

RESULTS FROM THE WORKING GROUP ON DEFENCE

Introduction

According to the founding principles that constructed the European Union and those of the UN, the European policy must be based on the values of Democracy, Human rights, Freedom and Peace. As a consequence, the goals of a European defence are first and foremost the protection of democratic institutions, liberties and peace. Confident in its heritage Europe has a role to play as a legitimate mediator when crises occur and it has to be able to lead missions of peace keeping and peace restoring worldwide.

We, students both from the current EU Member States and EU candidate countries; Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, agreed on the following amendments for the Convention to consider.

Paragraph 13: Update of the Final Report

Since the EU-NATO declaration on strategic partnership was signed on 16 December 2002, this paragraph requires an update.

Paragraph 29: The relations with the United Nations

The ESDP shall be linked to the UN security system through the dispositions of the art. 43 of the UN Charter.

Approved by vote 17/17 in the working group on defence.

Paragraph 51: Petersberg tasks

We agree that the Petersberg tasks should be expanded to include also joint disarmament operations, post conflict stabilisation and **conflict prevention as an essential part** of it. **Civilian crises management should also be included into the Petersberg tasks.** The first defence priority of the EU must be **to give the EU capabilities that will enable it to fully assume the Petersberg tasks** enumerated in Article 17 paragraph 2 of the Treaty on European Union.

Approved by vote 17/17 in the working group on defence.

Paragraph 52: Creation of the common Military Academy

We support the establishment of the European Military Academy. Such an Academy would not suppress the national military colleges but complete the national trainings in order that European officers learn to work together and share the same defence culture. With seminars and crash courses gathering servicemen, it will participate in the formation of a common defence culture and practises - coherence and efficiency. Preferably, the Academy should be located in one of the new member countries.

Approved by vote 17/17 in the working group on defence.

Paragraph 52(d): Coherence and effectiveness

Efficient crises management procedures under political control are needed. An arrangement of the High Representative proposing and coordinating operations and the Council approving and remaining the decision-making power ensures efficiency and responsibility. The problem is **financing**. The wording in 52 (d): "It is therefore envisaged that a relatively modest fund be set up, based on Member States' contributions..." is unclear. What are these "**relatively modest contributions**" and **are they voluntary**? Are you able to participate in the decision-making process even if you do not pay these contributions?

Approved by vote 15/15 in the working group on defence.

Paragraphs 53-55: Facilitation of flexibility in decision-making process and in action

Considering the importance of the defence for each member State we think that major decisions concerning the involvement of the Union in external commitment should be taken **by qualified majority** of at least three quarters (on the basis of one state one vote). Qualified majority will not avoid reluctant states to adopt **constructive abstention** related to their political position.

In the same way, enhanced cooperation should only take place after the decision to act.

The idea of the "defence Euro-zone" has to be extremely carefully considered, especially vis-à-vis to the future character of the EU as a whole and in its relations with the United Nations and NATO. **Security is achieved by communication and interaction, not by walling off others.**

Approved by vote 16/17 in the working group on defence.

Paragraph 71: High Representative

We think that the High Representative should be an independent figure from the Council, and to be a part of the Commission. This HR should become a commissioner. The role of this Commissioner for Security and Defence could be reinforced because she/he is the link between the political and military structure of the EU. She/he could facilitate the political decisions and speed up the processes because she/he could react to emergency situations and ensure the translation of political decisions.

This commissioner for Defence and Security will be granted the power to take initiatives regarding crises management, she/he will be assisted by a special Agency and the whole organizational structure of the Commission.

Approved by vote 14/17 in the working group on defence.