraints and constraints as well as an analysis of the capabilities needed, in order to develop potential military options balanced against those capabilities that are offered or potentially available.

Military Planning is conducted at four levels:

- the Political and Strategic Level (EU institutional level);
- the Military Strategic Level (Operation Headquarters – OHQ – level);
- the Operational Level (Force Headquarters – FHQ – level), and
- the Tactical Level (Component Headquarters level and below).²

It is important to distinguish Advance Planning from Crisis Response Planning.

Advance Planning is conducted to allow the EU to deal with potential crises. It is sub-divided into two categories:

(i) *Generic Planning* is the production of basic planning documents for potential operations where some planning factors have not yet been fully identified or have not been assumed. It identifies the general capabilities required.

(ii) *Contingency Planning* is the production of detailed planning documents for potential operations where the planning factors have been identified or have been assumed. They include an indication of resources needed

2. 'European Union Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level', Council Doc 10687/08, Brussels, 16 June 2008.

and the deployment options. They may form the basis for subsequent planning.³

Crisis Response Planning is conducted to enable the EU to deal with real crises. It builds on Advance Planning products, whenever available.⁴

The first element of the Union's Crisis Response Planning process relates to the **identification of the crisis**, which falls to the EU Situation Centre (SITCEN), placed within the General Council Secretariat.

Once the Council has agreed to prepare a military response to a given crisis, the High Representative can send an information-gathering or fact-finding mission integrated by military and civilian experts.⁵ This exploration phase is followed by the definition of the political, strategic and political-military objectives of the operation, the end state and exit strategy, the constraints and limitations, risks, timeline considerations, tasks and chain of command, through the so-called **Crisis Management Concept (CMC)**. Often also referred to as an 'Options Paper' the CMC is the 'conceptual framework describing the overall approach of the EU to the management of a particular crisis'.⁶ It offers the basis for the Joint Action that will provide the legal framework for the operation. DGE 8 at the General Council Secretariat is responsible for crafting the CMC for ESDP military operations.

Building on the CMC, the EU Military Staff (EUMS) will produce the **Military Strategic Options (MSOs)**. A MSO 'describes a military action designed to achieve the EU objectives as defined in the CMC. A MSO will outline the military course of action and the required resources and the constraints. It should also include an assessment of feasibility and risk, an outline of the Command and Control structure and an indicative force capability. It should contain the objective, the desired end state, the

3. Ibid. The difference between generic and contingency planning is mainly gradual: advance planning products 'can range from country books (...) in their most generic form, to possible military actions suitable for dealing with specific crises, in their most detailed form' (EU Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level, p. 9).

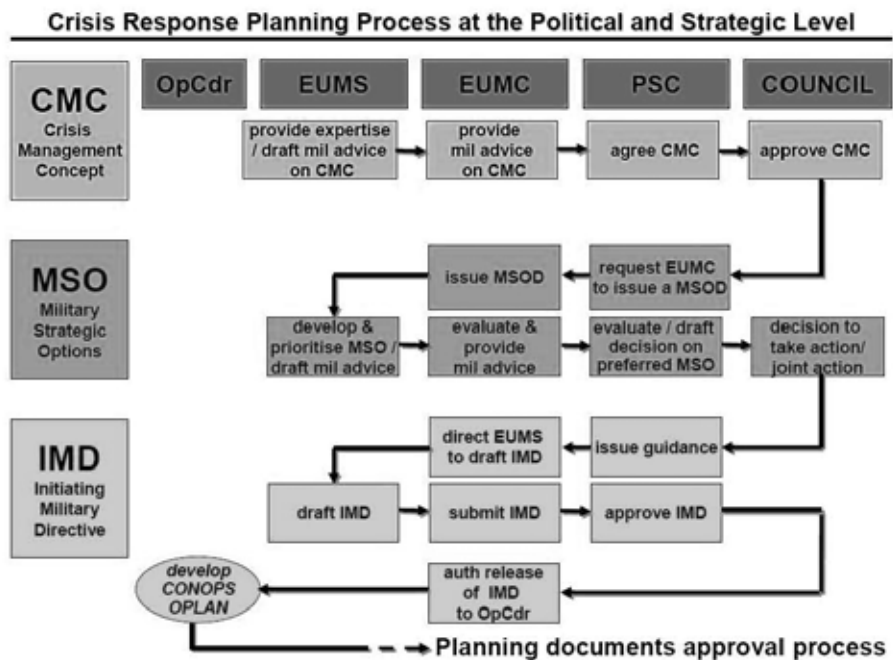
4. Ibid.

5. The coordination and organisation of this mission within the General Council Secretariat depends on the foreseen objectives and can fall under the remit of geographical units, DGE 8 (sub-division within the Directorate General External Relations of the Council that deals with the defence aspects of crisis management) or EUMS (author's communication with General Council Secretariat official, July 2009).

6. 'EU Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level', op. cit. in note 2, p 10.

exit strategy, the general objective of any military engagement and the degree to which military force will be employed which are derived from the CMC'.⁷ Once the MSOs have been produced, the EUMC prioritises them and the PSC decides on the preferred course of action.

The ESDP planning cycle



Source: 'European Union Concept for Military Planning at the Political and Strategic Level', Council doc. 10687/08.⁸

Once a MSO has been chosen, the EUMS produces the **Initiating Military Directive (IMD)**, which 'should provide a clear description of the EU political/military objectives and the envisaged military mission to

7. Ibid. It is the Operations Division within the EUMS that is charged with the elaboration of the MSOs, although it is supported by specific expertise from within the EUMS – logistics, intelligence, CIS, etc.

8. This diagram represents only a blueprint. In real life, the planning process must adapt to the idiosyncrasies of each operation. As a result, the process as displayed in the diagram above has never been fully respected. OpCdr = Operations commander; EUMS = EU Military Staff; EUMC = EU Military Committee; PSC = Political and Security Committee; MSOD = Military Strategic Options Directive; CONOPS = Concept of Operations; OPLAN = Operation Plan.

achieve these objectives.⁹ The IMD defines the military-strategic level of command; once it is issued the Operation Commander (OpCdr) and the Operational Headquarters (OHQ) kick into the planning process. It provides the OpCdr with political advice that should be taken into account when producing the Concept of Operations (CONOPS), the Provisional Statement of Requirements (PSOR), the Operation Plan (OPLAN), the Rules of Engagement Request (ROEREQ) and the achievement of the End State and Exit Strategy.¹⁰

The IMD is the core of a broader *transition package* that the EUMS sends to the OHQ, including personnel. In the words of an EUMS official with a direct insight into the transition between the politico-strategic level and the military-strategic level of command:

In the initial phase of operational planning there is a strong requirement for substantial EUMS input into the OHQ. OHQs are usually ill-informed about ESDP concepts and procedures. The OHQ is at the interface between the military and the political world and there is a need to understand what the EU is doing. You don't talk the same way to a battalion commander as you do to a EUMC or PSC representative. Once significant EU knowledge has been mainstreamed into the OHQ, we reduce our presence to a single officer, down from about a half dozen. Some of them might be non-permanent; back and forth.¹¹

Through the IMD and the emissaries it sends to the OHQ, the EUMS provides input into the OPLAN. However, it is the military-strategic level of command or OHQ and, more specifically, the OpCdr that is responsible for the development of a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and the Operation Plan (OPLAN). Under the authority of the OpCdr, the OHQ also exerts the command and control of the operation, to actually ensure that its development adjusts to the OPLAN.¹² Only an OHQ can, given its specific

9. Ibid, p. 9. The IMD is written by the Operations Directorate within the EUMS. In order to guarantee a seamless transition between MSOs and IMD, personnel from the Operations Directorate are integrated into the Civ/Mil cell when the latter is working on the MSOs. The IMD is normally not issued before the potential Ops Cdr has had the opportunity to make comments. (Author's interviews at the EUMS in Brussels, May 2009).

10. Ibid, p. 9.

11. Author's interview with EUMS official, Brussels, May 2009.

12. See also 'European Defence: NATO/EU Consultation, Planning and Operations', Council Doc .13990/1/04. For a more detailed overview of the planning process see that document. 'The EU Concept for Military Command and Control' (Council Doc 10688/08) remains classified.

expertise, engage in operational planning.¹³ The Union does not have a permanent military-strategic level of command or OHQ. Instead, it disposes of several means of generating one for the purposes of a specific operation:

- In the framework of the Helsinki Force Catalogue, a process launched by the EUMS to determine the capabilities needed to deliver the 2003 Headline Goal, the United Kingdom (Northwood) and France (Mont Valérien) first, and Germany (Potsdam), Greece (Larissa) and Italy (Rome), later, decided to make their national OHQs available for the EU, ensuring that they would be equipped to accommodate augmentees from other EU Member States. This option is referred to as the **framework nation** track.¹⁴
- Additionally, in the context of the Council's expressed will to lead a SFOR follow-up military operation in Bosnia Herzegovina, discussions between the Union and NATO led to the so-called **Berlin Plus agreements** – finalised by an exchange of letters (whose exact content remains confidential) between the EU's then SG/HR and NATO's SG in March 2003. The Berlin Plus agreements rest on the principle of the *presumption of availability* of NATO assets and capabilities for ESDP operations. Although in theory the principle of presumption of availability should suffice to alleviate the Union's concerns regarding planning and C2 autonomy, final confirmation of the lease of such assets and capabilities lies with the North Atlantic Council, which decides on a case-by-case basis.¹⁵

Between strategy and politics: the long and winding road to a European planning and C2 capability

Like every other capability, a planning and C2 capability is a tool at the service of a strategic vision. Given the lack of a EU strategic defence review

13. An OHQ is led by an OpCdr and is organised under a Chief of Staff from J1 (personnel) through J2 (intelligence), J3 (current operations), J4 (split in logistics, movement and medical), J5 (plans), J6 (CIS), J7 (training and lessons) J8 (finances), to J9 (CIMIC). The number of officers assigned to each of the cells is time and mission dependent. Additionally, the OpCdr has a number of personal advisors; legal, political, medical, cultural, gender etc. (Author's interview at the EUMS in Brussels, May 2009).

