

## **Policy Department External Policies**

# **THE BATTLE GROUPS: CATALYST FOR A EUROPEAN DEFENCE POLICY**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Characteristics of the Battle Groups</b>	<b>2</b>
Figure 1 - Operational aspects	3
<b>3. Issues raised by the Battle Group concept</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Multinationality	4
3.2 Command structures	5
Figure 2 - BG 1500 Command options	6
3.3 Deployability	6
3.4 Sustainability	7
3.5 NRF and BG 1500	8
<b>4. Beyond Battle Group 1500</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5. Recommendations</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Annex I</b> NRF and BG 1500 rotations	11
<b>Annex II</b> EU BG rotation cycle	12
<b>Annex III</b> Army manpower of EU Member States	13

## Executive Summary

The further development of ESDP implies that the EU must acquire the necessary capacity and capabilities to pursue the policy successfully. At the strategic level, this means being able independently to assess a crisis and consider its potential military implications. At the operational level, it means being able to plan and execute military operations far away from its borders against robust adversaries, if necessary, through use of exclusively European assets. This emphasis on autonomous action is a significant point of orientation to guide EU efforts to develop appropriate political-military structures and military tools to fulfil the goals assigned to ESDP. Such requirements led to the adoption of the 'Headline Goal 2010'.

The Battle Group 1500 (BG 1500), which forms part of this HLG 2010 package, represents a major achievement. It is a significant test case of the resolve of EU Member States to transform their military forces as well as an extremely useful tool to develop interoperability among EU military apparatus and establish a common military culture between Europeans.

The BG 1500 is made up of ground forces held at a readiness of 5-10 days that can be deployed and sustained at 6,000 km or more from the EU territory for operations lasting between 30 and 120 days. The BGs are intended to conduct the following missions: Humanitarian missions or non combatant evacuation operations; Peace keeping missions/stabilization operations; and Crisis management, including peace enforcement operations. It is capable of autonomous actions or 'initial entry force' operations. BG 1500 is considered to be the minimum militarily effective, rapidly deployable and coherent force capable of military operations at the outset of significant incidents with the risk of further complex deterioration of the situation in a specific area, mainly but not exclusively, in Africa.

Member States participating in the BG concept offer their 'battle group packages' for periods of six months at a time. In 2007, 25 EU member States are participating in a way or another in the BG programme, and 15 BGs have been or are being created. Two are now permanently ready for action on behalf of the Union.

The BG 1500 concept has been a real political success. It now mobilizes almost all of the EU Member States. The BG concept remains a good test of the will of most EU countries to move towards deepening ESDP. However, it cannot (yet) be seen as providing EU leaders with a robust, resilient and trustworthy military instrument able to fulfil those missions for which it was created. Certain inadequacies need to be addressed:

- There is a clear lack of EU strategic advance planning
- The lack of rapid airlift projection capabilities
- The heterogeneity of military forces within the EU undermines the BG military relevance

The study recommends that EU member states:

- Intensify their consideration of the nature of the military forces the EU requires
- Continue to work on developing rapid reaction air and maritime forces
- Gradually move towards the creation of more capable joint forces of about 5,000 personnel (Task Force 5000)

The study makes a series of recommendations as to how the European Parliament might inquire further into developments in this area.

# The Battle groups: catalyst for a European Defence Policy

## 1. Introduction

The Maastricht Treaty set up the parameters for the development of a 'European Security and Defence Policy' (ESDP). After years of paralysis in the early 1990s, a creative move for actually starting the process was made possible following the Franco-British meeting in Saint-Malo (France) in December 1998 when London and Paris agreed to jointly and actively work to make the European Union "*able to carry out some security tasks on its own*"<sup>1</sup>. Subsequent agreements with Germany and the others members of the European Union triggered the first concrete move to develop ESDP. At the European Council meeting in June 1999, in Cologne, EU leaders stated:

*"...the European Union shall play its full role on the international stage. To that end, we intend to give the EU the necessary means and capabilities to assume its responsibilities regarding a common European policy on security and defence... to this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible forces and the means to decide to use them"*<sup>2</sup>.

A first cycle of developing ESDP was then opened. Although interrupted by the Iraqi crisis the essential dynamic of the process remains unchanged and one may positively expect new rounds of development to follow in the years ahead.

During the period 1999-2003, the EU set up relevant political-military structures to assess, decide, plan and execute military operations. Although still in their infancy, these structures were first tested in 2003, during the course of two military operations (referred to as operations *Concordia* and *Artemis*). The former was made possible through use of the NATO machinery under the 'Berlin plus' agreement, while the latter essentially used European capabilities, including command structures<sup>3</sup>.

