

SDA ROUNDTABLE REPORT

WHAT FUTURE FOR A EUROPEAN DISASTER RELIEF FORCE?



SECURITY & DEFENCE AGENDA

A *Security & Defence Agenda* Report
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SECURITY & DEFENCE AGENDA

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Session I

Taking stock of Europe's response capabilities

Europe's ability to respond quickly to global emergencies was brought into sharp focus by major catastrophes like the Asian tsunami, Pakistan earthquake and Hurricane Katrina. The EU's reconstruction and crisis management capabilities are widely seen by public opinion as inadequate. What, objectively, are Europe's assessment and response capabilities, and what are the prospects for the disaster relief force suggested by the Barnier report? Would such a unified European force affect the role of ECHO or disaster response-times? How should Europe tackle its present force projection shortcomings, and where would the Community Civil Protection Mechanism fit in?

Moderator: Giles Merritt, Director, Security & Defence Agenda

- Michael Doyle, Crisis Platform, DG External Relations, European Commission & Commission representative in the Civil-Military Cell of the EU Military Staff
- Adriano Martins, Acting Director, European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR)
- Giuliano Porcelli, Head of Capacity Planning & Operations, Civil Crisis Management Directorate, Council of the European Union
- Ricardo Vallespin, Capability Manager Manoeuvre, European Defence Agency (EDA)



Session II

How can civilian and military forces complement each other?

Europe needs military and civilian response forces to address major emergencies, and both the EU and NATO played valuable roles in the speedy European reaction to Hurricane Katrina in 2005. But, the EU-NATO relationship is still a work in progress: how can the two organisations coordinate their responses to ensure effective interoperability? What can we learn from both organisations' engagement in Darfur, and how should critical capabilities such as airlift and situational awareness be better organised? How might the roles of NATO and the UN be affected by the creation of a European disaster relief force?

- Alain Délétoz, Vice President (Europe), International Crisis Group
- Johanna Grombach Wagner, Personal Advisor to the Director-General, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- Maurits Jochems, Deputy Assistant Secretary General, Civil Emergency Planning and Exercises, Operations Division, NATO, Civil Emergency Planning
- Rear Admiral Daniel B. Lloyd, Military Advisor to the Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard
- Ingrid Nordström-Ho, Deputy Chief, Civil-Military Coordination Section, Emergency Services Branch, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- Lt. Col. Raivo-Albert Tilk, Civil Military Cell, European Union Military Staff



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: FULL BACKING FOR DISASTER RELIEF - BUT WHO SHOULD LEAD THE WAY?

The latest SDA roundtable examined the future for a European Disaster Relief Force and concluded that it was unclear. Kicking off the debate, the Commission's Michael Doyle presented an overview of its instruments and activities in the area, while the European Agency for Reconstruction's Adriano Martins presented a picture of that organisation's success in the Balkans. Pertinently, the IFRI's Christopher Chivvis asked for details of the EU's overall value in crisis response situations. The ICG's Alain Délétroz had argued persuasively that the EU should be developing its own capacities, via the ESDP, and be creating its own military HQ in Brussels. Giuliano Porcelli of the Council of the EU, however, was just one speaker to see that tangible improvements in the EU's organisational capabilities for responding to international disasters of great magnitude with a unique EU voice would only arrive once the Lisbon Reform Treaty would be formally ratified and, subsequently, the EU External Action Service would be created.

Everyone was aware that only one set of armed forces existed in Europe and that a number of EU Member States preferred them to be wearing a NATO badge. The Belgian Armed Forces' Jo Coelmont made a plea for meaningful disaster recovery exercises to be conducted, with all stakeholders present but under the auspices of the EU itself. He wanted these types of intervention, and therefore the exercises, to be "as civil as possible and as military as necessary".

That way of thinking tied in with the International Committee of the Red Cross's Johanna Grombach Wagner, who had no particular preference for who led the way in terms of military assistance in crises. She simply wanted it to be seen as clearly separate from the provision of humanitarian aid and assistance.

Overall, a feeling emerged that something had to happen, and happen quickly. When disasters strike, the recipient governments are often overwhelmed by the array of various organisations that arrive to provide aid in various ways. As for the possible form and actual emergence of the European Disaster Relief Force, that might have to wait until the second half of 2008.