14. The framework nation modality has been applied to operations *Artemis* (Mont Valérien), DRC (Potsdam), Tchad/RCA (Mont Valérien and Irish OpCdr) and *Atalanta* (Northwood).

15. The exact meaning of the formula *assets and capabilities*, i.e. the question of what kind of allied assets and capabilities the Union can or should have access to, has been hotly discussed. For a perceptive analysis of this issue, see Antonio Missiroli, 'EU-NATO cooperation in crisis management: no Turkish delights for ESDP', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2002.

that offers a direct link between strategic objectives and military means (i.e. doctrine and capabilities) and delineates a clear mandate establishing the objectives of the Union's planning and C2 capability, clues must be found elsewhere. In this regard, the 2003 European Security Strategy and, most directly, the 2010 Headline Goal, provide the *vision* that must inform the nature of the Union's PC2 capability. That vision hinges on the two core objectives of rapid reaction and comprehensiveness (greater civ/mil synergies). According to the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS):

we need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention. (...) In almost every major intervention, military efficiency has been followed by civilian chaos. We need greater capacity to bring all necessary civilian resources to bear in crisis and post-crisis situations.¹⁶

Whereas the notion of rapid reaction has been clearly spelled out by the 2010 Headline Goal (HG) and subsequent Council communications,¹⁷ the concept of *comprehensiveness* remains very much disputed. Invoking the interdependence between effective crisis management and a broad mixture of means (military, economic, civilian, diplomatic, etc) and actors (public, private), much of the confusion surrounding the so-called comprehensive approach has to do with determining the appropriate balance between military and non-military means.¹⁸

A truly comprehensive approach

A truly comprehensive approach to crisis management can only rest on the effectiveness of each and every one of its constitutive elements (military, police, diplomacy, development, etc). For a comprehensive approach

16. *European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in a Better World*, Brussels, December 2003, pp. 11-12. Available at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.

17. See Headline Goal 2010. Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/2010%20Headline%20Goal.pdf>. See also 'EU Military Rapid Response Concept', Council Doc 5641/1/09REV, Brussels, 16 September 2003; 'EU Battlegroup Concept', Council Doc 13618/06, Brussels, 5 October 2006; 'EU Maritime Rapid Response Concept', Council Doc 15294/07, Brussels, 15 November 2007; 'EU Air Rapid Response Concept', Council Doc 16838/07, Brussels, 21 December 2007.

18. See 'Suggestions for procedures for coherent, comprehensive EU crisis management', Council doc 11127/03, Brussels, 3 July 2003 and 'Draft EU Concept for Comprehensive Planning', Council doc. 13983/05. For a perceptive analysis on the meaning of comprehensiveness, see Peter Viggo Jakobsen, 'NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Response Operations', *DIIS Report* no. 15, 2008. See also Per M Norheim-Martinsen, 'The European Security Strategy, the Comprehensive Approach and ESDP: matching ambitions with institutional innovation', presented at the University of Cambridge conference 'The European Security Strategy Revisited' (Jesus College, 22-23 May 2009).

to work it is necessary not only to have a proper mixture of the different elements, but it is also essential that each of those elements works properly. For that, it is most important that they each retain their own autonomy. Whereas the military instrument alone is not sufficient for crisis management and stabilisation purposes, it certainly is a necessary component of a wider comprehensive package. Without a strong and autonomous military instrument the comprehensive approach is destined to fail. In the words of an EUMS official:

The military must be looked at as an instrument. Before, the military was the main surgeon. The cancer was called enemy. Now the nature of the disease is blurry and we are not the main surgeon anymore. We are part of the surgical team: we are anaesthetists; we keep the patient still so we allow others to intervene and address the problem at its root.¹⁹

Although, in an ideal world, strategic visions (the 2003 European Security Strategy/2010 HG framework) and lessons learned from ESDP operations should guide the delineation the Union's planning and C2 capability, an important intervening variable stands in the way of a perfect marriage between the Union's strategic vision and the nature of its planning and C2 capability: politics. Understanding national preferences in the realm of planning and C2 is corollary to understanding the development of the Union's planning C2 capability. Most particularly, the preferences and behaviour of France, Britain and Germany (the Union's Big Three) are largely accountable for the slow pace of the evolution of the Union's PC2 capability.²⁰

The planning and conduct game: it takes three to tango

France is the main advocate of a permanent and autonomous military-strategic level of command. France sees a causal correlation between a permanent and autonomous OHQ that reunites the Union's politico-strategic and operational planning structures and possesses a contingent-

19. Author's interview with EUMS official, Brussels, May 2009.

20. There obviously is more to the planning and C2 picture than Big Three politics. Yet, the stubbornness of some middle powers (Italy or Spain come to mind) in punching below their weight on ESDP matters highlights even more the role of the Big Three. The twenty seven Member States' positions cannot be explored in detail here due to space constraints. Insofar as national positions towards planning and C2 generally mirror attitudes towards the ESDP matrix (i.e. their positions along the so-called Atlanticism vs. Europeanism and Extrovert vs. Introvert continuums) general approximations can be extrapolated from Bernhard Stahl et al., 'Understanding the Europeanist-Atlanticist divide in the CFSP: Comparing Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands', *European Foreign Affairs Review* vol. 9, no. 3, 2004 or François Heisbourg, 'Europe's strategic ambitions: the limits of ambiguity', *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 2, Summer 2000.

cy planning capacity and *European strategic autonomy*, a concept to which France is deeply attached. Accordingly, the French are vigilant regarding the main threats to the development of such capability, which can come from two main fronts: NATO and *Civilian Power Europe*. France does not deny the value of either NATO or a strong European civilian instrument, but wants to ensure that they do not come at the expense of an autonomous European military instrument. For Paris, a strong and autonomous military instrument is crucial for an effective comprehensive approach to crisis management.²¹

Britain plays the role of a *status quo power* in the planning and C2 debate, often resisting France's urges for change. London still sees ESDP largely as a means of strengthening NATO and the transatlantic relationship and wants to avoid duplication within the wider pool of transatlantic capabilities. It is in this context that it strongly resists the creation of a multinational planning and C2 capability which already exists at NATO. Britain sees ESDP as an extra lever for stimulating the strengthening of European military capabilities but, unlike France, sees no causal correlation between European military capabilities and EU strategic autonomy. The UK is most interested in those areas in which ESDP can add value to the wider transatlantic pool, namely the civilian realm.²² London's understanding of the comprehensive approach is similar to that of Paris, but whereas the latter sees the need for the EU to be able to deliver the comprehensive approach by itself the former sees the EU as *part* of the comprehensive approach. This is the key difference between London and Paris. Britain is most interested in the Union's added value in the civilian realm as an asset to a comprehensive approach which is understood in a wider transatlantic framework.

Germany is the quiet player in the realm of planning and C2. Its key objective is to 'CFSP-ise' ESDP, not least due to the difficulties it faces in reforming its armed forces in a climate where the German public is reluctant to see the Bundeswehr deployed overseas. Germany's aim is to highlight the importance of non-military solutions (where it excels) to security prob-

21. Author's interviews at the Quai d'Orsay in Paris, May 2008.

22. Author's interviews at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London, April 2008. For a good analysis of Franco-British perspectives on ESDP, see Jolyon Howorth, 'Britain, France and the European Defence Initiative', *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 2, Summer 2000; 'France, Britain and the Euro-Atlantic Crisis', *Survival*, vol. 45, no. 4, Winter 2003; 'The Euro-Atlantic Security Dilemma: France, Britain and the ESDP', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, Spring 2005.

lems and upload to Brussels the notion of *civilian power*, much championed in Berlin.²³ Germany sees the 'civ/mil-isation' of the Union's planning and C2 capability as the way forward, insofar as its understanding of the comprehensive approach sees the military instrument as virtually superfluous for purposes other than territorial defence. Furthermore, Germany does not want to upset the transatlantic framework under which European and German stability have prospered. Berlin is more than happy to live under the shadow of Paris and London's ongoing teleological dispute over autonomy and duplication, aware of the fact that Franco-British planning and C2 compromises will tend to fall within the neighbourhood of its own ideal preferences. Although apparently a mere bystander to Franco-British disputes, Germany's status as middle-of-the-roader gives it a particularly pivotal position in the planning and C2 debate.²⁴

The awkward alignment between Britain and Germany is the factor that is chiefly responsible for the rather modest evolution of the Union's planning and C2 capability.²⁵ Although using different means (opposition by the former, ambiguity and inaction by the latter) and driven by different motives (*Atlanticism* in the case of the former, *Civilian Power Europe* in the case of the latter), the behaviour of these two countries has been key in confounding the creation of the permanent military-strategic level of command Paris has pursued so eagerly. Furthermore, both Berlin and London champion, also for different reasons, the notion of Civ/Mil integration at the military-strategic level (the so-called Civ-Mil OHQ). Whereas London perceives the idea of a Civ/Mil OHQ as a means of drowning the Union's strategic potential in civilian waters, Berlin supports the notion of Civ/Mil integration at the military-strategic level out of strategic cultural conviction.

