

Towards a Common European Policy on Security and Defence: Challenges for the "Post-Neutrals".

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An Assessment from an Austrian Viewpoint

With the Treaty of Amsterdam coming into force on May 1, 1999, and the European Council Declaration on Strengthening the Common European Policy on Security and Defence in Cologne of 4 June 1999, a further step was gradually made towards the realisation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). From the viewpoint of the neutral and alliance-free EU members which are at the same time observers in the WEU, several priority questions arise:

- **First**, how will the operations for crisis management in the framework of the WEU, the so called Petersberg tasks, be shaped?
- **Second**, will essential functions of the WEU actually be transferred into the EU?
- And **last**, how do "post neutral" countries such as Austria deal with the forthcoming challenges in the national political and also military area?

In some neutral or non-aligned states, especially also in Austria, a discussion on the further development of the CFSP has been going on for some time, to the effect that it would be required, in particular, to create a "European Security Union" widely independent of NATO, or at least widely politically emancipated from the USA. Therefore it seems appropriate to first provide a rough outline of the development of the CFSP.

With the Treaty of Maastricht of December 1991 the CFSP was formed, including "the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence" (Art. J 4 par. 1). A functional relationship with the WEU was established as well. At the WEU ministerial meeting in Petersberg in 1992, an explicit separation of Article V and non-Art. V contingencies was undertaken. Under the so-called "Petersberg tasks", military units of WEU member states, acting now under the authority of WEU, can be employed for: humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crises management, including peacemaking.

Within the framework of the NATO summit in Brussels in January of 1994, the relationship with the USA and the role of the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within NATO were to be clarified. In doing so, the Europeans recognised NATO as Europe's essential security forum and acknowledged the strengthening of the European pillar of NATO, which was to take place by the development of the WEU. On the other hand, the political and military structure of NATO was to support the activation of the ESDI, which

was to be enabled by the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) concept and the reliance on NATO assets in WEU operations. With this, the measures for a provision of "separable but not separate capabilities" for WEU-led operations were introduced. Let us also recall the resolutions of the North Atlantic Council of Berlin in June of 1996, where the Europeans explicitly agreed "to build a European Security and Defence Identity within NATO".

With the Treaty of Amsterdam, a transfer of the functions of the WEU to the EU, at present still with the exception of Article V, was finally initiated, whereby the EU was to be put in a position carry out operations for crisis management by means of political-strategic control over national and multinational structures of armed forces outside NATO or also by usage of NATO structures. NATO, in its Washington Summit Communiqué of April 24, 1999, has taken this development into account and now offers the realisation of the ESDI to the EU. In doing so, it fundamentally sees the emphasis residing within NATO. The capacities for autonomous actions are to be restricted to those cases only, "where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged". Access to capabilities and common assets, up to now to be made available to the WEU, is now – after the transfer of functions of the WEU to the EU as agreed upon in Cologne – being offered to the latter. As a result, the EU could for the first time become a player in the security policy field, inasmuch as it could now also include the use of armed forces in its catalogue of means for crisis management.

It is fair to assume that a common security and defence policy within the EU is to be developed complementary to NATO. This is also in accordance with the decisions of the foreign and defence ministers of the WEU in Bremen in May of 1999, when, for the purpose of fulfilling the Petersberg tasks, "appropriate decision-making bodies and effective military means, within NATO, or national and multinational means outside the NATO framework" were requested, while "these structures and capabilities" are to be developed "in complementarity with the Atlantic Alliance whilst avoiding unnecessary duplications".

Two principal issues, however, remain unresolved:

- **First**, the issue of a possible transfer of the assistance obligation from the WEU treaty to the EU;
- **Second**, the issue of decision and action autonomy of the EU, as well as the question of the division of tasks between WEU and NATO in general.

These questions will decisively determine the span of action of the "post-neutrals". On the other hand, though, the way the "post-neutrals" will be included will essentially influence the extent of integration of the EU in the context of the CFSP.