DEBATE HIGHLIGHTS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- Further study conducted by the European Defence Agency (EDA) was needed to exploit the optimal synergy between military and civilian procurement requirements while avoiding duplication.
- The EU needed to streamline its decision-making capabilities when contemplating sending forces in harm's way, or risk losing global credibility as a serious disaster relief provider.
- We should not wait for the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, but test the resources and commitments we have made to note our shortcomings and correct them accordingly.
- Greater efforts to inform the public about the financial shortcomings of an optimal EU response to disaster relief had to be met, if the public are to trust their own security and safety to their governments and the European Union.

DEBATE HIGHLIGHTS

- The European Union Military Staff (EUMS) has established greater co-ordination with intra-EU institutions and Member States' transport capacities to support possible EU disaster responses in and outside the Union.
- The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty would result in a major reorganisation to the EU's current civil protection capabilities; most notably the introduction of qualified majority and co-decision Parliament/ Council procedures.
- The future of disaster relief might have to establish a clear distinction between the military and civilian representatives to avoid the blurring of military and international aid.

THE BARNIER REPORT

Background

Europe's ability to respond quickly to global emergencies was brought into sharp focus by major catastrophes such as the Asian tsunami, the Pakistan earthquake and Hurricane Katrina. That put the EU's reconstruction and crisis management capabilities in the spotlight and demonstrated to observers that the Barnier Report's recommendations (May, 2006)¹ could provide the answers for the EU. In that report, Michel Barnier had outlined 12 proposals that together would enable the EU to be better prepared to meet future crises and disasters. At the time of his report, however, Barnier noted that the proposals should be seen in its rightful context, i.e. that an EU Minister for Foreign Affairs would be in place. He also remarked that the proposals called for a certain amount of flexibility from Member States.

During the roundtable, speakers focused on the EU's capabilities and achievements, the need for the ESDP to be backed by a ratified Lisbon Reform Treaty, and the relative merits of the EU's and NATO's positions at a time of crisis. In addition, NGOs had the opportunity to give their views as to what changes were required.

“ At the time of a disaster, speed is essential but we don't want a political race to develop
Ingrid Nordström-Ho ”

The Barnier Report's 12 proposals for improving the EU's crisis response capability

1. A European civil protection force: "Europe aid"
2. Support for the force from the seven outermost regions of the EU
3. The creation of a Civil Security Council and a greater role for the General Affairs and External Relations Council
4. A one-stop shop for the EU's humanitarian response
5. An integrated European approach to crisis anticipation
6. Six EU delegations to specialise in crisis management
7. A clear information system for citizens travelling outside the EU
8. The pooling of consular resources
9. The creation of consular flying squads
10. The creation of "European consulates" on an experimental basis in four geographical areas
11. The establishment of a European consular code
12. Laboratories specialising in bioterrorism and victim identification

The EU's position

Taking stock

DG RELEX's Michael Doyle gave an overview of the Commission's range of instruments that could be used to respond to all types of crises (from natural disasters to conflict-related emergencies). Doyle explained that the actual mix of these instruments would depend on the nature and the stage of the crisis, e.g. preventative or preparatory measures, immediate responses, ongoing relief, recovery, reconstruction and stabilisation, etc.

During his remarks, Doyle focused primarily on the instruments managed by DG ECHO (the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department), DG RELEX and DG Environment's *Community Civil Protection Mechanism*. The last-named, in existence since 2001, coordinates voluntary actions of the Member States' civil protection resources and, while it was initially more focussed on disasters within the Union, it has since been also increasingly used outside of the EU, dependent on the nature of the crisis. As an example, Doyle explained that a new financial instrument has been created in regard to funding for transport (linked to crises) and that 13 civil protection modules have been established (e.g. for water pumping, aerial fire fighting etc.). These have to be self-sufficient and with well-defined tasks. Doyle stressed that the modules also have to be interoperable. However, he did stress that all of the Member States' actions were voluntary, so there were no guarantees on the outcome.