As the institutional setting of ESDP was being discussed in the interval between the 1999 Cologne EU council and the one that took place in Nice in December 2000, the discussions on the nature of the newly created EUMS constituted the first debate on the nature of the Union's planning

23. Sebastian Harnisch and Hanns W. Maull (eds.), *Germany as a Civilian Power? The foreign policy of the Berlin Republic* (Manchester University Press, 2001).

24. On Germany, see Felix Berenkstoetter and Bastian Giegerich, 'From NATO to ESDP: analyzing shifts in German cooperative preferences after 1990', paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association in San Diego, March 2006.

25. Awkward in the sense that Britain and Germany are poles apart in the two continuums that make up the ESDP matrix. Their alignment on PC2 is merely *coincidental*. Yet, it is central to the evolution of the PC2 debate.

and C2 capability. According to an insider to the discussions, ‘there was an absolute consensus that something like the EUMS was needed to assist the political institutions with strategic planning’.²⁶ It was, however, the very nature of that something that sparked the argument. Here, the French and the British had the first of a long series of planning and C2 rows, each coming to the table with its own bumper sticker, *Autonomie européenne* and *No Duplication* respectively.

Paris wanted a fully-fledged OHQ capable of doing advance planning and with a permanent C2 structure, as it considered it inseparable from the autonomous European crisis management capability to which the Council had pledged. London, for its part, was more in favour of a small international secretariat that would assist the EUMS with strategic planning but would have no operational punch.²⁷ The British wanted to avoid at all costs duplicating structures that already existed in NATO. In the words of an official from the British permanent representation to the EUMC, ‘advance planning in the EU has to be very, very general; not specific, data-based, rather than operational based. This is the UK perspective, because it limits the extent to which the EUMS can build a planning empire and grow in a way that duplicates NATO’.²⁸ The Germans stood somewhere in between, although somewhat closer to the British position; they did not want duplication with SHAPE and supported the British vision of a political structure with some military expertise rather than the French vision of an *operational* structure.²⁹ A compromise was reached; one closer to the British-German position. The EUMS would stay away from the business of advance planning, restricting its activities to the realms of early warning, situation assessment and assisting with the politico-strategic phase of crisis response planning. It would have no operational planning or C2 capacity.³⁰

As a way of compensating for the lack of an operational planning and C2 capability, the framework nation and Berlin Plus tracks were agreed

26. Author’s interview with EUMC representative in Brussels, May 2008.

27. Author’s interview with French official at the ministère de la défense in Paris, June 2009.

28. Author’s interviews at the British EUMC representation in Brussels, May 2008.

29. Author’s interview with EUMC representative in Brussels, May 2008.

30. Certainly, the EUMS has, like any other military body, *informally* engaged in what is defined in military circles as prudent planning or self-education about potential operational scenarios. It has, however, done so in a rather ‘unfocused manner’ (author’s interview with EUMS official in Brussels, May 2009). Advance planning was not an official competence of the EUMS until the creation of the Military Assessment on Planning (MAP) branch in 2007 (see below).

under the provisions of the Helsinki Force Catalogue. For the French, the framework nation scheme was a transitional solution only justified by the need to maintain the capacity to act of the European military instrument. Britain was most instrumental in bringing about the so-called Berlin Plus agreements through which the Union would gain access to the Alliance's Planning and C2 assets and capabilities.³¹

All of the following changes to the Union's planning and C2 capability have taken place under the new 2003 ESS/2010 HG regime.

The first reshuffle of the Union's planning and C2 structures was directly tied to the new 2010 HG document, approved in Brussels on June 2004. The rationale for this first reshuffle – illustrated by the creation of the Battlegroup concept and the new Civ/Mil cell – was to mainstream the two key objectives contained in the 2010 HG, rapid reaction and greater Civ/Mil interaction, into the Union's planning and C2 capability.

In the spirit of adapting the Union's planning and C2 capability to the new mantra of rapid reaction, the Council came up with the concept of pre-identification of a planning and conduct option for standby Battle-Groups (BGs).³²

Arguably, the chief contribution of this first planning and C2 reshuffle is the creation of a **Civ/Mil** cell which would 'reinforce the national HQ designated to conduct an EU autonomous operation, assist in coordinating civilian operations and have the responsibility for *generating the capacity* to plan and run an autonomous operation, once a decision on such operation has been taken'.³³ Led by a military officer and placed within the EUMS structure, the Civ/Mil cell would for the first time integrate civilian and military planning structures at the politico-strategic level.³⁴

31. Author's interviews at the ministère de la défense in Paris (June 2009) and the MoD in London (June 2009).

32. The Battlegroup concept is modelled on Operation *Artemis*. On the BGs, see Gustav Lindstrom, 'Enter the EU Battlegroups', *Chaillot Paper* no. 97, EUISS, Paris, February 2007. See also, Lt Col Ron Hamelink, 'The Battlegroups concept: A Versatile Force Package', *Impetus*, issue no. 1, Spring/Summer 2006. As of today, the pre-identified OHQs are the following: Northwood for the British BG, British-Dutch BG and Nordic BG; Mont Valérien for the French BG, Franco-Belgium-Luxembourg BG, Spanish BG and Belgian BG; Potsdam for the German Battlegroup, German-led BG, Czech BG and Polish-led BG; Rome for the Italian-led BG; Larissa for the HELBROC BG.

33. 'European Defence: NATO/EU Consultation, Planning and Operations', op. cit. in note 12, p. 3.

34. Author's interview with former Civ/Mil cell official in Brussels, May 2009. The Civ/Mil cell includes people from the EUMS, the Commission and civilians from national capitals.

Attached to the cell would be the new **Operations Centre**, a sort of embryo of an OHQ that could be activated at the request of the Council on a case-by-case basis. The very fact of having integrated the Ops Centre within the Civ/Mil cell implied a willingness on the part of the Council to toy with the idea of Civ/Mil integration at the military-strategic level of command.³⁵

Finally, drawing on the lessons learned from the Berlin Plus operations, a permanent liaison team was created at SHAPE and an equivalent SHAPE cell placed within the EUMS.³⁶

This first planning and C2 reshuffle is an eloquent example of the extent to which politics delimits the scope of evolution in the Union's planning and C2 capability. The need to downplay the strong sense of intra-European bitterness caused by Iraq underpinned a mood for movement on the planning and C2 front. Most interestingly perhaps, Germany's oscillation towards the French position at the so-called Brussels 'chocolate summit' in April 2003 (where France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg made a joint call for the creation of a permanent and autonomous EU OHQ at the Brussels suburb of Tervuren) was instrumental in moving the Planning and C2 debate forward, resulting in the eventual creation of the Civ/Mil cell and Ops Centre.³⁷

The Civ/Mil cell-Ops centre dossier was a trilateral Franco-British-German compromise reached in Berlin in December 2003; it resulted in the creation of an entity aimed at assisting the transition between the politico-strategic and military-strategic level (Civ/Mil cell) and an Operations Centre that would have the capacity to generate an OHQ *ad hoc* should the Council unanimously decide to do so.³⁸ According to a British official, 'the German buy-in at Tervuren was politically strange, and militarily strange,

35. Ibid.

36. The tasks of the EUMS cell at SHAPE are supporting DSACEUR in his role as a potential EU OpCdr and maintaining situational awareness in those areas in which both the EU and NATO might be interested (Author's interviews at the EUMS liaison team at SHAPE in Mons, May 2009).

37. On this debate see Philippe de Schoutheete, 'La cohérence par la défense – Une autre lecture de la PESD', *Chaillot Paper* no. 71, EUISS, Paris, October 2004; Jolyon Howorth, 'The European Draft Constitutional Treaty and the Future of the European Defence initiative: a question of flexibility', *European Foreign Affairs Review* no. 9, 2004. On the Civ/Mil cell, see Gerrard Quille et al., 'Developing EU Civil-Military Coordination: The role of the new Civilian Military Cell', joint report by ISIS Europe and CeMiSS, Brussels, June 2006.

38. The British established a maximum threshold of 2,000 forces for Ops Centre-led operations and explicitly excluded BG operations from it (author's interview with former Civ/Mil cell official in Brussels, May 2009).

because the Germans are essentially very pragmatic'.³⁹ In the words of a French official:

We convinced the German Chancellor on the necessity of a Permanent Joint OHQ, but we did not convince the German military. For the British that was a red line. We had a very long trilateral discussion, and the result was a bad compromise.⁴⁰

It was the British who proposed the creation of a Civil/Military cell that would improve the Union's ability for *comprehensive* planning at the politico-strategic level. The Germans strongly supported the creation of the Civ/Mil cell: although disappointed with France's demand to place it within the EUMS and have it led by a military official, they were more than happy to make progress with the concept of Civ/Mil integration at the politico-strategic level.⁴¹

Although the French see the whole Civ/Mil cell-Ops Centre dossier as a step forward in the long path towards a fully-fledged European autonomous planning and C2 capability, they perceived the advance as modest. In the words of a French official: 'for us the Civ/Mil cell was just a façade; the real thing was the Ops Centre, but we could not get a permanent structure due to lack of political support'.⁴² The British were quite satisfied with the outcome, more so considering Berlin's initial siding with Paris at the Brussels 'chocolate summit' in April 2003. In the words of a British official, 'the whole Ops Centre concept represents a great diplomatic triumph for the UK: we have very magnanimously given Paris an empty room'. However, London remains aware of the fact that the debate on the nature of the Union's planning and C2 capability continues. According to that same official, 'cynical victories are not real victories, and the French keep coming back for more'.⁴³