The Challenge of "Assistance Obligation"

The decisions of the EU summit in Cologne on June 4, 1999, concern only the implementation steps in regard to the Petersberg tasks, were not met with unanimous approval also within the WEU. First, the current course does not

lead to the creation of a genuine common European defence. On the contrary, the current goals do not extend beyond the development of capabilities for the execution of a *certain type* of crisis management operations. Second, it is totally unresolved how a genuine autonomy for Europe vis-à-vis NATO is to be developed, because a removal of the present subordination of the W/EU to NATO is not in sight. Under these premises the request for the development of also a common European defence still exists, which at least implicitly means questioning the relevance of the ESDI within NATO. In addition, the WEU assembly expressed very clearly that Article V of the WEU treaty on collective defence and the treaty on the close cooperation with NATO must become an integral part of the TEU.

The essential restraint for the development of a common defence policy are, however, the neutral and the non-aligned states, inasmuch as they have up to now not been willing to assume assistance obligations. With this, it remains clear for the present that collective defence will have to be undertaken outside the WEU for the near future. It would be similar for actions for crisis management if one of the "post-neutral" states would a priori block military operations. Also, this case would force the states willing to act to do it outside the WEU. The "post-neutrals" should be persuaded at least in these cases to use the right of "constructive abstention" in accordance with the Amsterdam treaty, if they do not want to participate in a WEU operation.

"Decision Autonomy" of the EU: Division of Tasks Between NATO and WEU

According to the Declaration of Cologne, the EU requires the capability for autonomous action for the purpose of executing Petersberg missions. Autonomous action is to be based on credible military capacities, the decision making capability and the willingness also to use it, in order to be able to react appropriately in the case of an international crisis, without prejudicing the options of NATO to act. Based on this wording and in light of the experience in dealing with the conflicts in the Balkans, a wide acceptance of "NATO first" by the European states can be implicitly deduced. Whether the Europeans are actually willing to build capacities independent of the US inside and, above all, outside the framework of NATO has to be viewed rather sceptically in spite of different rhetorics in some European state offices. In the Strategic Concept of NATO which was decided upon also by the 11 EU member states, the support by NATO for EU-led operations is explicitly assured whereby NATO – as the decisive security policy body – has again defined the future framework.

From a political point of view it can be assumed that the need for an explicit division of tasks may be rather small both on the part of the European states as well as on part of the US. Whether and in which way the US will participate in crisis management also on the European continent, will largely depend on its national interests. In case of an American engagement, however, NATO will remain the decisive forum for political-military measures. That the engagement of the USA in non-Article-5 problems happens neither automatically nor unconditionally was demonstrated by the initial phase of the Yugoslavia war at the beginning of the 90ies as well as by operation ALBA for the stabilisation of the internal situation in Albania in the spring of 1997. Keeping also in mind

the ever increasing "technological asymmetry" between the US and Europe, the transatlantic link offers above all the possibility to use American potential in manifold ways, especially where the Europeans are not in a position to bring forth anything equivalent in the near future. In view of drastically reduced defence budgets in most EU countries it is required to also voice doubts whether the willingness exists here at all to make comprehensive investments in separate, purely European capacities. The reliance on American political as well as military potential, especially also in the context of a European crisis management, may therefore very well be in the general interest of the Europeans. Hence, the avoidance of clear areas of responsibility between purely European and NATO options for action might actually be in the principal interest of at least some of the leading European states for the present. For the time being, US leadership seems, for various reasons, to be the lesser of two evils to the majority of the Europeans, as it allows an extensive delegation of security policy to NATO.

Of course, also the breaking points of the Atlantic Alliance have to be mentioned here – apart from neo-isolationist and unilateral tendencies in the US, which could lead to an increased emancipatory reaction in Europe, the two essential problem areas can be pointed out:

First, the development of permanent European structures that endanger the integrated NATO command structure,

Second, the establishment of a European communication and decision making centre which would prejudice the NATO Council.