To a large extent, military cooperation and integration in the EU has made tremendous progresses in only a few years, notably through the beginning of the implementation of the Headline Goal 2003 adopted at the Helsinki EU summit in December 1999. However, if the Europeans are serious in wanting to move ahead and embark on a 'second round' of building ESDP, clear objectives have to be defined to plan and organize new military cooperation and integration among EU member states.

The further development of ESDP implies that the EU must acquire the necessary capacity and capabilities to pursue the policy effectively. At the strategic level, this means being able independently to assess a crisis and consider its potential military implications. At the operational level, it means being able to plan and execute military operations far away from its borders against robust adversaries, if necessary, through use of exclusively European assets. This emphasis on autonomous action is a significant point of orientation to guide EU efforts to develop appropriate political-military structures and military tools to fulfil the goals

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<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister, Tony Blair, MP, Speech, RUSI, 8 March 1999, London.

<sup>2</sup> Cologne European Council, European Council Declaration Strengthening the Common European Policy on Security and Defence, 3 and 4 June 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Between 2003 and early 2007, the EU has launched 4 military operations: Concordia; Artémis; Althéa; EUFOR DR Congo.

assigned to ESDP. Such requirements led to a revision of the initial 'Headline Goal' and the adoption of the 'Headline Goal 2010' (HG 2010) endorsed at the EU council meeting in June 2004<sup>4</sup>.

The Battle Group 1500 (BG 1500), which forms part of this HG 2010 package, represents a major achievement. It is a significant test case of the resolve of EU Member States to transform their military forces as well as an extremely useful tool to develop interoperability among EU military apparatus and establish a common military culture between Europeans. Nevertheless, some years after this initial development, and following their subsequent utilisation, the BG concept reveals some inadequacies. If the aim of establishing a new potent military instrument at the disposal of the EU is to be realised, these inadequacies now need to be addressed. The outcome may be a slightly different BG concept than the one originally envisaged.

## **2. Characteristics of the Battle Groups 1500**

In January 2003, the EU Military Committee (EUMC) adopted the EU Military Rapid Response Concept, which provided a conceptual framework for the conduct of EU-led military crisis management operations. Britain and France endorsed the idea at a joint summit in Le Touquet in February 2003. They did so in light of the growing problems of failing states in Africa where the need to be able to rapidly deploy military force had been clearly demonstrated during the British intervention in Sierra Leone and the ongoing French operation *Licorne* in Ivory Coast.

The concept was made concrete by the two countries nine months later at a further summit meeting in London. The experiences of the EU's Operation *Artemis* in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during the summer of that year had been taken into consideration and had led to the establishment of rapidly deployable units of about 1,500 army personnel. In February 2004, the project was transformed into a trilateral initiative when Germany expressed interest. A proposal to develop European Battle Groups was then submitted to the Political and Security Policy Committee of the EU (PSC). The concept was agreed by the EU Military Committee on 14 June 2004 and a few days later endorsed at the European Council within the framework of the HG 2010.

If Battle Groups were initially envisaged only as national units, the trilateral proposal supported the concept of a multinational unit. Accordingly Battle Groups could either be formed from one country or be multinational. An EU-member could also serve as a 'framework nation', i.e. as the main constituent of a Battle Group, while other countries would contribute accordingly to their respective niche capacities.

The BG 1500 comprises a limited combat force built around an infantry battalion (500/600 personnel) with fire support, reconnaissance means and staff support. It is completed by combat support elements (engineer, air defence, helicopter support) and combat service support (logistic, medical support, etc.). It can, if necessary, be back up by element of forces drawn from air and/or naval forces and if necessary by 'special forces'. Precise certifications

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<sup>4</sup> See: *The EU Battlegroups*, Dr Gerrard Quille, 12 September 2006, Note, European Parliament, DGExPo/B/PolDep/Note/2006\_145.

