



## **Major Powers in Europe: Crisis Management Policy and Structure of the EU**

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### **Abstract**

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Crisis management need a firm structure and a clear policy, these are preconditions for a successful concerted action. In addition to structure and policy, experience is of great relevance. EU Crisis Management Capacities are well developed and civilian missions are executed with success. The role of the 28 Member States and their ambitions and political will to contribute differs and the sovereignty is an important issue in military missions. NATO must be considered as well and permanent dialog between both, NATO and EU, is urgent. The necessary capabilities are in stock, the framework is in place, the political leadership and responsibility is reflected in policy and structure. Civil – military coordination and cooperation is an asset in EU Crisis management, but it needed more training and experience.

### **About ISPSW**

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The Institute for Strategic, Political, Security and Economic Consultancy (ISPSW) is a private institute for research and consultancy. The ISPSW is objective and task oriented and is above party politics.

The increasingly complex international environment of globalized economic processes and worldwide political, ecological, social and cultural change, brings with it major opportunities but also risks: thus, decision-makers in the private sector and in politics depend more than ever before on the advice of highly qualified experts.

ISPSW offers a range of services, including strategic analyses, security consultancy, executive coaching and intercultural competency. ISPSW publications examine a wide range of topics connected with politics, economy, international relations, and security/defense. ISPSW network experts have worked – in some cases for several decades – in executive positions and thus dispose over wide-ranging experience in their respective fields of expertise.



## Analysis

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### Introduction

Before dealing with the principles and structures of crisis management in Europe, we should consider the following aspects:

Firstly, we should not overlook the fact that two European nations are nuclear powers: the United Kingdom has a sea-based nuclear deterrence, which is integrated into the NATO Command and Control structure. France's nuclear deterrence is air-and-sea based and is not integrated into NATO or EU structures.

Secondly, when discussing crisis management structures in Europe it is imperative that we consider both NATO and the European Union.

Thirdly, the European Union is in possession of a highly established and experienced civilian crisis management capability, which is operational at an exceptionally sophisticated level. These operations are carried out predominantly in Africa, Europe, Afghanistan, the Ukraine and Georgia.

NATO has a very well-established and proven military crisis response management, which is effective at all three levels: the strategic, the operational and the tactical. The Strategic Headquarters are located in Norfolk, USA and Mons, Belgium.

Lastly, we need to be more specific about precisely what is meant when referring to "major powers". What are these "major powers", or better "global powers"? What criteria are employed when identifying them, and what is implied when one is considered a global power in today's security environment?

Once the Cold War had come to an end, we learned that merely assessing a nation's volume of assets or military personnel by no means yields an accurate depiction of its power. I highly value the approach adopted in the study *"European Geostrategy's Audit of Major Powers: the World's Fifteen Most Powerful Countries in 2014"*. Although this presentation is not the place for detailed discussion, I should nevertheless refer to the four criteria used by the study. These are: cultural aspects, with a focus on educational systems; diplomatic influence, based on intelligence systems – both governmental and open source; economic strength, based on a country's decision-making centres; and the military aspect, based on sustainability and the ability to dispatch troops. Consequently, only the United Kingdom is to be classified as a European global power, followed by France, Germany, Italy and Spain, all of which are ranked as regional powers.

### The EU Framework

That said, let us now turn to the key institutions, which have been established in Europe for supporting and advancing international crisis management.

The European Union has established a very comprehensive crisis management structure. Though independent and distinct from NATO, in principle, it mirrors its well-developed structure. Firstly, the EU manages civil and military crisis, and seeks to accomplish this task comprehensively by way of creating synergies between the two dimensions of crisis management, while at the same time providing scope for improvement. The 28 EU Member States have set up a complex framework of institutions and instruments (in reality only 27 are present since Denmark has opted out of the defence):



**The Political and Security Committee (PSC)** keeps track of the international situation in order to ensure coherent EU response to a crisis, exercises political control and issues strategic directives. Principle decisions are made by the European Council, comprising heads of Member States, involved either directly or indirectly through their respective ambassadors.

The EU Military Committee is the highest ranking military body set up within the Council. It is composed of defence chiefs of the Member States, who are regularly represented by their permanent military representatives. The EUMC provides the PSC with advice and recommendations on all military matters within the EU. In addition to the EUMC, the PSC is concomitantly advised by the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM). This committee issues information, drafts recommendations, and provides recommendations to the PSC on civilian aspects of crisis management.