Apart from the obvious difficulties in coordinating transatlantic policies, Cologne brought about a specific definition in the area of decision finding for EU-led Petersberg missions. For ensuring political control and strategic command power, the EU requires capacities for situation analysis, in the area of intelligence reconnaissance, and for strategic planning. In order to ensure this, the following detailed demands are made:

- regular (or ad hoc) meetings of the Council for General Affairs with the inclusion of the defence ministers;
- a permanent body (Policy and Security Committee) consisting of civil and military experts;
- an EU military committee which can express recommendations for the Policy and Security Committee;
- an EU military staff as well as a situation centre;
- other facilities such as a satellite centre and an institute for Security Studies.

Essential questions are still unresolved in the organisational and functional realisation as, for instance, the position of "Mr. CFSP" and the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit (PPEWU), possibly as staff for "Mr. CFSP"; also, the interaction of the PPEWU with the functions provided for in Cologne is still unclear from today's point of view.

It is to be expected that above functions, which at present exist to a large extent in the WEU, will probably be transferred to the EU by the end of the

year 2000, without being able to make statements at present on the specific organisational structure or, respectively, their specific effectiveness. One of the key issues will be the actual planning capacity of the EU military staff and whether it will substantially extend beyond the present capacities of the WEU staff. A further essential question arises in the area of intelligence. Up to now, NATO and the WEU treated their intelligence reconnaissance findings very restrictedly with the WEU relying heavily on NATO findings. It is harder to imagine that NATO would now for the future adequately provide the EU and thus also the non-NATO members with intelligence reconnaissance findings. On the other hand, it is also questionable whether the EU member states are able and willing to establish appropriate intelligence capabilities outside NATO and, above all, without the US. Also here, substantial problems arise due to the overlapping of NATO members and non-NATO members.

According to Cologne, the implementation in the area of armed forces structures provides for making troops available especially suited for crisis management, without unnecessary duplications especially with regard to existing NATO structures. Repeatedly, the EUROCORPS is mentioned as the core of a EU crisis reaction force, as was the case in the course of a French-German summit in Toulouse at the end of May of 1999. In the case of EU-led operations without use of NATO assets, those national or multinational European forces are to be deployed which are provided for by the EU states. With regard to headquarters this would mean the possibility to use an existing multinational command structure or a national headquarter that is in a position to integrate multinational structures. The central question in this area is the one of size and spectrum of use for exclusive EU operations. From today's point of view, a restriction to only the lowest spectrum of the Petersberg Tasks is imaginable: Humanitarian and Rescue Tasks.

In general, for the strengthening of the military capacities of the EU, more and more attention is given to the definition of so-called "convergence criteria", as were also valid for joining the EURO-zone. According to British concepts, the portion of the national budget for procurement, research and development is to be defined at 40 percent, the total armed forces is to be reduced to 0.3 percent of the population, which in many cases would mean walking away from compulsory military conscription; the defence budgets would in no case be reduced any further and certain quotas of the national forces would have to be defined which could be drawn on for "out of area" missions. Especially the last demand largely conforms to the demand for autonomous European armed forces, as voiced in the context of the EU. To which extent the establishment of military convergence criteria seems doable within the framework of the EU is not foreseeable at all at present. However, it can be assumed that especially the neutral and the non-aligned states will view this development at least with reservation. If, however, analogous to the Euro- and the Schengen-zone, an integration zone came into being also in the defence area within the EU, this would without doubt increase the pressure to participate on the neutral and the non-aligned states. In the British concept the idea is remarkable that individual nations specialise in specific areas of armed forces in order to also achieve respective savings effects. The price for an integration of the armed forces forced in this way would however be that larger operations would not any longer be possible within the national framework which would massively

impact national sovereignty in the last decisive area. As attractive as this idea might be for the smaller EU and NATO states, resistance of the larger EU and NATO states especially in this point would be expected. Of interest would be a development where those NATO states which are also EU members would decide on such an integration within the EU. Would the neutral and the non-aligned states within the EU then renounce military integration in favour of remaining sovereign, and abstain also from the alliance then manifest within the EU?

