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INTRODUCTION

1. The Government's European defence policy is about improving Europe's ability to react in times of crisis. Although the current main focus of the Government - along with the United States and our other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Allies and European partners - is the fight against terrorism, there are many other potential causes of crises.
2. We want to strengthen the ability of European nations to act together on foreign policy objectives. In addition to national efforts and efforts within NATO, this means strengthening the European Union's (EU) Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and enabling the EU to respond to crises, co-ordinating its civilian and humanitarian assistance with, as necessary, a military element.
3. As the lessons of Kosovo showed, to do this, European nations need significantly to improve their military capabilities. They should not continue to depend so heavily on the United States in dealing with crises in and around Europe. Europe needs to improve its ability to act in circumstances where NATO is not engaged. This will in turn produce a better, more coherent and effective European contribution to NATO, reinforcing the efforts the UK already makes throughout the Alliance and in the Partnership for Peace programme with Central European nations. The EU is not competing with NATO or duplicating its operational structures. To do so would not make sense. EU efforts will complement and strengthen NATO.
4. NATO retains sole responsibility for collective defence. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which was invoked for the first time on 12 September following the atrocities in the US, says clearly that an attack on one Alliance member is an attack on all. Nothing will change this.
5. But the use of military force today as part of a complex crisis management task, such as addressing a regional dispute or a potential humanitarian disaster, remains as likely as before. The EU will increasingly need to pull its weight in the response to this sort of crisis, both on its own doorstep and potentially further afield, particularly at times like the present when the US is heavily engaged elsewhere.
6. Europe is responding. NATO has played the leading role in the Balkans since the 1990s. But European nations have recently taken on an increasing burden of responsibility, within a NATO framework, helping to free up American forces for operations against terrorism.
7. Today's strategic environment requires forces that are readily and rapidly deployable to crisis

areas, flexible enough to do peace-keeping and humanitarian tasks as well as fighting, and are sustainable with limited support from local infrastructure. Britain appreciated this with its Strategic Defence Review (SDR) of 1998. Other European nations have also recognised the need for change and most have recently conducted defence reviews that have come to broadly similar conclusions as the SDR. Whilst many of Europe's armed forces still look much as they did during the Cold War, comprising heavy, and relatively static forces unsuited to modern tasks, they are now being reformed.

8. The EU as a whole acknowledges that it must improve its capabilities if it is to be able to deploy the types of armed forces required today. This can only be achieved by European nations spending more effectively and efficiently, and in some cases spending more, on both equipment projects and on other programmes. It means real commitments are needed to real improvements, in both the short term and the long term.

BACKGROUND

9. The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy was introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force in November 1993. It aims to safeguard common values and fundamental interests, strengthen the security of the European Union, preserve peace and international security, promote international co-operation and develop and consolidate democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and freedoms.
10. Maastricht also envisaged "the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence". The Western European Union (WEU) (a separate defence organisation that had been in existence since 1954) was requested to implement decisions made under the CFSP that had defence implications. The WEU would have the task of leading crisis management operations.
11. In the event these arrangements proved largely ineffective. The WEU never became a credible vehicle for the development of European defence policy. Furthermore, it was apparent that European nations did not have the military capability to match their political aspirations, either as part of NATO or as Europeans out of the NATO context. The crisis in Kosovo in 1999 was a sharp wake-up call: European nations struggled to deploy sufficiently quickly, even to a region of mainland Europe, the 50,000 troops required. In the air campaign, European nations flew only a fifth of the air strike sorties.
12. Current work on an EU defence dimension was initiated at St Malo in December 1998 when the Prime Minister and President Chirac issued a declaration aimed at addressing these deficiencies. They called for the European Union to have the capacity for military action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises.
13. This was not done in isolation from other facets of EU external relations policy. The EU nations recognised that effective crisis management relies on a combination of diplomatic, economic, civilian and military efforts. And whilst the EU had for some time had the ability to co-ordinate

its diplomatic and economic activities in support of policy objectives, it had not been able to bring its civilian and military crisis management capabilities to bear effectively. The St Malo commitment to address military shortfalls was echoed by a succession of European Councils in relation to civilian capabilities. European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is the military component of a broader, balanced EU crisis response capability.