Lessons learned from ESDP operations, and most particularly EUFOR DRC, acquired a prominent role in informing the second planning and C2 reshuffle. Concerns over EUFOR DRC's planning delays acted as the

39. Author's interview at the British Permanent Representation to the EUMC, May 2008.

40. Author's interview at the French ministère de la défense in Paris, June 2009.

41. Author's interview with former Civ/Mil cell official in Brussels, May 2009.

42. Author's interview with French official at the ministère de la défense in Paris, June 2009.

43. Author's interview at the British Permanent Representation to the EUMC in Brussels, May 2008.

immediate trigger to the post-Wiesbaden process in mid-2007, which would result in an eventual reorganisation of the EUMS that included the creation of brand new division fully devoted to advance planning, the Military Assessment on Planning (MAP) branch.⁴⁴

The political mood in the Council was crucial for taking the post-Wiesbaden process forward. France played a leading role in the debate over the lessons learned from EUFOR DRC. In the words of a French official:

The support we had during the post-Wiesbaden process was remarkable. The British had no option but to accept the rationale for change in the realm of planning as they were completely isolated for the very first time in the whole history of ESDP. During the post-Wiesbaden discussions, the British representative did not even dare to take the floor in PSC meetings.⁴⁵

According to a British official, 'the UK did not take part in the Congo operation and therefore did not want to make a big fuss about lessons learned.'⁴⁶ Yet, just as the altered mood opened some room for change, prevailing political caveats ensured that change would be outweighed by continuity. In the words of a French official directly engaged in the post-Wiesbaden negotiations:

In our view the lesson to be learned from EUFOR DRC was that a Permanent Joint Planning and Conduct capability had to be created in Brussels. That was our initial position which had to be moderated after the Quai d'Orsay estimated that we didn't have the margin of manoeuvre to engage in such a sensitive discussion with the British just before our presidential election. So the French Ministry of Defence's proposal was 'Britishised' in Paris before even getting to London. It was amended both quantitatively and qualitatively. On the one hand, we moved from a planning *and* conduct capability to concentrating on planning alone. On the other, the French

44. The MAP is staffed by ten people – five transferred from the policy branch within the EUMS and another five military planners recruited specifically for that purpose (author's communication with EUMS official, June 2009). The post-Wiesbaden measures include: (1) Expand the requirement for language competence, planning skills and experience of EUMS personnel. (2) Increase the flexibility of the EUMS to manage the issue of early planning from existing EUMS resources. (3) Enhance Member States' intelligence and information support to the EUMS. (4) Immediately increase the EUMS Personnel Establishment, which is the agreed size of the EUMS, by five additional planners. See Maj. Claire Nestier, 'Post Wiesbaden: Improving Strategic Planning', *Impetus* (Bulletin of the EUMS), no. 6, Spring/Summer 2008.

45. Author's interview at the French ministère de la défense in Paris, June 2009.

46. Author's interview at the British representation to the EUMC in Brussels, May 2008.

MoD estimate of 50 to 60 people was brought down to 25 by the Quai d'Orsay and further down to 10 by the Brits.⁴⁷

Even if modest, the post-Wiesbaden process resulted in an improvement in the Union's planning and C2 capability: with the creation of the MAP, the path towards a European advance planning capability was, in principle, open.

At the time of writing, the details of the Union's third and latest planning and C2 reshuffle have not yet been finalised. This time around, the trigger has been plainly political: a French EU Presidency empowered by a NATO-friendly President at the Elysée Palace.⁴⁸ The run-up to France's completed reintegration into NATO's military structure – effective as of April 2009 – gave rise to a series of expectations before and during the French EU Presidency in the second semester of 2008 regarding further progress on ESDP and the planning and C2 issue in particular.⁴⁹ While the financial crunch, the Georgian crisis and the Irish No vote in the first referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in June 2008 certainly drained the energies of the French EU Presidency, Britain's ongoing uneasiness towards the concept of a permanent OHQ remained the biggest obstacle to France's ESDP agenda. According to an insider, the setting-up of a permanent OHQ was the 'first priority on France's ESDP agenda', but the British made it clear that they were not ready to move on the issue, suggesting that the Member States concentrate on how to improve the Union's politico-strategic planning structures instead.⁵⁰

Towards the end of the French Presidency, in November 2008, a proposal was put forward for the creation of a **Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD)**. According to a PSC ambassador, 'the CMPD proposal resulted from a Franco-British initiative at the end of 2008, in which Germany was later involved in order to make it harder for anyone to resist it'.⁵¹ Although its organisation still remains unclear, the new CMPD will gather into a single body all the strategic planning capabilities until now spread out across the Council's structure (DGE 8, DGE 9 and parts of the Civ/Mil cell) in order to conduct integrated strategic planning, including advance planning. The new CMPD

47. Author's interview at the ministère de la défense in Paris, June 2009.

48. See Luis Simón Navarro, 'Sarkozy's dilemmas, the French EU Presidency and ESDP: what's in it for Europe?', *Ari*, no. 76, Real Instituto Elcano, July 2008.

49. See *ibid*; see also Asle Toje, 'The EU, NATO and European Defence – A slow train coming', *Occasional Paper* no. 74, EUISS, Paris, December 2008.

50. Author's interviews at the British Ministry of Defence in London, May 2009.

51. Author's interview with PSC ambassador in Brussels, May 2009.

will have responsibility for the Crisis Management Concept. According to an insider, 'the added value of the CMPD would be the increased comprehensiveness of the CMC product; the new directorate will have a military angle, a police angle, a rule-of-law angle, a development angle, etc.'⁵²

A Deployable Augmentee Cadre (DAC) will be drawn from the integrated strategic planning team on a bespoke basis in order to ensure continuity of planning throughout the process. Its composition will then vary from one mission to another. Further details on the structure of the new CMPD remain unknown at the time of writing and are unlikely to become clear until later in 2010.⁵³ However, some sort of re-run of the arguments advanced by Member States during the Civ/Mil cell-Ops Centre debate is to be expected, with British and Germans placing the emphasis on the CMPD's value at the service of further comprehensiveness and the French trying to focus the debate on the potential of the DAC as a means for strengthening the Union's operational punch.

The question of the nature of the Union's capability for the planning and C2 of ESDP military operations has, arguably, been the issue surrounded by the most controversy throughout the ESDP process. It has been in the context of this debate that the Union's most influential Member States have most vigorously projected their views on the heart and soul of ESDP, namely its degree of autonomy from NATO and the appropriate balance between the civilian and the military instrument. The awkward alignment between Britain and Germany largely explains the rather modest development of the Union's planning and C2 capability and, most particularly, the lack of a permanent military strategic level of command or OHQ. On three occasions (in late 2003, mid-2007 and late 2008) the French have explored windows of opportunity to bump up the Union's planning and C2 capability. On the same three occasions they have met with Britain's explicit opposition and Germany's 'destructive ambiguity'. Compromises among the Big Three have led to some improvement in the Union's planning and C2 capability. Yet, the fact of the matter remains that the lack of a permanent military-strategic level of command continues to considerably cripple the performance of the Union's planning and C2 capability. The next chapter explores this aspect in more detail.

52. Author's interview with General Council Secretariat official in Brussels, May 2009.

53. Ibid.

2. Can Europe deliver? Assessing the Union's planning performance

This chapter assesses the Union's planning performance in operations EUFOR *Althea*, EUFOR DRC and EUFOR Tchad/CAR. The main criteria underpinning the chosen sample relate to its representation of different command options (Berlin Plus, Potsdam and Mont Valérien respectively), and the comparatively recent nature of the operations, which allows for a more timely assessment of a planning and C2 capability that is constantly in evolution.⁵⁴

EUFOR *Althea*: the two faces of Berlin Plus

Box 1: *Althea* in brief⁵⁵

On 28 June 2004, the Council issued a Joint Action framing Operation *Althea*, ESDP's largest and longest operation to date. It counted 6,300 troops from December 2004 when it was launched until May 2007, when it was downsized to its current 2,500 figure. A total of 34 nations, including EU Member States and non-EU troop-contributing nations, have contributed to the operation. The objectives of EUFOR *Althea* were to 'provide deterrence, continued compliance with the responsibility to fulfil the role specified in Annexes 1.A and 2 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) in BiH and to contribute to a safe and secure environment in BiH, in line with its mandate, required to achieve core tasks in the OHR's Mission Implementation Plan and the SAP'.⁵⁶ Already in December 2002, the

54. EUNAVFOR *Atalanta* would have made a fascinating case study given the technical (i.e. its naval nature) and political (UK Command) novelties that it presents and, correspondingly, the many avenues it opens into ESDP's future. Yet, its very recent status (still in its early stages) recommends prudence. The mission will surely trigger an important reflection process with regard to both planning and C2 and the Union's role as a maritime actor more broadly. For a snapshot of *Atalanta* see 'Maritime Security: a global challenge for the EU', *Impetus* no. 7, (Bulletin of the EU Military Staff), Spring/Summer 2009. For a perceptive overview of the Union's stakes at sea, see James Rogers, 'From Suez to Shanghai: the European Union and Eurasian maritime security', *Occasional Paper* no. 77, EUISS, Paris, March 2009.

55. For a good analysis of EUFOR *Althea*, see Thomas Bertin, 'The EU Military Operation in Bosnia' in Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaite (eds.), *The European Security and Defence Policy: An Implementation Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 61-77. For a general overview on *Althea*, see 'Supporting Bosnia on the way to the EU', *ESDP Newsletter* no. 1, December 2005. On *Althea*'s transition see 'Bosnie-Herzégovine, l'EUFOR en transition', *ESDP Newsletter* no. 4, July 2007. For an update, see General Sir John McColl, 'EUFOR *Althea*: Successful contribution to stabilisation', *Impetus* no. 7, (Bulletin of the EU Military Staff), Spring/Summer 2009.