The Declaration of Cologne decisively states that aside from the extensive inclusion of the WEU associate members (NATO but not EU members like Turkey, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary), above all, the WEU observers (EU but not NATO members like Austria, Sweden, Finland and Ireland, as well as NATO member Denmark) can participate fully and equally in EU-led operations. With this, the specific scope of action of the WEU observers is addressed.

The Austrian Perspective

In spite of formal continuance of the neutrality statutes, Austria – since May 1, 1999, the day the treaty of Amsterdam came into force, – is not any longer obliged to observe the neutrality stipulations with respect to the CFSP. Of course, the "classic neutrality" has been substantially restricted to a large extent already for some time due to Austria's membership in the United Nations, the participation within the framework of the NATO Partnership for Peace, above all, however, due to the membership in the European Union. With the Treaty of Amsterdam coming into force, neutrality was de facto repealed from a legal viewpoint. Austria must now be designated as an alliance-free state – like Sweden and Finland. The amendment to the federal constitution coming into force simultaneously on May 1 now provides that Austria can participate in both tasks according to Article 17 par. 2 of the treaty of Amsterdam, as well as in measures "with which economic relations with one or several other countries can be halted, restricted or fully restricted". With this, there remains rather a "neutrality à la carte" or a "rest function" of neutrality in all those areas in which the EU or the UN are not involved. According to a 1997 amendment of the Austrian constitution, it is now exclusively at Austria's discretion to participate in a peace operation of the UN, the W/EU, NATO, or the OSCE: peacekeeping, disaster recovery operations, humanitarian tasks, and search and rescue tasks, where measures of peacekeeping comprise the full spectrum of peace support operations. With this, it is possible for Austria also in the NATO context, to fully participate in operations as provided for in the "enhanced PfP", therefore also in peace enforcement.

Not only the practice, exercised for decades, of participation in peacekeeping operations of the UN, but also the granting of airspace and through-transport usage in the course of the second gulf war at the beginning of the year of 1991 vigorously showed that Austria has always subordinated its neutrality statutes to the resolutions of the UN Security Council. It is worth mentioning that Austria is a participant both in the SFOR mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as in the KFOR mission in Kosovo, with one contingent in each, although

these are NATO-led operations of which the security mandate is based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Peace enforcement operations – as experience from the most recent years shows – will also in the future be carried out not under UN command, even if mandated by the UN, but by individual regional organisations or ad hoc alliances. Austria's participation in operations within the framework of the UN will therefore also in the future be limited to classic "peacekeeping missions", in many cases also with an extended spectrum of tasks. However, even within varying degrees of intensity of the engagement, there remains a world-wide span of action for Austrian soldiers in this area.

More robust peace operations in the European context will, according to the situation either be carried out within the framework of NATO and, to a greater extent also of the W/EU, or in the context of a lead nation operation mandated above all by the UN, as was shown by operation ALBA under Italian leadership, in which Austria also participated. The probability for future missions according to the model of ALBA is difficult to assess. However, especially from the experience of ALBA, a lot speaks for the idea to execute missions in the European context in the future on principle by reliance on appropriate structures, such as NATO or W/EU. Since the OSCE as a regional arrangement according to Chapter VIII of the UN Charter cannot decide on operations of a coercive nature without permission of the Security Council, its military concepts are in principle restricted to classic peacekeeping operations. Actually it sees its mission in the civil area of conflict management, of CSBM (Confidence and Security Building measures) and armament control.

The NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) in the meantime offers a decisive span of action, which offers the partner states, including Austria since 1995, the possibility of participation in peace operations. Of course, the respective decisions are made by the North Atlantic Council and the partner states are only informed or, respectively, consulted. Therefore, only after the respective decisions have been made in NATO, the specific area of participation is given for the partner countries according to the guidelines of NATO. Since on principle "robust forces" are planned for the management of peace operations by NATO, they are most often used according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The "enhanced PfP" decided upon in May of 1997 finally explicitly provides for missions in the total spectrum of peace operations, therefore also "including military combat missions under varying topographic and climatic conditions". According to the decision of the Austrian federal government of November 1998, Austria participates in the extended PfP, namely in regard to the total spectrum of the PfP. Due to the prevailing political practice, participation in a PSO (Peace Support Operation) was made dependent on an authorisation by the UN or the OSCE. Whether in the future a resolution within the framework of the EU will suffice, cannot be assessed at present even though this is a key question.

For W/EU-led operations a change in position may be possible in this case; for pure NATO non-Article 5 operations which are not mandated by the UN, doubts have to be raised for the time being. Here Austrian policy may be faced with serious issues in any case, considering the still existing respective neutrality policy reservations. A typical example of this were the NATO air raids against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in the spring of 1999 when

Austria refused to grant use of its airspace based on neutrality reasons. According to usual political practice – the question may be debatable in international law – this is at present the limit of participation options in European crisis management, particularly as it was a NATO operation and not a W/EU operation. The example of Austria's participation in KFOR after the end of the NATO air raids in Kosovo also clearly shows the commitment to the resolutions of the UN Security Council and the inclination for engagement in the framework of classic peacekeeping operations. The deployment of Austrian troops shall only take place after the conflict parties have concluded a respective agreement.

Optional Solidarity in Crisis Management, No Solidarity in Common Defence

The current political position of the federal government, supported with pseudo-neutrality-policy arguments, thus denies Austria any participation in the area of common defence as well a participation in non-U.N.-or-OSCE mandated PSOs in the framework of NATO or of the W/EU, at least according to the most recent political interpretation. Whether Austria will also in the future participate in W/EU missions without UN or OSCE mandate will be one of the political – not legal – key questions of the future.

Since the resolutions of Cologne provide for PSOs also without UN or OSCE mandate – which was accepted by the neutral states – it can be deduced in general that the neutral states can participate in peace operations in the framework of the W/EU also without UN or OSCE resolution if they so wish. At least from an Austrian point of view, by acceptance of the EU as quasi mandate-issuing organisation, a further substantial cut in the "remaining neutrality" is to be noted. When a resolution is passed in the context of Title V of the TEU, a member state can abstain from voting but has to refrain from anything that could impact or prevent the respective actions of the EU. On principle, however, every member state has the right to prevent resolutions that require unanimity by a veto which includes in any case resolutions with military policy or defence policy implications. Whether, however, the mere raising of neutrality arguments would be met with political acceptance for the prevention of actions of the EU within the Union is more than questionable.

Also in the case of a "constructive abstention" for "neutrality policy" reasons, time will show, to which extent these political principles can be maintained, since actions of the EU must not be impaired. Neutral behaviour may in the context of the EU become obsolete completely since both carrying of resolutions, which also includes "constructive abstention" as well as the prevention of a resolution by usage of the veto right contradict neutral behaviour in any case. On principle, such a behaviour is also in contradiction with the meaning of solidarity. In essence, the continuance also of "the remaining neutrality" is, in its tendency, largely incompatible with the general objectives of the CFSP which is now being completed in its political scope by the foreign and security policy component after the realisation of the economic and monetary union. It appears highly problematic, however, to claim one's full right of political participation as EU member as "post-neutral" state such as

Austria without in consequence being in a position to support this claim by appropriate military participation.

Another perspective might be of interest at that point: Given the EU will further specify CFSP, a transfer of primary decision finding from the NATO-EU level to the US-EU level could be desirable for the "post-neutrals", as it offers the possibility of decision making participation at the highest level and as it would downgrade the decision power of NATO. However, in this case the question arises as to the rightfulness of the Austrian claim for decision participation. Like all post-neutral countries, in contrary to the majority of the EU members, it is not included in the decision making structures of NATO. The "post-neutrals" could then be placed in a position to participate, via the EU, in decision making on the highest political-strategic level on a NATO mission, in which they themselves cannot participate or do not wish to participate.