“Within reconstruction, it is not just a question of money, as the rests on how effectively it is used”
Michael Doyle

DG ECHO (EC Humanitarian Aid department)

- Humanitarian mandate to save and preserve lives in man-made and/or natural disasters in third countries
- Funding of €700 million in 2007
- 200 staff in Brussels, 100 field experts across the world
- Working with partner organisations (NGOs, Red Cross / Red Crescent family and UN organisations) in over 60 countries
- 25% of the global humanitarian aid budget



Michael Doyle

DG RELEX

- Manages a new Instrument for Stability (IfS), with on average of, over €200 million available per annum in the period 2007 – 2013 for crisis response
- Programmes managed by DG RELEX, supported by a network of 130 Commission Delegations across the world
- IfS is currently supporting actions in *inter alia* Darfur, Chad, Somalia, as well as Tony Blair's office in Palestine

Community Civil Protection Mechanism (MIC)

- Rapid reaction capability, with activations growing from three in 2002 to 17 in 2007
- Establishment in 2008 of self-sufficient and interoperable civil protection modules in 13 areas such as fire fighting, CBRN detection and sampling, search and rescue, etc.
- New instrument/competence to pool and finance the transport of assistance

The EU's ability to react

The European Union Military Staff's (EUMS's) Lt. Col. Raivo-Albert Tiik, provided an overview of the military support to EU disaster response. Last year had seen extensive discussion on the subject of disaster relief, with the outcome being two framework documents:

First, a general framework on transport was developed, as the transport was identified as a critical military asset that could possibly be required to complement civilian relief efforts. The framework document addressed the rapid identification and co-ordination of Member States' transport capacities in support of possible EU disaster response, if so decided. The concept includes the establishments of links between the EU Military Staff in Brussels, relevant points of contact in Member States as well as the two Multi-National Movement Co-ordination Centres in Eindhoven and Athens. Thanks to this network the EU Military Staff can now quickly get information on available transport. This network can be activated by a request from both the Commission services dealing with the European relief: DG Environment and DG ECHO as well as from

UN-OCHA through the Commission. The arrangements allow for better coordination of (sea/air) transport capabilities, when offered by Member States. The EU Military Staff (Movement Planning Cell), will undertake the necessary co-ordination.

Similar to arrangements for co-ordination of transport assets, the EU developed another document on arrangements relating to the possible provision of other military support, such as medical and logistic or engineering support. Following long discussions, an agreement was achieved on the basic principle that the EU Military Staff could also play a role when EU Member States have agreed to provide a concerted support to a possible request for military assets. The EU Military Staff will also be regularly updating the database of military assets and capabilities, which has been recently expanded (beyond consequence management) to cover also disaster response.

Additionally, the EU Military Staff has also established an internal alert list that includes EUMS experts from various fields of expertise, who can be called in at short notice. The alerting list is regularly updated and ensures the readiness of the EUMS to start an internal contingency preparatory work at an early stage, if so needed.



Lt. Col. Raivo-Albert Tiik

An EU success story

The European Agency for Reconstruction's Adriano Martins presented an overview of the Agency's work in Serbia, (including UN-administered Kosovo), Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Noting that the EAR's work was seen as "efficient and successful" by all stakeholders, Martins initially focussed his remarks on Kosovo, where the Agency has ensured that essential needs have been met following the 1999 crisis in that region.

Moving on to describe the work done in the remainder of Serbia, Montenegro and in Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, Martins said that those three challenges had been similar in that they had all needed rapid civil intervention. He added that the EAR's work had had a huge impact on the region's population. Although the present work of the Agency was focused on pre-accession to the EU for the countries of the region, Martins admitted that there was still much to be done on the ground. Seventy percent of young people are unemployed in Kosovo, tension is widespread and peace and stability remain fragile.



Adriano Martins

Looking towards the Lisbon Treaty

The Council of the European Union's Head of Capacity Planning & Operations, Civil Crisis Management Directorate, Giuliano Porcelli, expanded on Doyle's

European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR)

- Established in February 2000, with its mandate extended to the end of 2008
- Part of the EU's Stabilisation and Association Process
- The EAR has managed €2.8 billion of EU funds, the largest budget of any EU agency
- EU assistance to Kosovo via the Agency has reached €1.1 billion

remarks. Commenting that the existing pillar structure within the EU was not suited to today's situation, Porcelli saw a need for the efficient management of operational tasks (relating to both civilian and military missions).