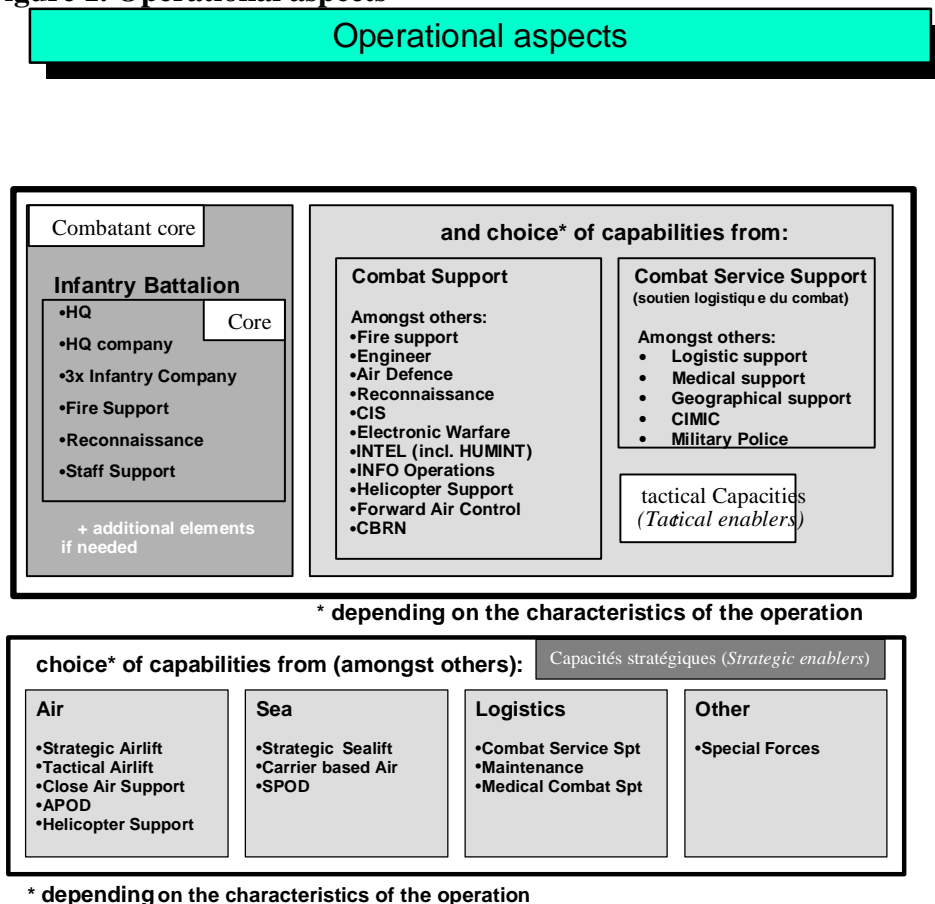
of the various sub-components of the BG are national prerogatives notwithstanding the definitions of common criteria.

The ground forces that comprise the BG are held at a readiness of 5-10 days that can be deployed and sustained at 6,000 km or more from the EU territory for operations lasting between 30 and 120 days. The BG is capable of autonomous actions or ‘initial entry force’ operations. BG 1500 is considered to be the minimum militarily effective, rapidly deployable and coherent force capable of military operations at the outset of significant incidents with the risk of further complex deterioration of the situation in a specific area, mainly but not exclusively, in Africa. The specific types of mission the BGs are intended to conduct are as follows:

- Humanitarian missions or non-combatant evacuation operations
- Peace keeping missions/stabilization operations
- Crisis management, including peace enforcement operations.

Member States participating in the BG concept offer their ‘battle group packages’ for periods of six months at a time at a EUMS (EU Military Staff)-chaired Battle Group Coordination Conference (BGCC). In 2007, 25 EU member States are participating in a way or another in the BG programme, and 15 BGs have been or are being created. Two are now permanently ready for action on behalf of the Union.

**Figure 1. Operational aspects**



Source: French Ministry of Defence



Three types of BG have been set up or are planned to operate: 'national' BG (all components are borrowed from the same nation); BG with a 'framework nation' i.e. the combat element is drawn from one nation when combat support and combat service support are drawn from other European nations; the 'multinational' BG: this is probably the least efficient variant unless it is based on a pre-existing agreement about force interoperability such as, for example, those governing the functioning of the Franco-German brigade.

Full operating capability of the BGs was achieved in 2007: in the first part of 2007 two BGs were available - one built around France as the framework nation with Belgium and Luxemburg providing support components, the other is built around Germany, with Finland and Holland providing support; later in the year two others will be available to the Union: one with Italy as the 'framework nation' (with Hungary and Slovenia in support) and the other with Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania. In early 2008 it will be the 'Nordic Battle Group' with Sweden as the lead nation with participation from Finland, Estonia and Norway (those countries undertook in 2004 to set up the Nordic BG) later; in 2006, Ireland decided to take part in this Battle Group<sup>5</sup>; Spain (France, Germany); followed later in the year by UK/Netherlands; and Germany/France (Spain and Belgium).

### **3. Issues raised by the Battle Group concept**

#### **3.1 Multinationality**

Multinationality was not the primary course sought by the initiators of the BG concept. A certain divergence of perspectives still exists between countries such as France and Britain (which will man a purely national BG in the second part of 2008) and the other EU member states. For Paris and London it appears that the combat core of the BG (i.e. about 500-600 infantry soldiers) have to be drawn from the same country; and if not they have to belong to countries that have already trained together, such as the Dutch and the British; the French, the German and the Belgians; or the Nordic BG (the only BG which exists on a permanent basis and in which Sweden represent about two-thirds of the manpower).

Interposition, stabilization and combat missions are highly risky and the present military heterogeneity of capabilities (equipment, training, norms presiding to the employment of units, etc.) within the EU is still too great to allow the amalgamation of military contingents that are not yet accustomed to exercising together and which do not abide by the same rules of engagement (RoE). Indeed, this absence of commons norms and RoEs could prove detrimental to the success of the operation<sup>6</sup>.