Also in the specific execution of a PSO, problems may arise due to the political practice resulting from the neutrality tradition which may raise doubts in the reliability but also in the usability of the Austrian contingents. Especially the current and expectable scenarios of crisis management show that classic peacekeeping operations (agreement of the conflict parties, implementation of an arrangement, impartiality, etc.) are rather the exception. On the contrary, due to the high escalation potential of conflict areas in which PSOs take place at present, "robust" operations are becoming the norm. The credible capability of the peacekeeping troops to meet any escalation possibility by superior forces from the beginning not only requires the deployment of appropriately "heavy" forces but also an adequate mandate with the respective rules of engagement. The change from weapon use for self defence to weapon use for peace enforcement can be achieved quickly and, in the extreme case, even the extension up to a war scenario would be feasible in the context of an Article V mission. Of which political and military value would a contingent then be, which according to national stipulations is excluded from an operation and has to be withdrawn?

An essential threshold to participation in peace operations that needs to be passed at least by Austria is the willingness to send combat troops or, respectively, to participate in combat operations. Independent of the mandate situation, the rules of engagement and here especially the rules of weapon use, which are in the end nationally given, decide on the actual spectrum of participation options in peace operations. Here the usual position of Austria to take part in a PSO only when it concerns the implementation of a peace agreement and not its making may perhaps even in the medium term not be any longer maintainable vis-à-vis those states which have to bear the dangers and burdens of enforcement operations. Here, the start-up phase of the KFOR mission in June 1999 should be mentioned when in the difficult phase of moving into Kosovo, it was required to fill the power vacuum and to establish the basis for security and order. Solidarity will also have to mean the willingness to carry risks together in the whole spectrum.

Limited Military Participation Options in the Framework of European Crisis Management

Due to the present status of Austria's integration into the Euroatlantic structures, but also as a consequence of the real capacities of the Austrian armed forces there are serious limitations both in the decision making and planning process as well as in specific military participation options.

The voting process, whether a NATO operation takes place at all, and to what extent the participation of partners is possible, takes place up to now among the NATO states within NATO. Should this result in an operation exclusively executed by NATO, be it for the defence of the Alliance or for European crisis management, Austria is not in a position to participate in the decision making process as it is not represented in either the political nor the military planning bodies. With the example of the NATO air raids against the FRY in the spring of 1999 it can be reconstructed that the "post-neutrals" could not only not influence this phase of crisis management, which at least militarily had entirely passed to NATO, but also, as in the case of Austria, obstructed it by the refusal of air space usage approvals by taking the neutrality position. In this context the agreement of the Austrian federal chancellor to the NATO air attacks expressed in the EU Council seems odd and shows the contradictions of the Austrian foreign and security policy.

Participation options in the framework of the NATO PfP in peace operations are limited to partial tasks which are offered by NATO and which take place under the mission command either of one of the leading NATO commands in the operation, as in Bosnia-Herzegovina, or of one in an operation area leading nation, usually a larger NATO nation, as in Kosovo, where the Austrian contingent is under the command of the German brigade. In WEU-led operations under the political and strategic control of the EU, the "post-neutrals" at present have the advantage of full political participation and the option, at any time, to declare an "intention to contribute" to the operation. From this point in time, full participation also in the planning process of the WEU should be made possible. In order to ensure that, a Dedicated Planning Cell Unit (DPCU) shall be established at the military staff, more precisely, outside the military staff in a restricted security area, to include the observers in the planning. The experiences gained in exercises up to now have been very satisfactory, at least from an Austrian viewpoint.

Heavily reduced options exist for Austria, last but not least, due to the limited military capacities. Apart from the political will to participate in the full spectrum of the Petersberg missions or also in PSOs in the framework of the enhanced PfPs, there is also a lack of suitable troops for combat operations. Austria's long tradition of participation in UN peacekeeping operations and the armament structure of the country with its strong civil defence component have up to now not led to the creation of units consisting mostly of professional military, which would be especially suitable for combat operations abroad. Here, alternative models, for instance in the form of regional cooperation have to be found, as is being tried, for instance, in the framework of Central European Nations Cooperation on Peace Support (CENCOOP).