“Deploying the civil protection mechanism under the ESDP could send a political signal that might not be in line with the current foreign policy of the Union

Giuliano Porcelli

He was forthright in his views, stating that the current architecture did not fit the needs of the day. In particular, he stated that the co-ordinated use of all available resources is paramount in order for the EU to carry out operations in an efficient manner. This requires inter-pillar cooperation, and the current pillar structure is simply not supportive of that necessity. Giving an example of the current "political" situation, Porcelli reminded attendees that the Council Decision establishing the civil protection mechanism envisages its possible use also "under Title 5 of the Treaty of the European Union", which is to say under the defence dimension of the EU (European Security and Defence Policy). Since the civil protection

mechanism is governed by Commission, whereas the ESDP is presided over by the Council, a joint Council/ Commission declaration was agreed laying down modalities for such using the mechanism under ESDP. However, he noted that the civil protection mechanism had never been used under ESDP so far, and expressed his opinion that one of the reasons might be that deploying the mechanism under ESDP might give a political signal, since ESDP is part of the foreign policy of the Union.

Focusing on joint civil and military operations, Porcelli highlighted the fact that within NATO's CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation), the civil capabilities were seen as additional tools available to the military commander to achieve his mission, whereas the EU saw the civil and military aspects of an operation as being at the same level, which is demonstrated by the high number of past, ongoing and envisaged purely civilian ESDP operations.

As for EU existing arrangements to respond to emergency or disasters of great proportions, Porcelli remarked on the *Crisis Coordination Arrangements*. Approved in 2006, they had been set up to establish a unified EU political decision-making process for emergencies of great proportions.



Giuliano Porcelli

With regard to the civil protection mechanism, another issue highlighted by Porcelli was that several Member States, in spite of supporting the creation of the

mechanism, prefer to use the UN system when intervening in international disasters.

Overall, Porcelli looked forward to the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, as this would allow for the implementation of several of the Barnier Report's recommendations. In particular, he would welcome the fact that, as far as the EU civil protection is concerned, its principle would be clearly stated (Art. 6) and Community competences would be neatly defined (Art. 176c). Another remarkable feature of the Treaty - he said - would be that qualified majority and co-decision Parliament/ Council would be required for decisions concerning civil protection, as opposite to unanimity required.



Ricardo Vallespin

The EDA's role

The European Defence Agency's (EDA's), Ricardo Vallespin stressed that the Agency did not get involved in operations but it played an active role in supporting the Council and Member States in their efforts to improve the EU's defence capabilities (i.e. concepts, equipment and manpower issues as training, etc.) in the field of crisis management and to sustain the ESDP. With this regard he concentrated on how EU States can develop capabilities together to increase the output needed for the operations, including Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Support, of tomorrow.

On the subject of capabilities, Vallespin noted that some EU military capabilities, usable at civil disasters as humanitarian aid are substantial, but not comprehensive. They need further development, sometimes through imaginative solutions, specially in the area of strategic transport, which was still a shortfall (along with intra-theatre mobility) – in the Headline Goal 2010 – and that the Strategic deployment capability must have access to organic Military assets, assured civilian contracted capability, spot market to fill gaps and coordination between actors (Multinational Coordination Centres). He also stated that military capabilities can complement civilian ones, but this is not the only way ahead in terms of building them up. Common civ-mil approaches from the conception of the projects can be pursued, particularly in the military contracted support area.

The Headline Goal 2010's objective was to provide the EU with the ability to react quickly at times of crisis. Vallespin argued that military and civilian capabilities were required in civil protection situations. However, It was not merely a case of coordinating the two bodies, but to study both requirements and planning from scratch capabilities which could exploit synergies. The Agency was conducting a Strategic Capability Analysis to find out the figures around combination of assets which could convey to optimal solutions for transport. This analysis used a scientific approach, via computer models and it was the EDA's aim to convince the Ministries of Defence of the wisdom of solutions obtained by this strategy.

Vallespin argued against the need for independent transportation assets within the Civil Protection Force as outlined in the Barnier Report. He felt that sufficient capabilities (dual or triple use) could be utilised in the current situation and that a new force would only create duplication.