14. Since St Malo, progress has been rapid. The basic approach - of developing arrangements for the EU to decide on military matters while drawing on national forces and capabilities, NATO planning support and, when necessary, other NATO assets - has been widely supported. The NATO Washington Summit and Cologne European Council, in April and June of 1999, set out the basic framework to implement this policy.
15. Further European Councils in Helsinki, Feira, Nice and Gothenburg have developed this framework. Issues that have been addressed include the arrangements for consultation between the EU and NATO, the establishment of the necessary political and military structures within the EU, the arrangements by which European nations which are not part of the EU can be properly involved in European Defence, and the civilian aspects of crisis management. But it is the improvement in European military capabilities that lies at the heart of these arrangements and that will continue to be the focus of future work on the European Security and Defence Policy.

CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENTS

16. The approach to capability improvement in the EU has been straightforward. Having set an overall goal (the 'Headline Goal') at Helsinki in December 1999, the EU member states assessed where they collectively stood in relation to that goal (at a Capability Commitment Conference in November 2000) and identified where the shortfalls were and what to do about them. The 'Capabilities Improvement Conference' in November 2001 will assess progress and agree an action plan to tackle identified shortfalls.
17. At a more detailed level, the process is complex. For example, the potential range of missions is wide (from disaster relief, through peacekeeping and the evacuation of EU nationals, to peace enforcement); the individual Member States' capabilities need co-ordination; and proposals for improvements need to take account of national programmes and NATO initiatives. In some cases capability improvements will cost money, which means that nations need to address their priorities, both within defence budgets and across Government programmes more generally.
18. Such improvements must come from voluntary national contributions. These will reflect Member States' individual circumstances and their national decision making sovereignty.

THE HEADLINE GOAL

What is the Headline Goal?

19. The European Union Headline Goal was agreed by the European Council at Helsinki in December 1999. It was adopted to encourage the development of readily deployable military capabilities through voluntary, but co-ordinated, national and multinational efforts.
20. In essence, the Headline Goal requirement is that Member States must, acting together, be able by 2003 to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least 1 year, military forces of up to 50,000-60,000 personnel, with additional air and naval elements as necessary. These forces should be capable of conducting the full spectrum of Petersberg tasks.

The Petersberg Tasks

The Petersberg tasks were originally defined by the Western European Union. They are described as humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. At one end of the spectrum an operation could be dealing with the evacuation of people from an area and providing security and assistance to humanitarian organisations in order to help restore order or allow the relevant organisations to provide relief to refugees. The definition also covers 'conflict prevention' where a force may help to prevent a potential conflict situation from escalating in order to create conditions where the conflict can be peacefully resolved. Finally, at the more militarily demanding end of the spectrum, an operation could help to resolve a crisis between two warring factions.

Work Since Helsinki

Headline Goal Task Force

21. Once the Headline Goal itself had been agreed, work was needed to analyse what would be needed to meet it. Military experts from EU capitals and the EU Military Staff, with assistance from NATO experts, have developed a statement of requirement of the forces and capabilities required.

The Capability Commitment Conference

22. At a Capability Commitment Conference on 20th November 2000, EU member states presented their national contributions to meet the Headline Goal requirements. They also made commitments to remedy remaining qualitative and quantitative shortfalls.
23. The nomination of forces that took place at the Conference, towards implementing the Headline Goal, does not mean the creation of a standing 'Rapid Reaction Force' or a 'European Army'. It identifies a pool of forces or capabilities that meet exacting EU requirements, from which forces can be rapidly assembled on a case-by-case basis for particular operations, albeit with the approval of the relevant national governments.

24. In terms of quality, those units made available to the EU must be at a high readiness and equipped with modern and high performance equipment, which meet criteria for interoperability, sustainability, and deployability. Where forces nominated do not meet these criteria they will need to be improved by 2003, the target year for the Headline Goal.
25. The target of the Headline Goal was set for EU member states alone, for two reasons. Firstly, it was important to set the EU nations a challenging target to encourage them to make real and effective improvements in their military capability. Secondly, it is clearly not for the EU to demand improvements in military capability from non-EU members.
26. However, non-EU European countries have been involved in the process to date and will continue to be involved, as they have an important role to play. The non-EU NATO Allies and other EU accession candidates attended the Capability Commitment Conference in November 2000 in order to offer their additional contributions to possible EU led operations. These contributions were warmly welcomed and the EU will continue to encourage non-EU European countries to join in with the overall aim of improving European military capabilities. Their offers will strengthen the wider pool of forces from which forces involved in European operations will be drawn.