Finally, also a specialisation in certain weapon categories would also be a possibility to create areas of emphasis, which would also allow participation in the full spectrum of PSOs. With regard to Austria, mountain troops, logistics units or also medical units are mentioned repeatedly. As attractive as such specialisations seem due to their favourable economics, then also the problem arises that these units are always requested too frequently, and that Austria, whether it wants to or not, would be participating in almost every PSO. With this Austria would lose span of action ability.

Conclusion

Essential prerequisites for effective crisis management are early perception of the crisis and its determining factors, the definition of a strategy for the management of the crisis, as well as its implementation. At the level of the EU or, respectively, NATO, this not only means the establishment of a basis of common will but also the willingness to deploy the planned or provided for forces. For Austria, as for any state in the Euroatlantic security unit, this means a double challenge. On the one side, it has to conduct its national 'will forming process' with respect to the current crisis, and on the other side, it has to define its position in the scope of the leading institutions. Different policy options shall therefore be considered:

If Austria, as was clearly shown, is not any longer neutral within the framework of the UN and now also the CFSP, then a "remaining neutrality" continues in the sense of a political position, above all with regard to non-U.N. or OSCE mandated NATO non-Article 5 operations and in all cases of collective defence. On the general political level, therefore the demand ensues for a quick clarification, transparent to the outside and internally, of the Republic's status relevant in respect to security policy.

Solidarity taken seriously in the European context, which in the end refers to especially collective defence, implies in consequence the assumption of assistance obligations also by Austria. Due to the manifold overlapping of WEU and NATO this also requires full membership in NATO.

It will be difficult for Austria to evade the issue of non-U.N. mandated NATO non-Article 5 operations. In no case should neutrality arguments be used as a pretext to block such operations if they are rightfully justified or necessary. Solidarity can mean specifically not to deny participation in the borderline area of legality and legitimacy, if the protection of basic human values requires it.

It must become the imperative of Austrian policy that actions in the framework of the CFSP are not prevented in any case on the basis of purely "neutrality policy" motives. In case Austria does not wish to participate in an action, the right of "constructive abstention" is to be used.

In the scope of the structure adjustments now planned according to Cologne, first the participation opportunities of the "post-neutrals" in the framework of the W/EU processes should improve since in the new institutions an equivalent status is provided for. The new capacities shall in particular comprise:

- Decision Making
- Analysis of Situations
- Intelligence
- Strategic Planning

Austria is directly challenged in the implementation of the resolutions of Cologne and in doing so it first needs to participate in a constructive way in the implementation of the planned institutions and then participate actively in all respective institutions. With regard to the now newly to be established institutions, from an Austrian viewpoint, the demand for fast implementation and full participation would need to be raised in the Political and Security Committee, in the EU Military Committee, in the EU Military Staff, in the Situation Centre and in the Satellite Centre.

Finally, it is necessary to adjust the structure of the armed forces in Austria in such a way that participation is possible also in combat missions without, in doing so, losing the political margin for action by resources prejudice. In this context also adjustments of matters of law are required which enable a timely deployment of ready units. The principle of voluntariness must be placed on another basis here.

This should in the future also enable the participation in European crisis prevention forces, for instance, in the EUROCORPS if it should be restructured to a fast intervention corps, e.g., according to the model of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) of NATO, and if it should be deployable out of area.

In conclusion there now arises only a superficially satisfactory picture for the "post-neutrals". Further development of the CFSP has not been hindered for the time being and the institutional structure of NATO and W/EU offers them extensive participation – and, in part, also decision making opportunities – but hardly serious duties. Solidarity taken seriously means to still take some further steps towards the adequate assumption of political responsibility, of material and personnel as, in the end, also of risks and losses.

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