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THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN SECURITY

Willem van Eekelen

Secretary-General, Western European Union

At the time of the signing of the Brussels Treaty in 1948, the emerging Cold War focused attention on the security aspects of transatlantic relations and the common defence of Western Europe. It is interesting to remember that the US could only mount the Marshall Plan after countries of Western Europe had declared themselves willing to cooperate closely along the whole range of international relations. WEU went further than NATO in its Article V providing for automatic military assistance in case of aggression against one of its members, but in practice the emphasis shifted to NATO. As European integration progressed, we saw several attempts to extend it to defence and security. Joint effort provided the diplomatic and economic framework for the successful reconstruction of Europe and for a containment of the Soviet threat on the basis of collective security arrangements, the Brussels and Washington Treaties.

The failure of the Genscher-Colombo plan of November 1981 showed that some European Community member States were not prepared to contemplate cooperation in the field of defence. Because of its membership (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom), WEU was seen as the only forum where common progress could be achieved on security questions. The Euromissiles issue relaunched the debate on burden-sharing and the nature of a European pillar within the Alliance. In 1984 we had the first joint meeting of Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers of WEU countries in Rome. Ministers adopted the Rome Declaration, which is the basis of WEU reactivation. It spelled out a dual objective, namely to define a European security identity and progressively to harmonize member States' defence policies. Following a French initiative and using a report drafted by the Council's working groups, WEU Ministers adopted the Hague Platform on 27 October 1987. It represented a notable achievement in defining a European defence identity. At the same Ministerial meeting, it was decided to start negotiations with Spain and Portugal on their accession to the modified Brussels treaty. Both countries formally became full members on 27 March 1990. In the meantime, the threat to freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf had provided a first opportunity for operational coordination under the aegis of WEU, with the mine-sweeping operations in 1987 and 1988.

In its present format, WEU is organized around two components, one intergovernmental and the other parliamentary. The intergovernmental structure comprises all bodies dealing with the intergovernmental consultative process and operational coordination as well as the Institute for Security Studies. The WEU Parliamentary Assembly has 108 members. Its Secretariat is based in Paris where the Assembly holds twice-yearly ordinary sessions.

The intergovernmental structure is organized around the Permanent Council, supported by the Secretariat. It has been based in London since 1954, but was transferred to Brussels last January. The WEU Council meets at two levels. The Permanent Council meets every week, for the day-to-day management of the Organization as a whole, and to monitor its Working Groups. The Council meets at Ministerial level at least twice a year. The Ministerial Council is jointly chaired by the Foreign and Defence Ministers of the country holding the twelve-month Presidency. The WEU Presidency is responsible for keeping European NATO informed. The Council's main working groups are the Special Working Group (SWG) dealing with the political aspects of security issues and the Defence Representatives Group (DRG). The outer groups deal, for instance, with space cooperation, arms control verification, the open skies initiative and security in the Mediterranean.

The WEU Institute for Security Studies started working in Paris on 1 July 1990. Its primary goal is to stimulate the debate on future European security structures in view of the new and potential risks arising from geopolitical developments in Europe. The Institute contributes to the development of a common language for a European strategic culture. Its two inter-related tasks are to conduct studies and independent research for the Governments of WEU member States and to stimulate a wider debate on European security issues, in particular through the development of a dialogue with institutes from countries of Central Europe. The Institute operates mainly through a combination of study groups, seminars and conferences. It can appoint "associate fellows" on a short-term basis.

Apart from its plenary session, the WEU Parliamentary Assembly holds ad hoc sessions and symposia. Its committees deal inter alia with defence, political affairs, technology and aerospace, parliamentary and public relations. Its main steering bodies are the Presidential and Standing Committees. The 1984 Rome Declaration called for a greater role for the Assembly, particularly in helping to inform public opinion in member States of policy statements on European security by the Council, which "expresses the political will of the individual governments". WEU is currently the only European body with a Parliamentary Assembly mandated by treaty to discuss defence matters.