56. Council Joint Action, 2004/570/CFSP of 12 July 2004 on the European Union Military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, article 1.1.

Council expressed interest in an ESDP mission in Bosnia. One year later, preparations for EUFOR *Althea* started at SHAPE and in Brussels. The launch of the mission had to await NATO's official announcement at the Istanbul Summit in June 2004 that Operation Stabilisation Force (SFOR) would be concluded.

NATO had operated in the country since 1995 when it first deployed 60,000 troops under the Implementation Force (IFOR). In December 1996 IFOR was replaced by the (approximately) 30,000 strong SFOR, which would be eventually downsized and replaced by EUFOR *Althea*.

The two faces of EUFOR *Althea*, the political and the technical, are quite distinct. Although EUFOR *Concordia* had already begun to address the much awaited question of how the Berlin Plus agreements would actually be implemented in practice, the rather modest nature of the Union's intervention in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) – 350 men on a seven month peacekeeping mandate in a rather permissive environment – and the short time available for planning made this a low stakes/low profile debate.⁵⁷ In this sense, the much more visible and ambitious intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina provided just about the right platform for the politically highly-charged debate over the heart and soul of Berlin Plus to be finally unpacked at the practical level. The main thrust of the debate was concerned with the politico-strategic phase of *Althea*'s planning process, as discussions focused on the exact meaning of the famous assets and capabilities formula. The stakes were high: the great debate over Europe's desired level of autonomy – which thus far had been confined to the teleological sphere – would finally be fought over a concrete referent. According to an official with insider knowledge of *Althea*'s planning process:

While the French insisted in looking exclusively at NATO's common assets, and more particularly the OHQ at SHAPE and the CIS, other Member States thought that the Union should lean on the Alliance as much as it could. Whereas most aspects of Berlin Plus were approached by British or

57. Author's communication with EU official from EU OHQ at SHAPE, Mons, June 2009. For a snapshot of the EU-NATO debate on *Concordia*, see Annalisa Monaco, 'Operation *Concordia* and Berlin Plus: NATO and the EU take stock', *ISIS notes* vol. 5, no. 8, 2003.

Germans from a practical, procedural, commonsense angle, any small detail would be considered by the French of the utmost political importance.⁵⁸

The politico-strategic planning phase of *Althea* was drawn out and protracted: it took about six months to get from CMC to IMD. Turkish demands for full information from the EU side and intra-European quarrels over the meaning of assets and capabilities account for the long and arduous deliberations. This politico-strategic stalemate contrasted sharply with the smoothness that characterised the planning process once the operational phase kicked in: the OPLAN proceeded in a quite straightforward and professional manner, and so did the conduct phase. In the view of an EU official involved in the development of the OPLAN at *Althea*'s OHQ in SHAPE:

The (operational) planning process was very, very comfortable; we had the transition plan from SFOR and I had the whole SHAPE at my disposal; I had Naples, I had the SFOR FHQ. It was a piece of cake. Berlin Plus works perfectly well, so long as you stay within the box, that is. It is perfect on the technical side: it is the best planning and conduct option the EU has by far.⁵⁹

Beyond the invaluable contribution from SHAPE and NATO's broader planning and C2 assets, *Althea* enjoys further benefits from the Alliance, among which the DSACEUR's (Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe) role as EUFOR OpCdr probably stands out. According to a member of the *Althea* OHQ at SHAPE, 'DSACEUR is a three star general, and can really get things moving here at SHAPE; most importantly, he can directly transfer information from the NATO to the EU side of the brain without necessarily compromising his sources, and that is a real asset to the operation.'⁶⁰ All in all, *Althea* has used SHAPE (where the 19-men strong EU OHQ is located); NATO's CIS; AFSOUTH at Naples (which has overall responsibility for the Balkans and where the EU has also set up its own EU Command Element, made up of 8 personnel and headed by General Ciro Concozza); Butmir Camp (the former SFOR HQ in BiH

58. Author's interview with former EUMS official involved in the strategic planning phase of EUFOR *Althea*, Brussels, May 2009.

59. Author's interview with former EU Staff Group (EUSG) official involved in the elaboration of *Althea*'s OPLAN, Brussels, May 2009.

60. Author's interview at EUFOR *Althea* OHQ at SHAPE, Mons, May 2009. NATO's DSACEUR is always a European. The position is traditionally held by a British or a German national. The current DSACEUR is Sir General John McColl (United Kingdom).

and the Union's current FHQ); NATO's financial electronic system, and the Alliance's strategic and operational reserves.⁶¹ Beyond those, the Union can count on a much bigger cushion comprising all of the Alliance's assets in the region. The Balkans must be seen as a whole; assets currently committed to BiH can reinforce Kosovo if needed and vice versa. *Althea* is therefore well guarded.

According to another member of the EUSG at SHAPE, *Althea*'s access to the Alliance's CIS is particularly relevant:

The Berlin Plus nature of our mission is very much highlighted in the CIS dimension: Operation *Althea* is completely dependent on NATO's assets for CIS functionality. The EUFOR relies on NATO for communications, from the OHQ down to Naples and Sarajevo. The significance of that from an EU point of view is that our Communications are releasable to NATO.⁶²

EUFOR *Althea*'s OHQ at SHAPE is directly plugged into the politico-strategic level in Brussels, and receives EU secret documents, which means that non-EU members of NATO cannot be a part of the EUSG.⁶³ Reciprocally, the EUSG does not have access to NATO secret documents.

Clearly, the main problem of the Berlin Plus planning and C2 framework is, as most eloquently illustrated by EUFOR *Althea*, the unpredictability surrounding the politico-strategic phase of planning, which can result in unforeseen delays. These delays are affordable so long as the operational framework takes the form of a NATO handover to the EU (as in the cases of both *Concordia* and *Althea*), whereby the Alliance maintains assets on the ground until the Union takes over. In such scenarios, there is widespread consensus that the Berlin Plus planning C2 option is second to none.⁶⁴

61. Up until January 2009 the strategic reserve force was a French battalion, which is not available anymore. The operational reserve consists of an Italian and German battalion. There has been no need to use either the strategic or the operational reserve forces. The EU's access to NATO's reserve forces is not provided for under Berlin Plus arrangements; it is based on specific, *ad hoc*, agreements (author's interviews at EUFOR *Althea* OHQ at SHAPE, Mons, May 2009).

62. Author's interview at the EUFOR *Althea* OHQ at SHAPE, Mons, May 2009. From the OHQ at SHAPE up to the EUMS, two EU-only systems operate; the SOLAN (Secure Operational LAN) system and ESDPnet. These two systems, encrypted differently, are computer-based and operated from the EUMS.

63. The modalities of non-European NATO members' participation in ESDP operations has been a hotly debated issue in the framework of the Berlin Plus negotiations. Given the fact that the SOLAN system does not operate at the tactical level of command and the FHQ does not receive confidential EU documents, non-EU European NATO members can be present at the tactical level of command (author's interviews, EUSG SHAPE, Mons, May 2009).

64. Author's interviews at the PSC, EUMC, EUMS and EUSG in Brussels and Mons (May 2009).

Yet, doubts remain as to the suitability of Berlin Plus for operations outside the handover scenario. Whereas it might have been expected that the *Concordia* and *Althea* experiences would have resolved any procedural issues related to the planning and conduct of Berlin Plus operations, there is simply no possible way to ensure that the politico-strategic phase of the planning of any future Berlin Plus operation will not be hijacked by politics. According to an EUMC official:

Berlin Plus works perfectly fine if we have plenty of time, but if we were to face a situation that required swift action the whole framework would be unreliable.⁶⁵

EUFOR DRC: a case in point

Box 2: EUFOR DRC at a glance

On the 27 December 2005, the Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations of the UN sent a letter to the EU Council requesting the Union to provide a 'deterrent force that, if necessary, could be deployed to the DRC during the electoral process ... (and) could enhance MONUC's quick reaction capabilities during or immediately after the electoral process.'⁶⁶

EUFOR DRC was deployed under the authority of UNSC Resolution 1671. The EUFOR OHQ was located in Potsdam (Germany), and France provided the FHQ in Kinshasha. Lt Gen Karlheinz Viereck was the OpCdr and Major General Christian Damay the Force Commander. The 2,300-strong operation ran from 30 July 2006 to 30 November 2006 and 22 nations took part (21 EU Member States plus Turkey).

65. Author's interview with former EUMC representative, Brussels, May 2009.

66. 'EUFOR RD Congo: the making of a new mission', *Impetus* no. 1 (Bulletin of the EU Military Staff), Spring/Summer 2006.