Multinationality also implies a certain degree of commonality in training experience. But this is not always the case. For example, most European forces have no experience of operating in Africa at all. As has already been mentioned, certification of assigned forces to the BG remains a national decision. This means that various national caveats may be included, which again may impact on the BG's coherence and its ability to react to unforeseen situations that

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<sup>5</sup> See: 'Ireland and the EU Battlegroups', conference by Willie O'Der, Minister for Defence, Dublin, 11 May 2006. When the Nordic battle Group is activated in 2008, Sweden will provide 2,300 soldiers, Finland 200, Norway about 150, Ireland 80 and Estonia about 30. The strategic command structure (OHQ) will be provided by elements of the British PJHQ (see following page) that will be "Europeanized" on those occasions.

<sup>6</sup> On both occasion during *Artemis* and EUFOR DRC, different rules related to air transport regulations have posed serious problems.



require a swift response (use of fire, offensive actions, call for air support, and so on). If so, such heterogeneity of conduct may have disastrous consequences in combat situations.

Such problems can be solved progressively by developing bi- or multi-national training in or outside Europe between European forces. A case in point is the regular joint training now undertaken in Djibouti between the Swedish Special Forces (which participated in Operation *Artemis*) and their French counterparts. This was also the case in EUFOR DRC where French, Swedish and Portuguese ‘special forces’ acted in support of the EU force<sup>7</sup>.

### 3.2 Command structures

Political control of the BG 1500 is exercised by the PSC. For military action the BG has to be led by a FHQ (Force Headquarters, at the operational level) under the supervision of an OHQ (Operational Headquarters, at the strategic level). The OHQ could be set up from existing cells already part of national Europeans OHQ (France’s CPCO - Centre de Planification et de Conduite des Opérations ; Britain’s PJHQ - Permanent Joint Headquarters; Germany’s EFK - EinsatzFührungsKommando; Italy’s COI - Comando Operativo di vertice Interforze and Greece’s OHQ in Larissa)<sup>8</sup>. These cells are activated and their manpower increased by ‘augmentees’ i.e. officers coming from various EU countries. In early 2007, five European OHQs and four FHQs had been declared by different EU countries. All of them are connected to Brussels (EU Military Committee) through the confidential, secure and global intranet network in defence affairs connecting EU’s countries ‘Ops WAN’<sup>9</sup>.

The EU itself is in the process of developing its own capacity to lead a military operation by building up its own OHQ. The military exercise known as MILEX 05 (November/December 2005) was the first EU command post exercise ever held. It concentrated on military aspects of crisis management. It involved the EUMS, which under the control of the PSC, led military operations conducted by an EU OHQ - located for the purpose of the exercise in Paris (Mont Valérien) - and an EU Force Headquarters (FHQ) - located in Ulm (Germany). France and Germany, therefore, were used as framework nations for the EU simulated military operation. This command post exercise, which had mobilised around 450 personnel, generated many lessons that have since been used to improve the EU strategic command system.

Six months after MILEX 05, although on a relatively small scale, both an OHQ and a FHQ were activated when EU forces (essentially French and German) were deployed to Kinshasa in support of the MONUC during the presidential election held in July 2006<sup>10</sup>. The EU OHQ was based in Potsdam and the FHQ in France.