The dramatic political upheavals which we have witnessed in and around Europe since 1989 have led to a dynamic adaptation of existing European security structures to the new environment. Once ratified, the Treaty on European Union will significantly accelerate the process of European integration. Western European Unions's role and place in the emerging European security order has been given a new definition. WEU is developing its operational role and structures as the core of European security.

The two Declarations adopted by Western European Union member States in Maastricht define WEU's role as being the defence component of the future European Union and as the instrument for strengthening the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance. They set the course for WEU's development by outlining a three-stage process. The first stage makes Western European Union "*an integral part of the development*" of the European Union and the link between the European security and defence identity and the Atlantic Alliance. A second stage will be "*the eventual framing*" of a common European defence policy, which might in a third stage "*lead to a common defence*". Implementation of the measures listed in the Declaration on the strengthening of WEU's operational role and on the shaping of its relations with the European Union and the Atlantic Alliance started immediately after the Maastricht Summit.

In June 1992, at their Petersberg meeting near Bonn, the WEU Ministers decided to concentrate on three categories of missions:

- humanitarian and rescue;
- peacekeeping;
- the tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.

Our new Planning Cell, which became operational in April 1993, will refine these missions and draw up force packages on the basis of "forces answerable to WEU", i.e. forces countries are prepared to make available to WEU. This applies to existing multinational forces (Eurocorps, multinational air mobile division in Central Europe, UK-Netherlands amphibious force) and national forces. Subsequently the Planning Cell will plan their transport, logistic support, communications and command arrangements. Here we do not want to duplicate what exists already and we intend to designate existing headquarters for the various scenarios our forces may have to deal with. The key word here is double hatting: giving several tasks to these headquarters, both for NATO and WEU missions.

Finally we hope to be able to give a new impetus to armament cooperation. WEU is taking over the functions of the independent European Programme Group and of the Eurogroup and we hope that our political-military framework will lead to better results than in the past. Personally, I believe that our multinational force packages could be an important stimulus in the direction of standardisation and inter-operability.

The simultaneous eclipse of communism and the Soviet Union brought about a fundamental change in East-West relations, but is also impacting on West-West relations. Analyzing the new situation, I should like to make the following points:

1. To the West collective defence no longer is the overriding priority of national and transatlantic policy. Today the emphasis is on the possible use of military capabilities outside our own territories, no longer to defend our own integrity and independence, but rather in support of wider political objectives. The decision to send forces to Kuwait or Bosnia has become very much a political decision, which may be viewed differently in the various capitals of Western Europe and North America.
2. Clearly the security of one country continues to impact on the security of the whole of Europe. Nevertheless, the notion that security is indivisible no longer is self evident, but will require hard work, politically and diplomatically, to retain the validity it had during the Cold War. Under threat of massive surprise attack it was evident that only a common and immediate response would be needed. Today such a common response will require much more analysis, consultation and planning. Times have become much more complicated.
3. In these new circumstances multinational organisations exclusively devoted to defence lose much of their relevance. In the first place because economic and political issues take priority over military questions. Today's problems cannot be solved by military solutions. At best our military capabilities can be used to underpin political settlement, both in reaching them and subsequently in implementing them. That is why NATO today is emphasizing the consultation function and its new role of outreach to its former adversaries. That is, I believe, also one of the reasons why WEU is receiving so much attention, because together with the European Union we are able to provide more convergence than any other organisation, i.e. convergence between foreign, economic and security policies. In other words, although WEU has the characteristics of a military alliance with an automatic military assistance clause, its real significance lies in becoming the operational arm of the European Union (you notice me using the word "operational" rather than "defence arm", because we are moving beyond "defence" in its traditional context). At the same time we want to become the European pillar of NATO, in a transformed alliance with a new, more balanced relationship between the European and the North American members.
4. After the collapse of communism and the disappearance of the Soviet Union, both CSCE and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council have included all its successor states. The rationale was that we should extend our code of conduct to all of them, extending rights and obligations to all of them, not wanting to exclude or isolate any of them. One of the questions the forthcoming NATO summit will have to discuss is whether intensification and differentiation is possible simultaneously and, if so, how this could be done. In WEU we have adopted a different approach from the

