

The United Nations and the European Union: An Ever Stronger Partnership

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**SESSION 3: UN-EU Cooperation in the Area of Security: Conflict Prevention,
Conflict Management, Post-Conflict Reconstruction, Terrorism**

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Thank you Ms. Chair. And I would like to concentrate, if you allow me, on conflict management, more than on the issues that you mentioned, and that are stated in the title, such as conflict prevention and post conflict reconstruction, because I understand that Jim Cloos and yourself mentioned it this morning. I will not come back either to the philosophy, because Jim also spoke about that. And, of course, I would like to speak about crisis management because it is my job, yet you are right, the title of my job is not Director of Crisis Management, it is Director for Defence issues. And that title was coined about two and a half years ago when we built the main structures within the EU in the framework of the General Secretariat of the Council. We said 'defence', because there are clauses in the present Treaty with a defence perspective, but also because what we do within the EU –although I won't speak about that in great detail- is not only about crisis management specifically. Since we are trying to have the instruments to be able to conduct operations that would contribute to crisis management, we also entered into an approach of capabilities. And I think that the word 'defence' does not mean that we are not committed to the defence of the EU territory or defence territorial. We described what we wanted to do as a Petersberg mission: a crisis management mission, a humanitarian mission, up to the possibility of restoring peace in a conflict. Once more, we had to implement the instruments and the capabilities to acquire. We had a very strange approach in a way, within the EC, because we began with the Petersberg tasks and then, because of the necessity to build the effective instrument to be able to conduct those tasks, we entered into an approach of, once more, military and defence capabilities. Moreover, you do not make a difference in a military tool, whether it can be used within the territory of the EU or outside of it. That is why it is called 'defence'. I will be very short on the introductory elements because I understand that you mentioned that there is a natural intimacy between the EU and the UN, because of the member states and because, if there is a point of consensus between the European member states and ESDP, it is about the fact that we have to contribute to the UN and we have to put any action we want to carry out in the UN framework. That is, of course, of paramount importance for most member states, and maybe I should say all member states. That is perhaps why you mentioned that the security strategy had changed. In the security strategy, effective multilateralism could have been more developed, but I would say it was rather simple because on that point there was absolutely no dispute. The fact that we want to contribute to effective multilateralism within the EU is a credo for all member states. And I think that you can judge that, not through how many paragraphs you have in the Security Strategy about effective multilateralism, but by the fact that we tried afterwards, once it was adopted, to have the EU bring an effective contribution to this effective multilateralism. That is what I would like to illustrate through a few elements in the military realm. Once more, for the EU it is hardly possible

to intervene outside of the UN framework and without a resolution, it is a key element of anything we would do.

A second element of this intimacy between the EU and the UN is the conception we have of a crisis, before, during and after the crisis. The EU has the vocation to be a global actor, and I would not interpret global only in the geographical sense, but also global in the instruments. I do not want to describe it at length because you already mentioned it, but the EU has a whole panoplie of instruments: trade, economic assistance, third pillar instruments, and now the military component. It goes in the same direction as what the UN want to do, i.e. to have not a military but a global approach of crises, possibly to prevent crises, or to reconstruct after crises, to avoid new ones, but also during a crisis, to incorporate all the elements that would go together with the military elements, thereby bringing every possible tool we have to solve even the roots of the conflict that we are trying to tackle at a particular moment with military elements.