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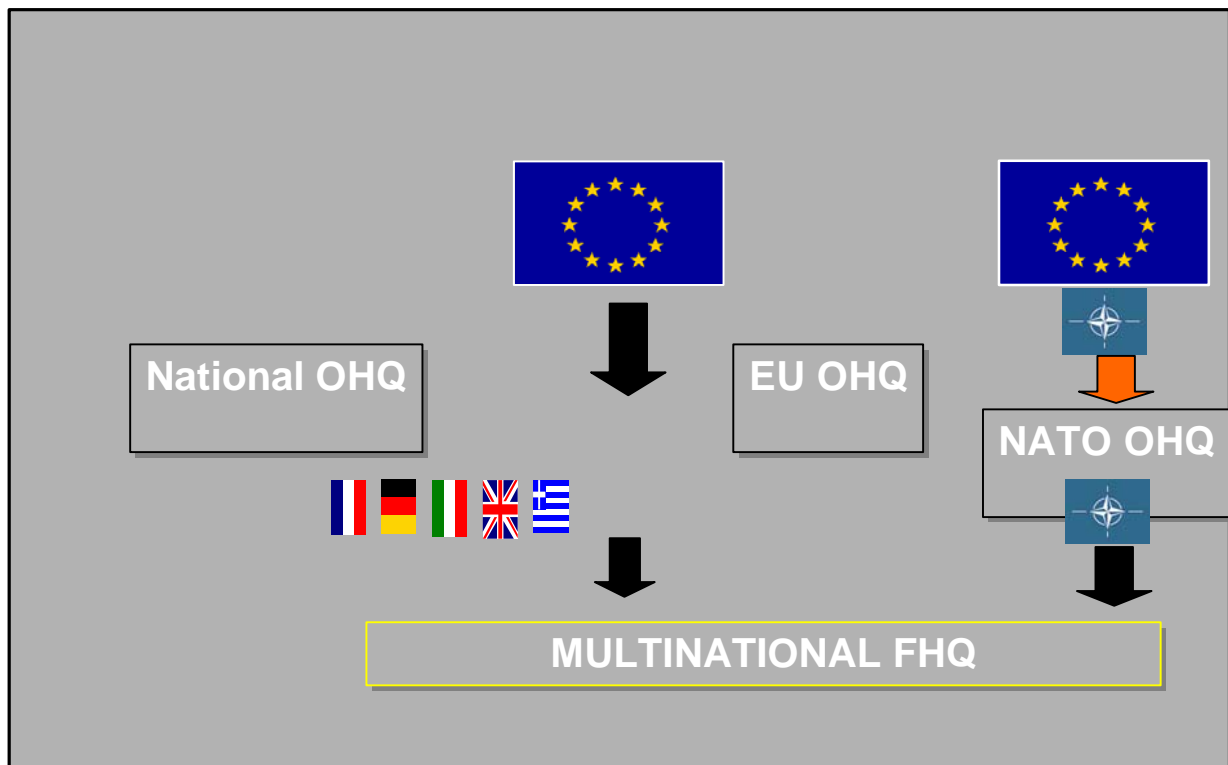
<sup>7</sup> See Assembly of Western Union, “The EU Battlegroups reply to the annual report of the council”, Report by Jean-Pierre Kucheida, 53<sup>rd</sup> session, Document A/1964, 5 June 2007.

<sup>8</sup> On the complex issue of command structure in the context of EU and NATO see: ‘Les opérations en coalition: modes d’organisation et dangers cachés’, Yves Boyer, *Annuaire Français de Relations Internationales* 2005, ED. Bruyant Bruxelles-La Documentation Française Paris. [http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/actions-france\\_830/etudes-recherches\\_3119/annuaire-francais-relations-internationales\\_31](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/actions-france_830/etudes-recherches_3119/annuaire-francais-relations-internationales_31)

<sup>9</sup> See, for example: Avis, Tome IX “Défense, équipement des forces; Espace, Communications, Dissuasion”, M. Jean Michel, Paris, Assemblée Nationale, 12 October 2005.

<sup>10</sup> EUFOR DRC was set up to support MONUC in accordance with UNSC resolution 1671. The operation ended in November 30, 2006.

**Figure 2. BG 1500 Command Options**



BG 1500 Command options (source: French Ministry of Defence)

In future the EU could also rely on the EU Operational Centre (EU Ops Centre) based in Brussels (about 89 personnel when fully augmented by officers and civilians from various EU nations). During MILEX 07 (June 2007), the EU Ops Centre was activated for the first time. It was manned by 32 personnel of the EUMS augmented by 44 officers from EU member states<sup>11</sup>. It led a simulated operation, the FHQ of which was located in Sweden (Enköping), in order to test the various procedures and mechanisms in place: notably how to manage a crisis involving the use of a BG and how to develop the military strategic command structure of the Nordic BG in particular.

### 3.3 Deployability

Europe's lack of long-range heavy transport aircraft continues to hamper the rapid deployment of the EU BGs<sup>12</sup>. However, the situation is going to improve with the entry into service in the UK's Royal Air Force of Boeing C-17 cargo planes or in some other EU countries A-400M military transport aircraft. In the interim period it remains possible within the SALIS (Strategic Airlift Interim Solution) agreement<sup>13</sup> to use heavy transport aircraft, namely the Russian *Antonov 124-100*.

<sup>11</sup> See: EU activates operations centre for the first time during MILEX exercise, Nicolas Fiorenza, *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 20 June 2007.

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that the EU is in no lack of medium sized transport aircraft with about 30 A-340/310, KC-10 aircraft and about 270 C-130 and C-160 transport aircraft.

<sup>13</sup> Members are Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, France, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and Slovenia. SALIS also extends to two non-NATO members: Finland and Sweden

Such an option was used in the context of EUFOR DRC to transport heavy equipment to Gabon and Kinshasa. It could also be possible to draw upon the three or four C-17 aircrafts that NATO intends to acquire as part of its Joint Airlift Capability agreement of June 2007. When those planes are made available to the Europeans, particular attention should then be devoted to define common rules about transport flights in a difficult environment. Such issues became apparent during Operation *Artemis*<sup>14</sup> and were raised again during the more recent EU operation in the DRC.