Discussions over a potential EUFOR in Congo began in Brussels on 11 January 2006.⁶⁷ In order to grasp the nature of EUFOR DRC, it is most important to have an understanding of the special position that Congo has in the context of the Union's external action. Congo has been a test case for ESDP, having been the target of two civilian missions (EUPOL Kinshasha 2005-7 and EUPOL Congo 2007), a Civ-Mil operation (EUSEC Congo, launched in 2005) and two military operations (EUFOR *Artemis* in 2003 and EUFOR DRC in 2006), as well as substantial efforts by the EU Commission in the field of development.⁶⁸ The Union's heavy presence in the country, as well as the amalgam of public and private organisations operating in the theatre (among which the UN stands out) meant that EUFOR DRC had to maintain a broad awareness of the political situation on the ground. It was in this spirit that High Representative Javier Solana personally advocated for a strong role for the Civ/Mil cell in the politico-strategic planning process of EUFOR DRC – the cell being the main organ within the EUMS with operational planning experience and presenting the additional advantage of having a certain sensitivity towards Civ/Mil conundrums.⁶⁹

EUFOR DRC was the Civ/Mil cell's defining mission. Between 30 January and 2 February 2006, Brigadier General Heinrich Brauss, then Director General of the Civ/Mil Cell, went on a fact-finding mission with the UN to Kinshasha to 'refine the operational and logistic parameters for the force'.⁷⁰ The fact-finding mission was followed by an Options Paper co-produced by the Civ/Mil cell and DGE 8, which contemplated all of the elements of a CMC including options for a possible deployment and the tasks of a potential EUFOR. A former EUMS official directly involved in the early stages of EUFOR DRC's planning process complains that the lack of operational-level input hampered the politico-strategic planning phase, arguing that:

67. For an overview of EUFOR DRC, see Claudia Major, 'EU-UN cooperation in military crisis management: the experience of EUFOR RD Congo in 2006', *Occasional Paper* no. 72, EUISS, Paris, September 2008. A critical view of EUFOR DRC is expressed in Bastian Giegerich and Jean-Yves Haine, 'In Congo, a cosmetic EU operation', *International Herald Tribune*, 18 June 2006. EUFOR DRC's planning experience has been hotly discussed privately – in PSC, GCS, EUMC and EUMS venues – and publicly. For a high-profile public discussion of the planning and C2 process of EUFOR DRC, see 'The EU's Africa Strategy: What are the lessons of the Congo Mission?', SDA Discussion Paper, March 2007). See also General (ret.) Jean Paul Perruche and Ambassador (ret.) Eric Hochleitner in Sven Biscop and Franco Algeri (eds.), 'The Lisbon Treaty and ESDP: transformation and integration', *Egmont Paper* no. 24, June 2008.

68. Major, op. cit. in note 67.

69. Author's interview with former EUMS official in Brussels, May 2009.

70. 'EUFOR RD Congo: The Making of a New Mission', *Impetus* no. 1, Spring/Summer 2006.

we would have benefited in the early planning stages – both during the fact-finding mission and the process of crafting the CMC – from OHQ expertise, even if this consisted of only four or five guys with concrete experience of operational planning. The EUMS simply does not have the expertise. Mont Valérien sent one official to the fact-finding mission, who proved extremely useful, but that was clearly not enough. Neither Northwood nor Potsdam sent anyone along, let alone Rome or Larissa.⁷¹

Once completed, the CMC/Options Paper was sent to the PSC for revision, who then asked the EUMC for military advice. It was at that very point, by late February 2006, that, according to a former EUMS official directly involved in EUFOR DRC's planning process, 'the French and especially the Germans stopped the process, the main reason being the lack of a clear planning and C2 option; nobody was ready to offer an OHQ and there was this general expectation that the responsibility lay with the Germans'.⁷² Having already led Operation *Artemis* also in DRC, the French said that ESDP was not a French prerogative but a European enterprise and that there was a clear demand in Kinshasha for an operation with a strong European flavour, as the UN had directly asked the Union for support to MONUC. Mont Valérien was therefore not an option. The British, still reticent to lead a military ESDP operation, pointed towards their heavy commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq. Finally, according to the same EUMS official, the Italians were in the middle of an electoral process and did not want a debate on the matter.⁷³ In this context, it seemed almost natural that everybody looked to the Germans; after all, in the words of that EUMS official:

Potsdam was on standby, as it had been pre-identified for a German-led Battlegroup. However, Berlin was unprepared due to domestic political reasons, not least the arrival of a new government and a new defence minister and the unpopularity of the idea of a German military intervention in Africa.⁷⁴

Whereas the problem of the lack of a clear planning and C2 option could have been tempered by appropriate contingency planning activity, the

71. Author's interview with former EUMS official involved in the politico-strategic planning phase of EUFOR DRC, Brussels, May 2009.

72. Ibid

73. Author's interviews with General Council Secretariat official in Brussels, May 2009. The Larissa OHQ in Athens was still not fully accredited.

74. Ibid.

problem was further compounded by Germany's unwillingness to engage in any sort of advanced planning before Potsdam had been officially identified as the EUFOR OHQ. A chicken-and-egg problem then emerged: the Germans did not want to take the responsibility for the planning and C2 of EUFOR without specific assurances or force commitments, but in the absence of an OpCdr and an OHQ the kind of forces needed for the EUFOR could not be identified.⁷⁵

There was a period of limbo that lasted for four weeks from late February to late March during which nothing happened, but in the end the Germans decided to take responsibility for the command of the operation.⁷⁶ Luckily enough, that planning impasse overlapped in time with the decision to delay the DRC elections. In the words of an EUMS official directly involved in the process, 'we got very, very lucky: without the electoral delay there is no way we would have made it in time'.⁷⁷

The Civ/Mil cell played a key role in supporting Potsdam with the development of the CONOPS and the OPLAN. According to a member of the Civ/Mil cell involved in the EUFOR DRC planning process: 'Potsdam was very much focused on Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo, and we needed to familiarise them with EU planning procedures and concepts'. In this sense, another EUMS official contends: 'DRC is probably the ESDP mission in which there was most EUMS micro-managing'.⁷⁸

Most officials involved in the EUFOR DRC's politico-strategic planning concur that an early and more thorough operational assessment would quite probably have had positive spinoffs with regard to force generation; the rather chaotic evolution of the EUFOR DRC planning process highlighted the need for some sort of operational planning expertise that could inform the politico-strategic process.⁷⁹ According to an insider of the EUFOR DRC planning process:

75. Author's interviews with EUMS and General Council Secretariat officials in Brussels, May 2009.

76. According to an insider, 'there was an agreement between Chirac and Merkel that both countries would contribute on equal terms to a potential EUFOR in DRC'. That contribution would emphasise the commitment of France and Germany to both the further progress of ESDP and stability in Africa (author's interview with former EUMS official in Brussels, May 2009).

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

79. Author's interviews at the EUMS, Civ/Mil cell and DGVIII, Brussels, May 2009.

only an OpCdr supported by an OHQ could really say whether the military dimension of the operation made sense, and provide a proper assessment to be made available to the potentially contributing nations; and there was nobody who could assess the forces that would be needed.⁸⁰

To sum up, the lack of an advance planning capability and a delay in the activation of the OHQ at Potsdam – due to political disagreements among Member States – compromised the Union's preparedness to deploy EUFOR DRC on time. Only a fortuitous electoral delay in Congo ensured the timely deployment of an operation that would not have been ready otherwise.

EUFOR Tchad/RCA: comprehensive planning requires operational planning input

Box 3: A snapshot of EUFOR Tchad/RCA

EUFOR Tchad/RCA was formally launched on 28 January 2008 and ended in March 2009. It has been the largest, and the most multinational autonomous ESDP military operation, involving 3,700 troops from 19 countries (3 of which were non-EU). Mont Valérien in France was the OHQ (where 23 EU Member States were represented), and Lieutenant General Patrick Nash (from Ireland) and Brigadier General Jean-Philippe Ganascia (France) were, respectively, OpCdr and Force Commander. Lt Gen Nash referred to EUFOR Tchad/RCA as having 'clarity in its end state. It is a bridging operation for a follow-on force. It is located in Eastern Chad and North Eastern CAR. It is to provide a safe and secure environment (SASE) for Internally Displaced Persons and Refugee Camps'.⁸¹

80. Author's interviews with General Council Secretariat official in Brussels, May 2009.

81. Interview with Lt Gen Patrick Nash (EUFOR Tchad/CAR OpCdr) in *Impetus* no. 5, Spring/Summer 2008, pp.18-19. For a detailed overview of the EUFOR Tchad/CAR planning process see Alexander Mattelaer, 'The Strategic Planning of EU Military Operations - The Case of EUFOR Tchad/RCA', IES Working Paper no. 5, 2008. See also Félix Arteaga, 'The Chad Conflict, United Nations (MINURCAT) and the European Union (EUFOR)', *ARI*, no. 20, March 2008. For an update, see Brig Gen Jean-Philippe Ganascia, 'Tchad/RCA: Mission Accomplished', *Impetus* no. 7 (Bulletin of the EU Military Staff), Spring/Summer 2009.

A French diplomatic cable to other Member States' ministries of foreign affairs on 21 May 2007, during the German presidency, raised for the first time the idea of a potential EUFOR in the Chad/CAR/Sudan region. Given opposition from the German Presidency, the idea had to be deferred until the Portuguese Presidency.⁸² The (French) identity of the original source certainly did not help dispel the increasingly uncomfortable and widespread perception that France was continuously resorting to ESDP to promote her own agenda in Africa. The suspicion that EUFOR Tchad/RCA would primarily serve French interests would never go away.⁸³ In spite of the Union's efforts to emphasise neutrality, there was a widespread fear in Europe that the mission would be associated with support for the Chadian Regime.⁸⁴ According to an EUMC official:

Chad was a manufactured operation; it resulted from the desire of the new French President and Foreign Minister to present their ESDP credentials. It had nothing to do with a collective decision of the European Union on the need to act in the light of a new crisis in Africa. That crisis had been going on for years, and then two new people arrived on the scene and decided for political reasons to promote some European activity.⁸⁵

The politico-strategic stage of EUFOR/RCA planning was, arguably, the best example of a deliverable comprehensive approach. On 13 July 2007, an Options Paper was drafted jointly between the Council Secretariat and the Commission, followed by a CMC that incorporated all of the dimensions of crisis management: development, economic assistance, military, etc. According to a Council official directly involved in the politico-strategic phase of planning: 'we coordinated all our moves: identifying areas where we could provide more security, and they (the Commission) would supply more development money to build more infrastructure projects, roads, etc.'⁸⁶ However, that same official added, the politico-strategic level 'did not have the means to write a CMC. This had to do primarily with the lack of specific, terrain-acquainted expertise.'⁸⁷

82. Mattelaer, *op. cit.* in note 81, p. 14.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

84. Arteaga has articulated this feeling: 'given France's support for President Deby, the European mission ran the risk of being perceived as a covert prolongation of the military assistance which France provides to the N'Djamena regime via other means'; Arteaga, *op. cit.* in note 81, p. 6.