In Summary, Vallespin considered that the EDA has been and still is studying optimal solutions in the area of strategic and tactic transport, including solutions which could be approached from a civ-mil perspective. Namely, structures and information systems to facilitate cooperative access to transportation market and long term outsourcing of transport capacity (follow up of SALIS). Also military transportation solutions both assets and coordination and control should be considered complementary to the pure civilian ones. These could be also studied with a view on the disaster release requirements. Finally he said that some of the solutions under study could be approached from a shared civ-mil perspective.

EU & NATO: which badge on the troops?

Europe needs military and civilian response forces to address major emergencies, and both the EU and NATO played valuable roles in the speedy European reaction to Hurricane Katrina in 2005. However, there are still questions as to how these efforts are dovetailed and to what extent the creation of a European disaster relief force have an impact?

“The EU profits from a more positive image (outside of Europe) than NATO

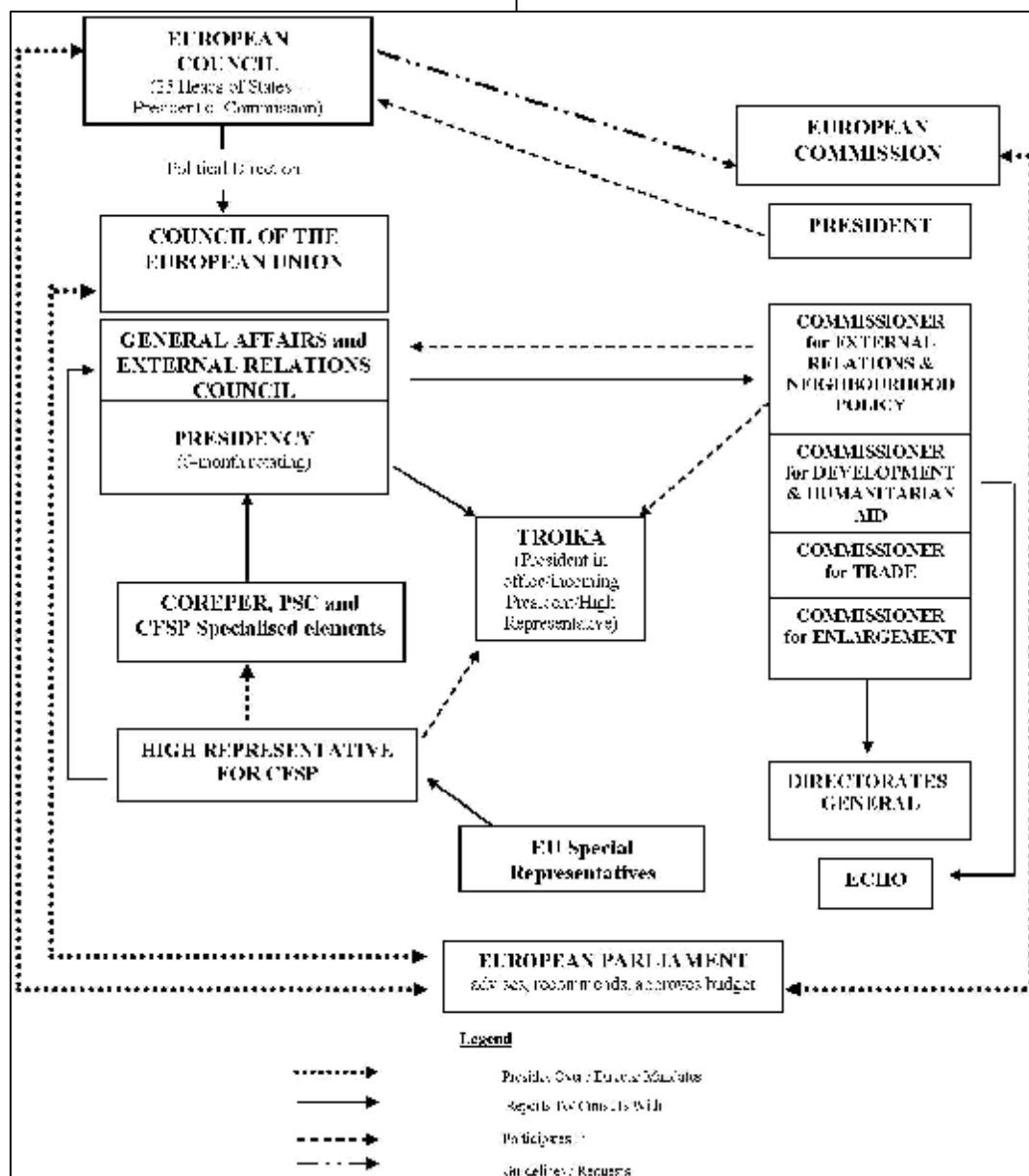
Alain Déletroz

”
The International Crisis Group's Alain Déletroz argued that although the EU and NATO were utilising the same military capacity, the political capabilities of each body were far from being equal. Viewing President Bush's image as being negative in many parts of the world, Déletroz said this led some dictators to say that NATO's actions could not be regarded as peacekeeping. He therefore felt that Berlin+ marked the end of NATO / EU collaboration and that the way forward was for the EU to develop its own capacities.

What future for a European disaster relief force?

Délétroz also noted that the ESDP had not suffered as much from the French and Dutch 'No' to the Constitution as have other aspects of European external engagement. However, he admitted that the decision-making process had to be simplified (the diagram below shows the 'Key Structures for EU External Action' as of January 2005).

Practically speaking, Délétroz wanted the EU to develop its own military HQ in Brussels. Taking Chad as an example, he said it took far too much time to sort out the logistics. Délétroz asked for clarification on what role the EU was playing in the world and he wanted the Union to put its money where its mouth was.



Key Structures for EU External Action as of January 2005

The International Committee of the Red Cross' (ICRC), Johanna Grombach Wagner did not totally agree with Délétroz that the EU's image was certain to be more acceptable than that of the US. She said the Union had no credit in some countries and that, overall, if an intervention was perceived to be political then those troops were regarded as the enemy.