It should also be mentioned that, in certain circumstances and for certain theatres of action, a BG could also be deployed by sea. One goal is to be able to deploy a BG to the southern shores of the Mediterranean within 24-48 hours using maritime transport departing from the northern shores the Mediterranean. The Europeans already possess adequate naval transport capabilities for such a role, which can be reinforced with commercial Roll-on Roll-off (RoRo) ships).

Deployability also raises secondary questions that are far from being properly addressed in a coherent manner by EU members particularly when a multinational BG is involved. To take just one example, when participating in an operation in Africa, all troops require protective vaccinations to be administered. A failure to do so could easily hamper the rapid activation of a BG. This example is typical of the type of ancillary issue that requires commonly agreed regulation applied to all member states by the EUMS.

There is also the question of the BG being able to have the necessary reach to deploy from its initial entry point on a given theatre, that is to say the capability to access remote areas, notably in Africa. This was the case during the *Artemis* deployment in the Ituri province of the DRC where there were very few usable trails. Such demanding tasks require a comprehensive approach at EU level in order to identify beforehand potential bases of operations and facilities that the Europeans would need to use when deploying a BG.

### **3.4 Sustainability**

Beyond logistical questions, there are issues relating to sustainability. For instance, what happens when, due to unexpected circumstances, the deployments lasts longer than anticipated? In such cases, there are no agreed rules concerning how to organize the changeover of one BG to another. Equally, a BG that is confronted with a rapid deterioration of a given situation might have to rely on a strategic reserve. The Europeans have yet to agree rules concerning the level of strategic reserves that should be ready to rapidly reinforce a deployed BG.

In a much broader sense sustainability is also about resilience. The operational use of the BG may be significantly different from traditional tasks assigned to UN 'Blues helmets'. The tasks assigned to BGs may be highly dangerous, and in the foreseeable future their deployment overseas will become even riskier from a military standpoint. For instance, adversaries will be better equipped than today (in terms of artillery, helicopters, tanks etc.) and asymmetrical methods of warfare often demand a return to traditional infantry fighting, requiring tough, well-trained troops. It is quite possible that a deployed BG could find itself immediately confronted with formidable adversaries in a theatre of operations where most Europeans forces have never previously been deployed.

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<sup>14</sup> During *Artemis*, 660 tons of freights, 440 vehicles and about 3,800 personnel were airlifted.

Unfortunately, currently EU BGs are characterised by their heterogeneity. Few of them can draw upon units that are ‘combat proven’. Almost all of them – with the exception of French and British units - have no experience of lengthy deployment in hostile and tough environments. Hence, it is imperative for Member States, on an intergovernmental basis, to define higher standards of training for most units planned to be assigned to EU BG 1500. After all, the initial concept behind the creation of the BGs was to contribute to the transformation of European militaries into more agile and more robust forces with higher standards of training and toughness.

If the Europeans do not agree amongst themselves on those higher standards, they run the risk of fragmenting EU militaries between those that have potent forces and those that do not. Such fragmentation already exists, vis-à-vis high intensity warfare capability, with the setting up of the Multinational Interoperability Council (MIC) which, outside NATO, systematizes close cooperation between a small group of European countries and the US, Canada and Australia<sup>15</sup>.

It would be detrimental to ESDP if such fragmentation also occurred in relation to future rapid intervention forces. In most cases, the various existing or planned BGs cannot be considered as sufficiently robust, resilient and battle-proofed. And European political leaders cannot continue to ignore this hard reality. Accordingly, the Europeans have to better understand the need to harden the standards by which collectively they want to create military units that are capable of fulfilling the goals of ESDP. In that perspective, the BG 1500 is not an end in itself. Lessons learned through the various recent deployments of EU forces call for an adjustment towards a more robust set of forces.

### **3.5 NRF and BG 1500**

Although similar in concept, there are a number of important differences of nature between the BG 1500 and its comparable homologue in NATO: the NATO Response Force (NRF). For instance, the command structure is different and probably less problematical for the BG than for the NRF, given that NATO’s JFCs (Joint Forces Command) in Brunssum or in Naples has yet to resolve issues relating to how the NRF should be commanded. One should also add that contrary to the NRF process, the national contribution proposed for a BG is made on a voluntary basis rather than imposed.

## **4. Beyond BG 1500**

The BG 1500 concept has been a real political success. It now mobilizes almost all of the EU Member States. The BG concept remains a good test of the will of most EU countries to move towards deepening ESDP. However, it cannot (yet) be seen as providing EU leaders with a robust, resilient and trustworthy military instrument able to fulfil those missions for which it was created. This is particularly true in cases where an apparently straightforward peacekeeping operation is transformed into an unexpected entanglement with very capable adversaries using asymmetric means to inflict significant casualties on the deployed BG. To date, a number of lessons learned can be identified. These include:

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<sup>15</sup> On the MIC see: ‘Les opérations en coalition: modes d’organisation et dangers cachés’, Yves Boyer, AFRI 2005 op.cit.