And I would like to very quickly describe the EU relation with the UN as a quick evolution from a kind of misperception at the origin of ESDP to real action, i.e. Artemis, and to the current strong and ambitious perspectives that we have defined together. First the misperceptions: I think they were rather clear. We encountered in our counterparts in the UN Secretariat, DPKO particularly, and at the highest level and amongst some UN states, the feeling that the ESDP, this new defence policy within the EU, was kind of egocentric or 'eurocentric', concentrating on our own problems. When I say our own problems, I mean the Balkans, and the idea was that because of ESDP, Europe would no longer be able to bring its contribution to crises and to UN operations in other continents like Africa, Asia or other parts of the world. And that, I think, was a very strong feeling when we arrived as an ESDP, and that was immediately after the EU was considered operational. If you remember, at the end of the Belgian Presidency, at Laeken, the EU was considered operational, and the year after that, we had two operations: fYROM, at the request of the government, and Artemis, which was already mentioned, conducted in Ituri at the request of SG Kofi Annan. I think that was really the element that changed the relationship between the EU and the UN. It was not obvious at all in the beginning, to do all that within the set time frame. Kofi Annan probably called several Heads of State and Government, but he also called Chirac, who told him that he agreed to conduct the French operation in Ituri, even if he was the only one to be ready to do that. At the same time, a few hours or days afterwards, Kofi Annan called Mr. Solana and said: 'would you consider making it an EU operation?' And in fact, between Javier Solana and the French government and Kofi Annan, there was a clear understanding that transforming a French operation into an EU operation did not cost one day, which is positive because one day could mean a massacre, and it did not cost anything in terms of military efficiency (rules of engagement, chapter 7). It was a kind of race against the clock and then because most of the member states were really convinced that it was a very important added value to make it a European operation, we did it as quickly in the EU as it would have been, had it been a national operation of a country that has pre-positioned forces in Africa. Then we used a notion that was not validated before and existed only on paper: a framework nation has the Headquarters to conduct the operation. It was rather risky as opposed to the fYROM operation, that would not entail very important risks, it was logistically very difficult and it was also difficult because of the risk of having to fight, and to fight against child soldiers in a very difficult context, that was very important for most of our member states. We had the necessity both to have a militarily robust way of doing things, and to respect all the values that the EU is supposed to convey. It was a rather difficult operation logistically, and of course the key element was rapidity, because we had not had the occasion to test this before. It was properly done, to the satisfaction of the EU on one side, the local authorities and the UN on the other. From that operation we drew lessons together, I think Mr. Cloos mentioned it this morning, we had a meeting prepared and the follow up with DPKO, and some points were clearly, totally positive. The way we could prepare together, in particular with Mr. Swing, the handover to the MONUC (because it was a bridging operation to prepare the handover to a strengthened MONUC) was really a success. Other things, as it was the first operation, could be improved. When we began this operation, we had no tradition or habit at all to work together with DPKO,

we had to improvise. And of course we learnt lessons there and things we can do ahead of the operation, should be implemented, if we have another operation of that kind in the future. On the basis of that, we have now, I think, an action that proved that the EU was able to bring an effective contribution to the UN. We have now built solid and ambitious perspectives. You already mentioned, and I will not come back to that, the Joint Declaration of last September. On the basis of this declaration we almost immediately implemented the cooperation that we have to conduct with DPKO and the different counterparts in New York. We are going to work together -and we already began doing it- about training and exercise, best practices and so on. Now we have regular meetings at every appropriate level, to see how we can prepare operations together.

But I would like to particularly mention two initiatives. One you already mentioned is about battle groups. That was the initiative of the UK, France and Germany, regarding the possibility to deploy 1500 troops within 15 days. The objective was to do it exclusively in the framework of the UN but as you remember, that does not mean specifically that we cannot use battle groups in other circumstances. Yet, the political objective of the battle groups is only to be used in the UN Operations framework. Once more, at the beginning it was not clearly understood because the deadline for the battle groups is 2007. The first reaction in New York was to say, 'well, you did Artemis six months ago, will we have to wait until 2007 to have those battle groups and to have a rapid response capability available from the EU?' The answer is of course no, you do not have to wait. The battle group will be fully operational and will be additional to our present instrument in 2007. Yet early 2005, you will probably get the first battle groups. Yesterday, in Brussels, there was a meeting of the Ministers of Defence, most member states announce their willingness to contribute to those battle groups, even rather small member states, because there is a multinational perspective. That means that now we have the instruments to be more rapidly and more effectively available for UN operations, particularly for that kind of bridging operation or entry force enablers, i.e. for an operation that would precede the strengthening of 'normal' UN operations.

Then there is the second, military, element, which I would like to go into, and afterwards I will stop. That was also discussed yesterday by the ministers of defence of the EU: we must be really able to deploy, not only those battle groups, but any rapid reaction force we want to deploy if there is a necessity for a humanitarian mission, for instance. We have to be able to plan and decide on an operation within five days, and to have the troops deployed on the ground in ten days, that amounts to 15 days in total.

I would like to conclude by saying that you are right: we were embryonic, and possibly still are, but at the same time, this embryo can bring something to the UN, as was already demonstrated last year. And, we are taking all the necessary measures to be able to bring more. Now the difficult question is about expectations, because they are rising. When Mr. Solana meets with Kofi Annan or Ms. Fréchette comes to Brussels, they have a terrible list of operations, which is why the word you hear most often nowadays is 'overstretched'. The forces of the member states, of the allies, of any country which has a military capability, are overstretched. That is why, and I do not want to overstretch my time, (around what we are doing directly for the UN) we are also trying to enable other, and particularly African regional organisations to be themselves an element which could contribute to peace-keeping. Thank you.