85. Author's interview with a member of the British EUMC representation, Brussels, May 2008.

86. Author's interview with General Council Secretariat official in Brussels, May 2009.

87. *Ibid.*

While the operational planning level does not have an opportunity to inform the politico-strategic process – insofar as it does not kick in until later in the planning cycle –, the EUFOR Tchad/RCA operation provided another example of (necessary) politico-strategic level micromanagement – particularly from DGE 8 and the EUMS. According to an EUMS official: ‘since politicians delay a decision on an OHQ and OpCdr, we are forced into acting as a *de facto* OHQ when we clearly do not have the means to do OHQ work.’ However, this problem proved less difficult than in the case of EUFOR DRC, as the French were quite open to doing some planning in advance. A Council official involved in the transitional stage of the planning process argued:

We managed to have some exchanges with the French OHQ; it was not official and it happened late, but it was certainly better than in the Congo case. We worked ‘under the table’. We urgently needed to provide Member States with something concrete, but we were blocked by the fact of not yet having a commander. So we definitely kicked in the process before General Nash took over, but we could not build something solid because it was always pending Nash’s decision. In fact the official permanently assigned by France to Mont Valérien found himself in a very difficult position, not wanting to take any further decisions in order not to place the OpCdr in an uncomfortable position once he arrived.⁸⁸

It is, however, rather hard to determine the actual consequences that might derive from the lack of operational-level input into the politico-strategic planning phase, as it is not so much a question of whether a planning product can or cannot be delivered at all, but rather one concerning the relative quality of such a product. In this regard, some Council and EUMS officials suggest that more detailed planning products are, insofar as they will improve the mission’s clarity, much more likely to generate positive spinoffs in relation to the force generation process – the main handicap of EUFOR Tchad/RCA. In the words of a Council official:

The Chad operation was yet another example (like that of DRC) of the fact that we lack timely operational expertise that can inform politico-strategic deliberations. The consequence is rather unprofessional planning products.⁸⁹

88. Ibid.

89. Ibid.



3. Conclusions and policy recommendations

Of the various problems here identified with the Union's current planning and C2 capability, some are specific to a particular track (i.e. Berlin Plus), but most result from the lack of a permanent military strategic level of command or OHQ.

The main liabilities of the Berlin Plus track are political. Whereas the broader political context informing EU-NATO relations might have improved, some important obstacles remain – most notably the Turkish-Cypriot stalemate.⁹⁰ There is little doubt that, given NATO's outstanding planning and C2 capability, the Berlin Plus track represents the Union's best planning and C2 bet so far if the potential EUFOR lies within the handover framework – the EU taking over a NATO operation. In those cases, NATO's possession of a planning and C2 infrastructure tailored to the theatre in question substantially enriches the politico-strategic planning phase and enormously facilitates the Union's C2 options. Today, the most obvious candidate for a Berlin Plus operation would be Kosovo (where a EUFOR mission under Berlin Plus is currently being discussed), but other options cannot be ruled out in the future. Berlin Plus, however, only comprises a small fraction of ESDP. The Union's own promise of autonomy, the political environment in certain regions (i.e. Africa or the Middle East) or the Union's pledge for rapid reaction or comprehensiveness (stronger Civ/Mil coordination) require going beyond the Berlin Plus framework.

The OHQ detractors: *if it ain't broke don't fix it*

Beyond the Berlin Plus track, the Union's planning and C2 system is severely handicapped by the lack of a permanent military-strategic level of command or OHQ. Instead, the Union relies on the principle of 'ad hocery'. When pitching ad hocery and permanency against each other, detractors of the latter – of which Britain is the most prominent repre-

90. See Asle Toje, op. cit. in note 49. Beyond the Turkish-Cypriot issue, it still remains very much unclear at the time of writing what the improvement in Franco-US relations will bring to EU-NATO relations – an issue likely to be further clarified in the light of deliberations over the Alliance's New Strategic Concept.

sentative – have insisted that there is basically no need for it: the current system, they argue, works fine as it is.⁹¹ This focus on whether the current *ad-hoc* system can or cannot do the job is, though, strongly biased. The focus should move away from *getting the job done* (whether planning products are or are not delivered) towards *doing a good job* (the *quality* of planning products). It all boils down to quality expectations. An official from the General Council Secretariat puts it most succinctly:

When you plan something from Brussels at the strategic level, fundamentally there are three things that Member States would really like to know: how many troops, how much money and how long? We are in no position to answer any of those three questions satisfactorily. In order to do that you need an OHQ that is theatre-acquainted. Since we don't have it, we try and plan things from a strategic level, but it is very unprofessional and unreliable. Everybody will tell you that politico-strategic planning cannot be done without an OHQ. It is a matter of politics; as simple as that.⁹²

There are two main problems with this 'if it ain't broke don't fix it' argument. The first one is that it is based on a false assumption: the system is indeed *broke*: it can *perform* but it does so in a characteristically unprofessional manner. As we saw earlier, autonomous operations present significant liabilities associated with the activation of an OHQ, force generation or information gathering. While a permanent planning and C2 capability is by itself not a guarantee that all of these problems will be swept away, it would certainly leave the Union in a much better position to counter them. The second problem is that, even if one were to assume that the system was not *broke*, it would still need fixing: assuming the current planning and C2 capability has been able to deliver the planning and C2 leg of those ESDP military operations launched thus far, the lack of a contingency planning capability – denied by the lack of permanent operational expertise – and of a permanent OHQ hamper the objective of rapid reaction as defined by the 2010 Headline Goal.

91. Author's interviews at the British Representation to the EUMC in Brussels, May 2008. The fact that Britain's successful opposition to a permanent planning and C2 capability must be understood in combination with the lack of enthusiasm among other Member States, particularly the bigger ones (Germany, especially, but also Italy or Spain), cannot be emphasised enough. Rather than trying to alter the existing balance between Paris and London on the planning and C2 issue by adopting a more activist approach, those three countries (among others) are dominated by an apathy that does no service to ESDP.

92. Author's interview with General Council Secretariat official in Brussels, May 2009.

The current institutional design underpinning the Union's planning process tends to accentuate what is essentially an artificial division between what are commonly referred to as the *politico-strategic* and *operational* phases of planning. Whereas these labels can sometimes be useful, they should be understood as loose labels and not insurmountable boundaries. Both in the national and NATO contexts, the various levels of command can go up and down the planning and C2 ladder as the situation requires. Planning and conduct are inherently porous activities. On the one hand, operational input is tantamount to an informed politico-strategic process. On the other, OHQ-OpCdr involvement in politico-strategic deliberations ensures a greater feeling of ownership at the military-strategic level, a feeling that results in greater political awareness throughout the operational level.

Beyond this more general problem of a lack of flexibility throughout the planning and C2 cycle, the lack of a permanent military-strategic level of command creates CIS and *situational awareness* issues. According to an EUMS official, 'we have the secure links activated with all the OHQs, but it happens *ad hoc*; this has created a lot of problems in operations and is an issue with which we have to deal on a daily basis'.⁹³ For another EUMS official, 'the lack of a permanent CIS is the biggest problem we face in the realm of C2: our current CIS does not meet the security requirements of the military'.⁹⁴ A permanent OHQ would make it possible to better keep track of all European deployments, enhancing the Union's broader situational awareness.⁹⁵

Planning and C2 deficiencies compromise the Union's ability to deliver its key military-strategic objectives: rapid reaction (for which both a permanent CIS and a permanent operational PC2 capability and a serious contingency planning capability are needed) and comprehensiveness (for which a strong military instrument is a must). Additionally, and without prejudging the importance of the deeper political problems that surround discussions on troop contributions, the ability of the Union to provide a much more accurate and reliable assessment of the operational scenario would most likely result in positive spin-offs regarding force generation insofar as Member States would have a clearer plan in sight.

93. Ibid.

94. Author's interview with EUMS official in Brussels, May 2009.

95. Ibid.

Of course, acceptance of the need for a permanent planning and C2 capability is corollary to accepting the need for an autonomous ESDP: the two can only be separated at the cost of jeopardising the Union's credibility as a security actor.

The way ahead

This paper's policy recommendation shall come as no surprise by this point: the Union needs a sufficient degree of permanency in its military strategic level of command to enable it to address the main liabilities of its planning and C2 capability, namely deficiencies in the realm of advance planning, the fragmentation of the planning process and the ongoing problem posed by the fact that headquarters are not co-located. Such a degree of permanency, however, must be achieved in a way that is politically palatable: like Rome, the Union's planning and C2 capability will not be built in a day. One should have no illusions about the remaining room of manoeuvre for addressing the existing liabilities of the Union's planning and C2 capability under the existing *no permanent OHQ* mindset. Tinkering around the edges can no longer be effective: existing deficiencies within the Union's planning and C2 capability can *only* be addressed through the creation of a permanent military-strategic level of command. The key questions are what kind of permanent planning and conduct capability and how to get there?