Making a strong plea, Grombach Wagner argued that there had to be a clear distinction between the military, the civilian representatives and the Red Cross. The EU and the Member States could not act in a neutral manner, so care had to be taken to separate military and international aid.



Johanna Grombach Wagner

“ Civil-military forces at the time of a disaster must not be disguised as humanitarian efforts; we need clarity and transparency
Johanna Grombach Wagner ”

The United States Department of Homeland Security's Rear Admiral Daniel Lloyd shared best practices and lessons learned from the United States. Lloyd noted that the challenges of disaster response are in large part common across countries and organizations, and that related disaster response questions for leaders to con-

sider include: (1) is timely, effective response to a possible incident within the capability and capacity of the entity or organization? (2) Further, does the entity or organization have the capability and capacity to deal with multiple large-scale incidents at one time? (3) Does the entity or organization have in place the mechanisms to promote unity of effort and complementary response measures with governmental, non-governmental, and private sector partners?



Rear Admiral Daniel Lloyd

US actions in order to be prepared for disasters

It has developed:

- A national preparedness goal
- A national response plan
- A national exercise programme
- A national incident management system (with a single chain of command)
- A homeland information network (across federal states)
- A national security exercise programme
- A city interoperability scorecard
- An inter-agency planning team
- A pre-scripted request for assistance (using a language that is understood by all)

US actions in support of disaster Response

- A national preparedness goal
- A national response plan
- A national incident management system (promoting unity of effort)
- A national exercise programme
- A homeland information network (supporting situational awareness)
- A city interoperability scorecard
- An inter-agency planning team
- Pre-scripted requests for assistance (using a language that is understood by all parties involved)

Lloyd went on to describe the United States' development of mechanisms and programs for planning, exercising, and managing organizational structures for response. He also described the United States' use of certain programs for information-sharing, interoperability, inter-agency cooperation, and requests for support across government entities. The United States' system is built upon a flexible, consistent organizational structure for response to incidents of all sizes—this structure is supported by various mechanisms for planning, exercising, and evaluating capabilities, and the ability of different entities to work together successfully.

“ A flexible command and organizational structure that promotes unity of effort across multiple response entities is a critical element of success.