**The Politico-Military Group (PMG)** carries out preparatory work in the field of CSDP for the Political and Security Committee. It covers the political dimensions of EU military and civil-military issues, including concepts, capabilities and operations, and missions. It prepares Council conclusions, provides recommendations for PSC, and monitors their effective implementation. It contributes to the development of (horizontal) policy and facilitates information exchange. It has special responsibility with respect to partnerships with third states and other organisations, including EU-NATO relations, as well as exercises. The PMG is chaired by a spokesperson of the High Representative.

**The Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD)** contributes to the objectives of the European External Action Service, the EU Common Security and Defence Policy and a more secure international environment by the political-strategic planning of CSDP civilian missions and military operations; it thus ensures the coherence and effectiveness of those actions as part of the comprehensive EU approach to crisis management and developing CSDP partnerships, policies, concepts and capabilities.

The CMPD has a mandate to work with different partners on crisis management. This includes international organizations, such as the UN, NATO, African Union, OSCE, or individual countries (we call them "Third States"). In most cases this partnership is based on the so-called Framework Participation Agreements (FPA). The agreements provide a legal basis to participation and contribution in and/or to missions and operations. There are more than a dozen FPAs in place. Most recently, the EU concluded FPAs with Chile and South Korea.

**The European Union Military Staff (EUMS)** – operating under the direction of the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and the authority of the High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP) – is the source of collective (multi-disciplinary) military expertise within the European External Action Service (EEAS). As an integral component of the EEAS's Comprehensive Approach, the EUMS coordinates the military instruments, with particular focus on operations/missions (both military and those requiring military support) and the creation of military capability. Enabling activity in support of this goal includes: early-warning (via the Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity – SIAC), situation assessment, strategic planning, Communications and Information Systems, concept development, training and education, and support of partnerships through military-military relationships. Concurrently, the EUMS is commissioned to sustain the EU OPSCEN and provide its core staff when activated.

**The Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC)**, which is part of the EEAS, is the permanent structure responsible for an autonomous operational conduct of civilian CSDP operations. Under the political control and strategic direction of the Political and Security Committee and the overall authority of the High Representative,



the CPCC ensures the effective planning and conduct of civilian CSDP crisis management operations, as well as the proper implementation of all mission-related tasks.

On 23 March 2012, the Foreign Affairs Council activated the above-mentioned **EU Operations Centre** with a view to improve coordination and strengthen civil-military synergies between the three CSDP actions at the Horn of Africa: the military operation EUNAVFOR Operation ATALANTA; the EU Training Mission Somalia (EUTM Somalia) and the civilian mission (with military expertise) on EU CAPACITY NESTOR (EUCAP NESTOR, formerly Regional Maritime Capacity Building – RMCB). This is the first activation of the EU Operations Centre. We must bear in mind, however, that this operations centre has far greater capacity and therefore scope for further development. But we must also take into account that one EU Member State is very reluctant to further develop the EU Operations Centre, since it believes this could weaken Europe's involvement in NATO.

In terms of military operations, EU Member States decided that the Union should be capable of conducting crisis management operations on its own, or with recourse to NATO assets and capabilities under the so-called 'Berlin-plus' arrangements. The commitment by Member States to provide a suitable EU Operational Headquarters (OHQ) is a key factor in fulfilling the EU's command and control requirements: An existing national HQ is "multinationalised" for planning and commanding EU-led military operations.

To date, five EU Member States – France, Germany, Greece, Italy and the United Kingdom – have declared their national OHQs available for an autonomous EU operation. These 'parent HQs' are respectively located in Paris, Ulm, Larissa, Rome and Northwood, and can provide the EU with the necessary premises and technical infrastructure to run a military operation with a fully multinational staff. The EU's ongoing military operations EUNAVFOR Operation ATALANTA is currently managed through such a multinationalised parent-HQ in Northwood (UK), while the EU's ongoing military operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), is conducted with recourse to NATO's command structure (Berlin plus arrangements). EUTM Somalia does not have a parent HQ, but a mission headquarters located in Mogadishu, Somalia.