beginning. We limit our "Forum of Consultation" to the Visegrad countries, Bulgaria, Romania and the Baltic countries, i.e. countries which are close to us geographically and are moving closer to the European Community. Most of them already have association agreements with the EC along the new "European" model. We are modest in calling them our "consultation partners", but already we are moving towards some very concrete forms of cooperation. The most striking example is the WEU embargo action against Serbia on the Danube, supporting the three countries involved in the operation: Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. At the same time we are conscious of the fact that our Forum has to be supplemented by bilateral relations with countries which are not or not yet associated with the EC. This applies in particular to the Ukraine, but also to Russia.

5. At Maastricht the WEU countries agreed that all member countries of the EC would be eligible for membership of WEU as well, subject of course to negotiation on a treaty of accession. As a result, Greece will become a full member, Denmark and Ireland observers. I assume the same will apply to future members of the EC, first to Austria, Finland and Sweden, later to the other countries of Central Europe. So they could become full members or observers. Of course, we hope that ultimately all the members of the EC will also become full members of WEU, because otherwise the potential for convergence would not be exploited and ambiguities would arise between the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union and the operational activities of the WEU. Transitional arrangements are always possible, but we should aim at full synchronisation of membership.

6. What does this mean for NATO? Of course, it is for the Alliance to decide on its own enlargement. I can only point at some implications if this question. The major one to me is whether it is conceivable for WEU to extend security guarantees which are not matched by NATO. I must admit that under today's circumstances I would find that very difficult. But nobody knows how our relationship with Eastern Europe will evolve, how NATO will be transformed, and to what extent we manage to build a collective security system covering the whole of Europe. In general terms, I would prefer the "Royal road" of first extending the EC, then WEU and finally consider membership of NATO.

Some advocate earlier enlargement of NATO and I presume that the NATO summit of January 1994 will discuss this question. Personally, I have a feeling that it will be easier to extend the obligation to consult under art. 4 of the Washington treaty to the NACC partners than to extend the guarantees of art. 5. But, again, that is up to NATO.

On a strictly personal basis I should like to raise two points:

What kind of guarantees would really be helpful in enhancing the perception of security? To whom should they be given and where do we draw the line? Such guarantees cannot be directed against Russia, because we no longer regard her as a threat in general terms, nor more specifically in strategic terms as she no longer borders on our Central European partners. The problem then boils down to the question to what extent security guarantees are relevant to our present major preoccupation with minority problems and regional instability.

The other point is even more conceptual. Guarantees only work if there is a sufficient degree of consensus and common approach to foreign policy. Otherwise there would be the risk of a country obtaining guarantees following an independent policy and exerting leverage on the countries issuing the guarantees. Only if there is sufficient maturity all around, consultation machinery with reciprocal rights and obligations and the acceptance of policy restraints will it be possible to find agreement on security guarantees.

This leads me back to my earlier emphasis on the European Union in providing a convergent approach, drawing security policy into a wider framework of foreign and economic policies. It seems to me that the countries of Central Europe are best served by such a broad convergent pattern of relations and that we should concentrate on filling in all its different aspects, rather than concentrating somewhat selectively on separate issues.

WEU's Forum of Consultation provides the opportunity for our partners to explain their security concerns and for the WEU members to take account of them in their policies. The system will be successful when our consultation partners see their concerns reflected in our policies. At the same time, we shall have to examine ways and means of doing things together. I already mentioned the Danube embargo operation as an example. Similarly, Poland and Czechoslovakia participated in the monitor missions of the EC in Yugoslavia. It may be possible to extend this cooperation in the future execution of WEU missions, which, as you may know, will concentrate on humanitarian missions, peacekeeping, and peacemaking. Participation of our consultation partners in these activities and their planning would draw them closer to our day-to-day reflections and activities and could be instrumental in building the community of interests which is the indispensable basis of future European integration.