MULTINATIONAL INITIATIVES

27. The UK has a comprehensive defence planning structure that includes the development of equipment programmes to deliver the necessary military capabilities needed to carry out UK defence policy. These programmes meet national defence requirements and take account of the UK's commitment to both NATO and the EU.
28. Equipment projects may take place on a multinational basis - such as the A-400M transport aircraft, which is being developed with other European countries. But in addition to procurement projects, the UK is currently participating in a number of other important multinational activities, particularly in the field of force deployability. These include the implementation of the multilateral Air Transport and Air-to-Air Refuelling Exchange of Services (ATARES) under the auspices of the European Air Group, and a number of bilateral air and sea lift exchanges of services.
29. The UK is already a member of the European Amphibious Initiative with France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain, while in May 2001, the Chiefs of European Navies (CHENS) forum commissioned work to set out the Maritime Dimension to European Joint Operations. This work is proceeding well and will look next at how nations will contribute to the maritime components of operations in the European joint operational theatre.
30. Such multinational co-operation brings many benefits, in a world where military operations are increasingly carried out by coalitions and alliances of states. For example, it increases cost-effectiveness through the pooling of resources between countries and improves interoperability, enhancing overall military capability. It also allows smaller nations, in particular, to contribute to capabilities that could not otherwise be sustained by individual countries.

POLITICAL AND MILITARY STRUCTURES

31. For the EU to duplicate NATO operational structures would not make sense militarily, financially or politically. The EU is not trying to compete with NATO, nor striving to replace it. Indeed, a key objective of our European defence policy is that it will strengthen NATO, not least by enhancing the European capabilities available to the Alliance. The structures that the EU have set up are only those that are required to support military decision-making and to take political control of, and give strategic direction to, crisis management operations.
32. A Political and Security Committee, an EU Military Committee and an EU Military Staff have been set up, each of which contains representation from every EU nation. All decisions require consensus, thereby ensuring that the EU's defence dimension remains firmly in the hands of the Member States. The European Parliament is informed of work in this area. The European Commission has no decision-making role within ESDP.

The Political and Security Committee (PSC)

33. The PSC, comprising national representatives from the fifteen EU Member States, is designed to be the focal point for crisis management. Its day-to-day role is to deal with all issues falling under the Common Foreign and Security Policy umbrella and to provide advice and recommendations to EU ministers, meeting in the General Affairs Council, as necessary. In the event of the EU running a crisis management operation, the Committee will exercise political control and provide strategic direction to the operation.
34. The crisis management options examined by the PSC are by no means purely military. They can include political and diplomatic measures, as well as civilian intervention in crisis hit areas (for example, help to local police forces).

EU Military Committee (EUMC)

35. The European Union Military Committee (EUMC) is composed of the Chiefs of Defence of the Member States, usually represented by their appointed EU Military Representative (most of whom also serve as NATO Military Representatives). The purpose of this body is to provide purely military advice and recommendations to the EU. It is supported by the EU Military Staff.

EU Military Staff (EUMS)

36. The EU Military Staff is composed of officers seconded from Member States and is the source of the EU's internal military expertise. Its roles include performing early warning, situation assessment and consideration of strategic options for Petersberg tasks, and it develops and implements policies and decisions as directed by EUMC. In addition, it ensures the link between EUMC on the one hand and the military resources available to the EU, from Member States or in NATO, on the other. However, the EUMS does not have the role or the capacity to plan operations itself. In most circumstances, we expect to use the existing multinational operational planning capabilities of NATO for this purpose. There is no intention to create a separate EU planning headquarters to duplicate this capability.

EU-LED-OPERATIONS

Fundamentals

37. Whatever we do in Europe, the UK is in no doubt that NATO is and must remain the cornerstone of Europe's collective defence.
- ◆ NATO is the only organisation for collective defence in Europe. Territorial defence and collective security guarantees are NATO's business.
 - ◆ NATO will continue to have a role in many crisis management operations. This will certainly be the case for the larger and more complex ones, and those where Europeans and Americans wish to act together. The EU has been quite explicit that it will act only "where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged".
 - ◆ NATO operational structures will not be duplicated by the EU. This would be unacceptable in military, financial and political terms.

Approach

38. In order to create an EU security and defence dimension without duplicating capabilities and structures in NATO, we are taking an approach which allows the EU to make informed decisions on military matters, whilst developing detailed arrangements through which the bulk of the military resources needed for planning and conducting European-led operations (e.g. planning staffs, command structures, key assets) could be drawn from resources already available in NATO, or in Member States.
39. This approach is based on full transparency between the EU and NATO. The EU will take its own decisions, and will have the necessary military expertise to ensure that the military implications are properly considered. But it will do so in close consultation with NATO.