EU military operations aim at **peace-keeping** and strengthening **international security**. Such operations rely on civil and military assets provided by Member States. The missions are:

- humanitarian and rescue tasks;
- conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks;
- combat forces tasks in crisis management;
- joint disarmament operations;
- military advice and assistance tasks;
- post-conflict stabilisation tasks.

### **EU Conflict Early-warning System**

The EU Conflict Early-warning System (EWS) is a tool for EU decision-makers for **managing risks** and accordingly **prioritising resources**. It involves the EU External Action Service, the European Commission, Member States and civil society organisations.

As mentioned earlier, the European Union maintains sound working relations with other international crisis management bodies. Due to the Ukraine crisis, the EU has been in constant contact with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Furthermore, the EU has established strong institutional links with



early-warning systems maintained by other regional organizations, above all, in Africa, which is of strategic importance to the Union:

#### **African Union (AU)**

The Continental Early-warning System of the AU is designed to advise the Peace and Security Council on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa. It consists of an observation and monitoring centre, also called “the Situation Room” regional mechanisms for conflict prevention as well, management and resolution units.

#### **Southern African Development Community (SADC)**

In July 2010, SADC launched its regional early-warning centre. The centre is designed to strengthen the SADC mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution. It executes this mandate by compiling strategic assessment and analyses of data collected at regional levels, sharing information on threats to security and stability within the region and by proposing solutions for dealing with such threats. It is expected to link with national early- warning centres in all SADC Member States, and with the continental early-warning centre at the African Union.

#### **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

Within the framework of its mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping and security, ECOWAS established its own early-warning system. This consists of the observation and monitoring centre at the Commission as well as four zonal bureaus located in Member States. Based on open-source information, the system is responsible for observing and monitoring sub-regional peace and security indicators, providing timely reports with recommendations to the Presidential Office.

#### **The NATO Framework**

In addition to the European Union NATO has established its own institutions and instruments for supporting international crisis management.

The key elements of NATO’s military organisation are the military committee, composed of the chiefs of defence of NATO member countries, its executive body, the international military staff, and the military command structure (as distinct from the force structure), which is composed of allied command operations and allied command transformation, headed respectively by the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and the Supreme Allied Commander, Transformation (SACT).

In practice, the chairman presides over the Military Committee. This committee, NATO’s most senior military authority, provides the North Atlantic Council and the Nuclear Planning Group with consensus-based military advice – that is, advice agreed to by all of NATO’s chiefs of defence.

The military committee works closely with NATO’s two strategic commanders – SACEUR, responsible for operations, and SACT, responsible for transformation.

On the one hand, the Military Committee provides strategic commanders with guidance on military matters. On the other hand, it works closely with the strategic commanders to bring forward – for political consideration by the North Atlantic Council – military assessments, plans, issues and recommendations, together with an analysis that puts this information into a wider context and accounts for the concerns of each member country. The Military Committee is supported in this role by the International Military Staff.

To sum up, the Military Committee serves as a link between the political leaders of the HQ and the two Strategic Commanders.

This has proven very effective and successful. But coordination and cooperation between NATO and the EU has yet to be improved. This is a purely political issue and must be solved between the particular nations. At the tactical level cooperation is a day-to-day affair, above all in naval operations.

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**Remarks:** Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

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### Über den Autor dieses Beitrags

Vice Admiral (rtd) Feldt served in the German Navy for 41 years and retired in 2006 as Chief of the German Naval Staff in Bonn and Berlin. He was engaged in sea duty assignments for 13 years, which included leadership functions on all command levels and duty assignments in different naval staffs, national and in NATO.

Since retirement, he has occupied several posts of honor. Vice Admiral Feldt was president of the German Maritime Institute until June 2012 and is now a member of its board. From 2008 until 2009, he was working for the European Commission as advisor for the “Instrument for Stability”. From July 2009 to December 2010, he served the European Defence Agency as member of the Wise Pen Team, working on topics of maritime surveillance and maritime security.

Since August 2011, Vice Admiral Feldt, in his function as a Director of the Wise Pens International, is working on studies dealing with future maritime safety, security and defence, for example “On the Future of EU Maritime Operations Requirements and planned Capabilities” together with his fellow Directors. Recently they have finalized a study about “Naval Challenges in the Arctic Region”. Since November 2013 Vice Admiral Feldt has been President of EuroDefense Deutschland e.V.



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