- There is a clear lack of EU strategic advance planning capable of collecting intelligence on specific areas, preparing scenarios of military action, providing guidance for defining norms for employing equipment (notably air transport aircraft and RoEs), and so on.
- The lack of rapid airlift projection capabilities remain a serious drawback.
- The heterogeneity of military forces within the EU (training, equipment, deployability, resilience of units, intelligence capabilities, etc.) undermines the BGs' current military relevance. One way forward would be for the European armed forces to conduct intensive discussions - under the aegis of the EUMS with directive from the EUMC – on what represent an optimum force capable of conducting a complex interposition mission against aggressive opponents. They might even return to first principles and ask whether the BG is the best military answer to those questions? If so, how can it be made sufficiently capable and cohesive to cope with potentially dire military situations?

As a 'ground forces package' the efficiency of the BG is intrinsically limited. Its core - the infantry battalion - is probably insufficient to assume and exercise control of large urban areas. Moreover, the different EU-led operations in Africa have required various capabilities beyond ground forces. Airlift, reconnaissance aircraft and fighter-bombers have all participated in operations. In the future, one can expect a deployment to use sealift, requiring different categories of surface ships and probably even submarines to secure the force in transit.

These observations suggest a need to adapt the BG to the EU's requirement to be able rapidly to deploy forces in response to a crisis. In this light, the following conclusions and recommendations are put forward:

1. The EU member states have to intensify their consideration of the nature of the military forces the EU actually requires. This yet largely unresolved issue bears upon the rationale that should guide further development of rapid reaction forces. Indeed three questions have not so far found an answer: should the BG be used for *all* military contingencies on the whole spectrum of the use of force? Is participation in the BGs being used by some Member States as a means of paying lip service to EU military capabilities while actually being hesitant about deepening ESDP? How far might the concept of BG (or other type of rapid reaction force) serve as a real incentive to medium and small EU Member States to transform their armed forces - notably towards greater role specialization?
2. The EU should continue to work on developing rapid reaction air and maritime forces. Already progress has been made in defining concepts for a Rapid Reaction Air Initiative<sup>16</sup>. The planned creation of the European Air Transport Command between France, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands in October 2008 will represent a milestone in solving some of the practical problems experienced during Artemis and EUFOR RD Congo. A similar process in respect of a maritime rapid reaction concept (MRRC) should now be accelerated with four dimensions to be addressed: amphibious operations; mine warfare; surface ships (frigate) operations; strike capabilities (based around aircraft carrier capabilities).

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<sup>16</sup> See for example: EU Council Conclusions on ESDP, 2761<sup>st</sup> External Relations Council meeting, Brussels, 13-14 November 2006.

3. These various elements converge to suggest that the EU, without abandoning the BG concept, should gradually move towards the creation of more capable joint forces of about 5,000 personnel. This kind of force – one might call Task Force 5,000 (TF 5000) - would be able to act at the operational level with a combination of air, sea and ground components. Set up on a permanent basis, such Task Forces would offer the EU a potent, fully operational military capability. Moreover, such a development would avoid the complex force generation processes that may be needed in the future to deploy this kind of force within a very short time frame. Interoperability and commonly agreed rules of engagement would have been defined *a priori*, including those related to situations requiring the full use of military assets in high intensity situations. Such Task Forces are not out of the reach of EU Member States, which deploy overall army manpower of about 1.7 million, a maritime potential second only to the US (in terms of tonnage), and their combined air forces amount to some 2,000 combat capable aircraft.
4. Significant progress has to be made to make European forces such as the BG 1500 or its indispensable successor (TF 5000) more combat ready with necessary equipment, better training in multiple exercises in tough terrain (desert, jungle, mountains, urban complexes, etc.). Such tasks should be understood in the framework of ‘transformation’: in the understanding by politicians of the modern way of warfare and the reality of the use of force; and of most European armed forces towards leaner, stronger and more potent forces.

## **5. Recommendations**

1. The European Parliament should study the implications of the existing heterogeneity of training, equipment and manpower among various European forces in relation to their potential vis-à-vis BG 1500 (or others types of European military units) in order to see how to transcend those differences to the benefit of ESDP.
2. The European Parliament should examine how contributors to BG 1500 might harden the standards by which such units or and their equivalents are capable of fulfilling their objectives when deployed in a given theatre.
3. The European Parliament should inquire into how the EU Military Committee defines commons norms and rules of engagement to the operational employment of BG 1500 or other types of European military units.
4. The European Parliament should request a comprehensive EU study to pre-identify potential bases and facilities that could be used when deploying BG 1500.
5. The European Parliament should examine ways and means to foster the development of an EU capacity to lead a military operation by building up an EU OHQ.
6. Without abandoning the BG 1500 concept, the European Parliament should study the feasibility of creating more capable joint forces of about 5,000 personnel (TF 5000) that would be better suited to fulfil the goals of ESDP.