"Berlin Plus"

40. At the Washington Summit in April 1999, NATO welcomed the developments in the European Union and acknowledged its resolve to develop a security and defence dimension. In support of this aspiration, Alliance leaders announced that they stood ready to develop arrangements to provide the EU with ready access to NATO resources. In particular, these arrangements would give the European Union "*assured access*" to NATO's planning capacities, and a "*presumption of availability*" of NATO's common assets and capabilities.
41. These arrangements are commonly known as "Berlin Plus" (because they build on an original agreement between NATO and the WEU signed at Berlin in 1996), and are current work in progress.
42. In an EU-led operation that used NATO assets and capabilities, operational planning would be carried out using NATO planning resources. For EU-led operations that did not use NATO assets and capabilities, operational planning would be carried out at a National Headquarters, for example the Permanent Joint Headquarters in the UK or Creil in France.

Consultation Arrangements

43. The permanent arrangements between the EU and NATO provide regular dialogue between the two organisations at all levels. These include at ministerial level, between the Political and Security Committee and North Atlantic Council, the Military Committees of the two organisations, and between sub-groups and working groups. Either side may request additional meetings if required.

44. Where appropriate there will be cross-representation at meetings. For example the Secretary-General of NATO at EU Ministerial meetings, the Chairman of the NATO Military Committee at EU Military Committee meetings, and in view of his responsibilities for the European Pillar of NATO and his potential role in EU-led operations, DSACEUR for meetings of the Military Committee. These are provided on a reciprocal basis. Consultation arrangements will be intensified during the period of a crisis.

NON-EU ALLIES AND ACCESSION PARTNERS

45. The European Security and Defence Policy is an inclusive project designed to involve Non-EU European Allies, the candidates for accession to the EU and other states with which the EU has a political dialogue.



46. The Nice European Council in December 2000 set out the arrangements for the involvement of non-EU European nations in possible EU-led operations. The package agreed at Nice proposed regular (non-crisis) dialogue and consultation between the 15 EU Member States and 15 non-EU European nations during each six-month Presidency. In addition, each non-EU European nation will be able to appoint a representative from its mission to the EU to follow the developments of the European Security and Defence Policy, and a military liaison officer as a contact to the EU Military Staff.
47. In the event of an EU-led operation using NATO assets, these 15 non-EU European nations will be consulted in advance and the NATO countries among them will have an automatic right to participate. For an EU-led operation that does not use NATO assets, non-EU European nations will be extensively consulted in advance and may be invited to participate. If they choose to take part, they will have the same rights and obligations in the day-to-day conduct of the operation as Member States. This is achieved through a 'Committee of Contributors', consisting of representatives from all participating nations, who will make decisions on the day-to-day running of an operation.

CIVILIAN ASPECTS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

48. Whilst Europeans are acutely aware of the need to improve their military capabilities, military power is only one aspect of the overall issue of security and crisis management. Security in the 21st Century is multi-dimensional. It demands a multi-dimensional response both in the range of institutions we call on to provide our security, and within each of those institutions.
49. The EU has the resources and skills to engage in the prevention and management of conflict, for example through external trade, sanctions, external assistance and the external parts of Justice and Home Affairs (including migration policy and transnational crime). In 1998, the EU was the world's largest provider of humanitarian assistance and the world's largest multilateral grant provider. Another example is EU involvement in drugs law enforcement programmes in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe. This will help tackle both the direct and indirect threats to regional stability posed by drug trafficking.
50. EU Member States are currently working on a set of specific targets for non-military crisis management capabilities to complement the military goal. They include areas such as police or justice officials who are available for emergency deployment to crisis hit areas. These targets will build the objectives of political and social stability and democracy more clearly into EU activities, putting greater emphasis on creating stable institutions and on the rule of law.

CONCLUSIONS

51. The European Union is a significant actor on the world stage. The European Security and Defence Policy capitalises on the political will and momentum that the EU as a whole can generate to improve Europe's military capabilities and to give the EU an effective ability to respond to crises.
52. In short, it will strengthen European military capabilities and thereby strengthen the European contribution to NATO. It will bring new responsibilities to the European Union – responsibilities which the EU is uniquely well placed to carry out. It will ensure that Europe takes a fairer share of the security burden and reinforce and sustain the relationship between Europe and North America. These aims are supported by Europeans and North Americans alike.