Rear Admiral Lloyd

NATO's Maurits Jochems resorted to Alliance principles, saying that the use of military capabilities was a last resort, in

disaster situations, and it was always at the request of the nation concerned or the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). This meant that the possible roles of NGOs, NATO and the EU in disaster relief were a “bit remote”.



Maurits Jochems

In terms of NATO and EU cooperation, Jochems argued that it was getting better and that Darfur was a good example of that. While he agreed with Délétröz that the US's image (and hence NATO's) could be improved, Jochems also thought that the EU might have similar problems if it got involved in such interventions. He did not think that NATO would have a problem with the EU's MIC playing a lead role at the request of a host country at a time of crisis, and he assumed that there would be no problem from the EU if the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) assisted in a similar way. Jochems added that the UN was leading outside of the EU area and the NATO / EADRCC area, which also includes Russia, Ukraine, the Central-Asian states and the Caucasus, and he mentioned the excellent work by Ukrainian and Russian teams, e.g. in dealing with the forest fires in the fyroMacedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. He put a question mark to the concept of a European disaster re-

“ Disaster relief is a national responsibility, so possible NGO, NATO and EU roles are a bit remote. But there can be added value in case the scale of the disaster is extraordinary.

Maurtis Jochems ”

The solution for the problem of lack of civil resources to deal with natural disasters should in his view first of all be found in building up national resources, in combination with better international coordination, e.g. through a stronger role for the MIC (or EADRCC) as a clearing-house and a better cooperation between civil and military authorities in the preparation for disaster relief operations.



Ingrid Nordström-Ho

Ingrid Nordström-Ho, Deputy Chief, Civil-Military Coordination Section, Emergency Services Branch, UN-OCHA, emphasised the need to adhere to and implement the internationally accepted guidelines. Nordström-Ho's point was that the needs "on the ground" had to be met and that the "humanitarian space" had to be safeguarded. She wanted clear

decisions on who provided the (military and civil defence) assets in any particular crisis. Time was always precious in such situations but Nordström-Ho did not want a political race to develop at those times.

She agreed that the situation had to be simplified as there were several assets databases held by for ex., the EADRCC, the MIC, the EUMS, ECHO and the UN OCHA, that included the same assets, meaning duplicate entries. In the past duplicate requests for assistance had been made to Member States, as UN, NATO and/or EU Member States which had been a source of irritation. The above organisations therefore always copied each other when requests were made. Other lessons to be learnt from the past included:

- The need for better pre-deployment and post-operational activity
- Improved coordination at the highest levels, e.g. NAC approval required before requests for assistance by the UN could be met.
- Better communications and information sharing
- Improved planning and division of tasks

The debate proper

Don't wait for Lisbon

The Belgian Armed Forces' Jo Coelmont was confident that the correct structures, money and processes existed but he still felt that something was missing. Coelmont did not want to wait for a crisis to happen or to wait for an, as yet, unratified Lisbon Reform Treaty.

Coelmont's suggestion was for the EU to be pro-active by organising a "demanding exercise" that would utilise all of the assets (and involve the UN, NGOs and NATO) and cut across pillars. Importantly this would be under the auspices of the EU. Coelmont argued that it would provide answers to the missing parts of the puzzle and it would throw some light on the question – were the Barnier Report recommendations justified?



Doyle commented that the EC would participate in the International Humanitarian Partnership's (IHP) biennial TRIPLEX exercise, scheduled to be next held in Norway/Sweden in autumn 2008.

Porcelli was not optimistic on the possibility of improving in the short term the co-ordination of or establishing synergies among the European actors involved in disaster relief. He recalled his involvement in the *Fribourg Process* led by OCHA (see table below for results and intended benefits) back in 1998 - 2000. The process highlighted the existence of

many "collision of mandates" among the various actors claiming to have a role to play in international disaster relief, and concluded with the Fribourg Forum, where senior policy makers responsible for international humanitarian assistance in Europe and the New Independent States committed themselves to enhance coordination and cooperation in the provision of humanitarian assistance in the region.