Most insiders estimate that an OHQ of some 100 to 110 personnel should suffice to deliver the planning and C2 leg of up to two Battle-group-sized operations.⁹⁶ These numbers remain strikingly modest if compared with SHAPE's capacity of over 3,000: in their light, the *no-duplication* argument is just not sustainable. There remains, however, strong political resistance to the concept of a fully-fledged and permanent OHQ. In fact, a planning skeleton of some 50 personnel would suffice to address the most urgent problems associated with planning, namely the lack of flexibility in the planning process and the compelling need to improve the Union's capacity for advance contingency planning. Such a skeleton would also provide a framework for operational planning and conduct.

96. Author's interviews with EUMS and EUMC officials in Brussels, May 2009.

The most direct way to build up a *planning skeleton* would be bumping up the manpower, resources and competencies of the MAP. Inserted within the superseding CMPD structure, this beefed-up MAP, or OHQ skeleton, would provide a permanent nexus between the *politico-strategic* and operational dimensions of planning. It would, on the one hand, offer the CMPD operational insight in the context of politico-strategic planning deliberations, as well as contribute to the CMPD's advance comprehensive planning packages. The skeleton would maintain its own autonomy within the CMPD structure and remain a military body: Civ/Mil integration is a principle that must be applied at the politico-strategic level, not the military-strategic one – guaranteeing the autonomy of the military instrument is central to the delivery of a comprehensive approach. At the military-strategic level of command, Civ/Mil cooperation must be addressed through coordination (by co-location) and not integration. In this sense, the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) should place a permanent cell within the skeleton, while the latter should reciprocate by sending its own permanent liaison team to the CPCC. Besides contributing to the CMPD's comprehensive work, the skeleton must develop its own military contingency planning products, so crucial for rapid reaction. Finally, given its familiarisation with EU planning products, doctrine and procedures, the skeleton would also be the ideal vehicle for carrying out operational planning and conduct of operations.

For operational planning and conduct purposes, the ideal option would be for a detachment of some 40 personnel from the skeleton to integrate the existing Ops Centre within the EUMS (a facility which already has the necessary space and is equipped with a CIS). The remaining part of the skeleton (some 10 personnel) would stay behind, within the CMPD, to ensure the maintenance of existing advance planning products.⁹⁷ This detachment would be then assisted by a 'plug-on' force of some 50 to 60 augmentees that would migrate from national capitals to the Ops Centre for *ad-hoc* operational planning and conduct purposes. This 50 to 60-strong augmentee force would be drawn from a wider pool of some 80 to 100 pre-identified augmentees that would be earmarked in national

97. Should the core skeleton be required to spend a longer period of time than anticipated within the Ops Centre or a national OHQ (due to ongoing operational commitments), the reduced skeleton (the part staying within the CMPD) could still share new advance planning products with them. This would require a secure CIS to link up the Ops Centre, national OHQs and the EUMS with the skeleton, which would be ESDP's planning hub.

capitals for ESDP purposes. Together, they would constitute an EU OHQ. In peacetime, these pre-identified national augmentees should maintain regular communication with the skeleton, in order to be up to speed with any developments in EU operational doctrine and practices.

Whereas the existence of a skeleton would considerably increase flexibility in the Union's planning process and improve the capacity for advance planning, uncertainty regarding the timely designation of the Operational Commander would still leave some planning questions up in the air, as the EUFOR Tchad RCA operation shows. Given the fact that the designation of the OpCdr is tied to national troop contributions and that these are not cleared until late in the planning process, there is no easy fix to this problem. A small pool of pre-identified OpCdrs should be established to mitigate this difficulty. Most of them could be based in national capitals, and some of them within the skeleton itself. They would be in constant communication with the skeleton, and remain aware of its main tasks, having an input on advance planning products and on the planning skeleton's operational briefings to the politico-strategic authorities.

As has been argued above, the skeleton should ideally evolve into the operational planning and conduct hub for military ESDP. This would sort out the problem of the lack of a permanent CIS, as well as the Union's lack of overall situational awareness. Nonetheless, if the framework nation system were to be maintained and, for whatever reasons (i.e. Mont Valérien's expertise in Africa or Northwood's maritime know-how) a national OHQ were to be chosen for planning and conducting a given operation, a smaller detachment of some 20 personnel from the skeleton should be sent for a short period of time to bring the national OHQ up to speed. Coordination between the national OHQ and the skeleton would also be facilitated if framework nations were to maintain a number of their people within the pool of pre-identified augmentees. This would allow them to stay in constant communication with the planning skeleton.⁹⁸

Although the maintenance of the framework nation track would still not sort out the problem of a lack of a permanent CIS, the planning skeleton, even when not fully activated through a 'plug on' force, would represent a substantial improvement in the Union's planning and C2 capability. It

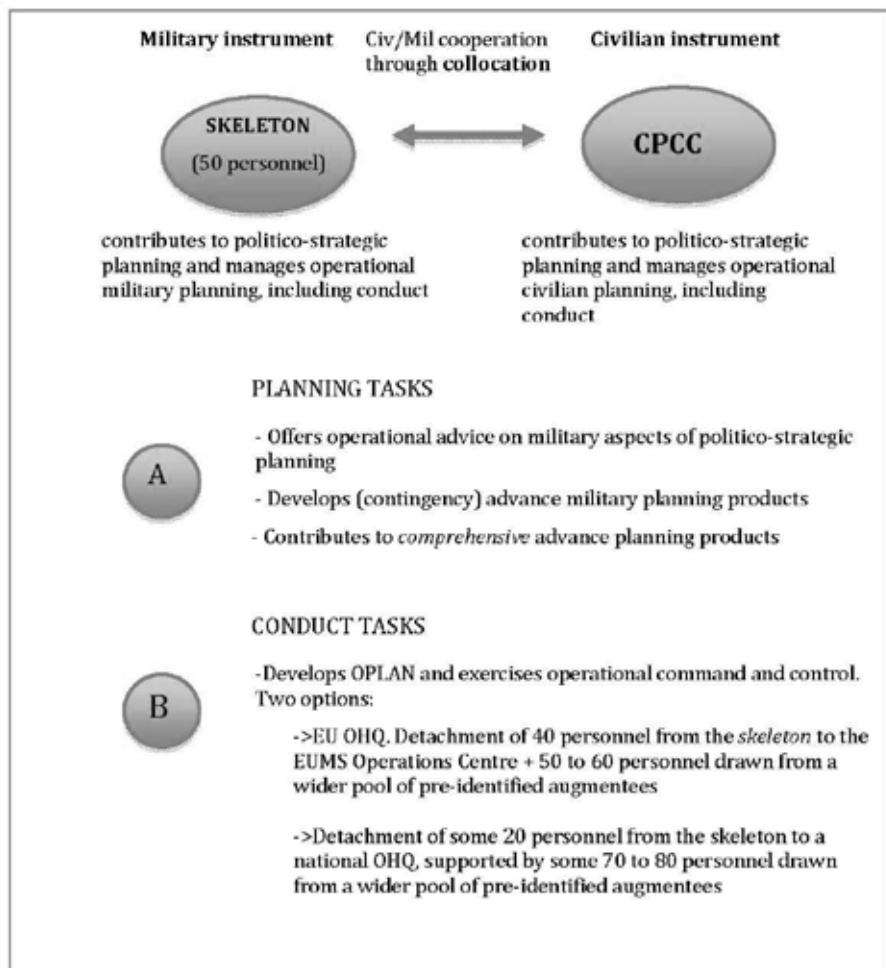
98. A diagram of the proposed skeleton appears in Annex 1.

would add important operational insight into politico-strategic planning deliberations (and thereby contribute to erasing the artificial fragmentation of planning) as well as substantially bolster the Union's advance planning capability. More broadly, it would be a solid step forward in the development of a European planning culture and, by extension, of a European strategic culture.

Annexes

ANNEX 1 – Proposal for an EU planning skeleton

CMPD – Strategic planning board (Civ/Mil cooperation through integration)



ANNEX 2 – Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| BG | Battlegroup |
| BiH | Bosnia Herzegovina |
| C2 | Command and Control |
| CAR | Central African Republic |
| CFSP | Common Foreign and Security Policy |
| CIMIC | Civil-Military Cooperation |
| CIS | Communication and Information Systems |
| CMC | Crisis Management Concept |
| CMPD | Crisis Management Planning Directorate |
| CONOPS | Concept of Operations |
| CPCC | Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability |
| DGE | Directorate General |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| DSACEUR | Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe |
| ESDP | European Security and Defence Policy |
| ESS | European Security Strategy |
| EUMC | EU Military Committee |
| EUMS | EU Military Staff |
| EUSG | EU Staff Group |
| FHQ | Force Headquarters |
| FYROM | Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| GCS | General Council Secretariat |
| HG | Headline Goal |
| IFOR | Implementation Force |
| IMD | Initiating Military Directive |
| MAP | Military Assessment on Planning |
| MoD | Ministry of Defence |
| MONUC | United Nations Organisation Mission in DR Congo (<i>Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies en République démocratique du Congo</i>) |
| MSO | Military Strategic Option |
| MSOD | Military Strategic Options Directive |
| OHQ | Operational Headquarters |
| OpCdr | Operations Commander |
| OPLAN | Operation Plan |
| Ops | Operations |
| PSC | Political and Security Committee |
| RCA | <i>République Centrafricaine</i> |
| SFOR | Stabilisation Force |
| SG | Secretary General |
| SG/HR | Secretary General/High Representative |
| SHAPE | Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe |
| SITCEN | Situation Centre |
| UNSC | United Nations Security Council |

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