## Annex 1

### NRF and BG 1500 rotations

Année	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014
ROT/ JFC/JHQ	2	3 (Lisb)		4 (Bruns)		5 (Napl)		6 (Lisb)		7 (Bruns)		8 (Napl)		9 (Lisb)		10 (Bruns)		11 (Napl)	
CC	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
LCC	GE/ NL	SP	UK	CE	TU	IT	GE/ NL	FR	SP	UK	?	CE	IT	TU	GE/ NL	UK	SP		FR
CATF- CLF	X	SP +IT	NL	SP +IT	FR														
MCC	UK	IT		SP		UK	FR	SPN	SP	IT		FR	SP	UK		FR		IT	
ACC	AIR N	FR	UK	AIR	R	AIR	IZ	UK	FR	AIR R		AIR IZ		GE	FR	UK	AIR R	AIR IZ	
SO FCC	UK	US		US		?		IT	IT	FR	?	?	?	SP		GE		FR	?

GT 1500	S1. 05	S2. 05	S1. 06	S2. 06	S1. 07	S2. 07	S1. 08	S2. 08											
Titul. 1	UK	IT	GE /FR	FR/ GE BE	FR BE	IT HU SI	SV FI NO ET	GE FR BE LU											
Rempl.	FR		SI AF		GE NL FI		ES FR DE												

Source: French ministry of defence



## Annex 2

EU BG ROTATION CYCLE (results BGCC 2006 10 27)				
IOC	I / 2005	II / 2005	I / 2006	II / 2006
	<div>FR </div> <div>UK </div>	<div>IT </div>	<div>SIAF</div> <div>ES </div> <div>IT </div> <div>EL </div> <div>PT </div> <div>DE </div> <div>+</div> <div>FR </div>	<div>FR </div> <div>+</div> <div>DE </div> <div>BE </div>
FOC	I / 2007	II / 2007	I / 2008	II / 2008
	<div>DE </div> <div>NL </div> <div>+</div> <div>FI </div> <div>FR </div> <div>+</div> <div>BE </div>	<div>IT </div> <div>+</div> <div>HU </div> <div>SI </div> <div>EL </div> <div>RO </div> <div>BG </div> <div>CY </div>	<div>SE </div> <div>FI </div> <div>NO </div> <div>Non EU</div> <div>EE </div> <div>OHQ UK</div> <div>ES </div> <div>FR </div> <div>DE </div> <div>PT </div>	<div>DE </div> <div>UK </div> <div>FR </div> <div>+</div> <div>ES </div> <div>BE </div> <div>LU </div>
FOC	I / 2009	II / 2009	I / 2010	II / 2010
	<div>SIAF</div> <div>IT </div> <div>?</div> <div>ES </div> <div>EL </div> <div>PT </div>	<div>TBC</div> <div>BE </div> <div>FR </div> <div>TBC</div> <div>CZ </div> <div>SK </div>	<div>PL </div> <div>DE </div> <div>LV </div> <div>SK </div> <div>LT </div> <div>OHQ DE</div> <div>UK </div> <div>NL </div> <div>UK/NL</div>	<div>IT </div> <div>?</div> <div>RO </div> <div>TR </div> <div>Non EU</div>

OHQ and FHQ are providing by the nation upper each composition.

Source: French ministry of defence

## Annex 3

### Army manpower of the EU member states

(source: The Military Balance 2007; the IISS, London)

AUSTRIA *	32 900
BELGIUM	20 600
BULGARIA	25 000
CYPRUS	National Guard
CZECH Republic	14 784
DENMARK **	13 580
ESTONIA *	3 600
FINLAND *	20 500
FRANCE	133 500
GERMANY ***	160 794
GREECE ****	93 500
HUNGARY	23 950
IRELAND	8 500
ITALY	112 000
LATVIA	985
LITHUANIA *****	10 100
LUXEMBOURG	900
MALTA	
NETHERLANDS	23 150
POLAND *****	89 000
PORTUGAL *****	26 700
ROMANIA	41 300
SLOVAKIA	6 038
SPAIN	95 600
SWEDEN *****	13 800
UNITED KINGDOM	104 980

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\* Mainly conscript

\*\* Of which 6,000 conscript

\*\*\* Of which 42,566 conscript

\*\*\*\* About which 35,000 conscript

\*\*\*\*\* 1/3 are conscript

\*\*\*\*\* Including 48,900 conscript

\*\*\*\*\* 8,740 conscript

\*\*\*\*\* 8,600 conscript