He observed that, notwithstanding the apparent value of the Fribourg Process, little follow-up to it could be registered and nowadays only few people know it. For example, NATO and the EU continue carrying out separate exercises on international disaster assistance, with little or no mutual participation, except for occasional observers. Porcelli recognised that some Member State maintain that NATO has nothing to do with civil protection - a belief he did not agree with. Eventually, he pointed out that a State had many options at its disposal to deliver international assistance, such as via the UN system, via the EU through the civil protection mechanism, via NATO, or directly to the stricken country. In the end, a State will always apply its right of decision, which will be dictated by several factors, among which those of political nature will prevail. Vallespin said that the EDA would support such comprehensive exercises, as it would be useful to compare the results to see if they confirmed the predictions from the Agency's computer models.

(cont. pg 20)

The Fribourg Process (1998 - 2000)

Results

- A policy framework facilitating collective and individual undertaking in the field of humanitarian assistance by concerned states and organizations
- Plan of action emphasizing operational and political responsibilities within existing structures and networks
- Identification of remaining gaps to translate operational needs into policy
- Assessment of future policy needs

Intended benefits

- Sound regional policy environment for effective and efficient humanitarian assistance
- Improved coordination of humanitarian initiatives
- Enhanced bilateral response
- Effective and efficient delivery of relief goods and personnel
- Strengthened civil relief institutions



Q&A cont.

Doyle noted that various advances had been made since the Barnier Report had been issued, thus allowing progress to be made on many of its recommendations. He further clarified that the Barnier Report did not envisage the creation of a new standing force, but that a call would be made on the existing resources of the Member States, albeit that some additional resources might need to be acquired. Furthermore, Doyle reminded on several key requirements: the need to respect neutrality, the need for continuously improved dialogue and the need to always protect those delivering assistance. Doyle went on to say that the recently enhanced Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Commission services engaged in disaster response was having an impact as there was clear evidence of stronger coordination on the ground (particularly amongst EU stakeholders).



On the financial side, Doyle confirmed that in the case of post-disaster reconstruction, the Community geographic instruments came into play. While it was hard to forecast the amounts that would be available without knowing the specific disaster context, he noted that, for example, an amount of some €350 million was reallocated and directed towards reconstruction work connected to the Asian Tsunami (following on around €120 million managed by DG ECHO for earlier emergency relief). For Doyle, it was not just the amount of money that was important, but how effectively it is used.



The final Q&A

In the final session, the Universidad Politecnica de Catalunya Barcelona's Manuel Medina asked if there were methods for knowing when the risks associated to a crisis meant that it was time to call for inter-regional or international assistance. IFRI's Christopher Chivvis asked for details of the EU's added-value in crisis response situations, Defence Strategy & Solutions' Nigel Hall wanted to know what needed to be changed to make the EU more ready to face crises of all kinds, and he also asked why a 'Barnier force' was needed. Overall, there was a general call for more clarity in the way that all organisations acted at such times.

Panellists Responses			
	Délétröz	Grombach Wagner	Jochems
Are early warnings effective and when does one know when to go international?	It 's complex and the situation is improving but there is no way to have a system that gives clear-cut recommendations to all situations.		The affected country must decide.
What's the EU's added-value and why is the Barnier force needed?	The EU is a 'unique body' that can act as a model for the world; the AU is trying to follow on the security side. The big challenge is Kosovo and if the CSFP (Brussels) cannot react on its own doorstep, then it will no longer be credible.	It's common sense, but it is important to avoid blurring the lines.	Not sure if the Barnier force is needed as a lot more could be done by national civil-military coordination.
What are the priorities in civil protection?		The key is to ensure that civil-military actors are not disguised as humanitarian aid workers.	

Conclusions

Summing up, Merritt concluded that shortfalls existed across the process and that both European public opinion and the European political class were both convinced that the EU needed to improve its outreach so that it could help at times of crisis and disaster. However, he acknowledged that the public had to be made aware of why any financial support (to meet the shortfalls) was necessary.

Merritt could see the arguments for the Barnier recommendations as the recipient governments were often overwhelmed by the array of different donor organisations beating at their door. Therefore, the Disaster Force could cut the Gordian Knot of the "rather complex institutional arrangements". He added that this would fit in with the French thinking about re-energising European policy-making and might therefore emerge as a key item on the French Presidency's agenda of 2008.

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