

COMMON EU DEFENCE vs. GLOBAL WARMING THE LISBON TREATY -- KEY TO LISBON STRATEGY*)

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During the 1982 Falklands crisis, Margaret Thatcher reminded that diplomacy without force is like an orchestra without instruments. In this terminology, the EU's current defence policy resembles an orchestra of deaf musicians with large instruments, and lacking a conductor. The Lisbon Treaty will harmonize this current chaos.

Our EU military might still reflects the centuries-old legacy of European enmities and we continue to arm ourselves as if to fight one another, rather than opposing an external foe together. The unnecessary duplications and chaotic diversity of armaments and technology -- even among NATO's European Allies -- makes European defence spending far less effective than that of the US. It is clear why: instead of one common EU defence, CED, we have 27 national ones.

Europe spends for defence around 200,000,000,000 (200 billion) euro annually, which is close to half of the USA's defence budget. But -- as the EP's April 2002 Resolution underlines -- the European spending is five times less efficient. I.e., every EU defence-euro does about as much good as 20 euro-cents spent by the US.

The unfortunate calculation yields that our 200 bln have the efficiency of only 40 bln, while the balance of 160 bln is just waste of money, poured in global warming, GW, by the European states. Or, alternatively, a US type efficiency would multiply our 200 bln will to do almost twice as much as the US do in defence sector, i.e. will have the power of some 1 000 bln (1 trillion) euro if efficiently spent today.

These arguments are particularly valid for EU/NATO nations that spend for defence highest percentage of GDP. Bulgaria, with almost 2.6 % is among the top 4 in EU and top 6 in NATO in that respect, will be among the first to support CED.

The return of France in NATO's military organization and the leadership of President Sarkozy towards "Europe de la défense" create a unique environment for the deepest and most productive of all forms of European integration -- the defence one. NATO needs a stronger European pillar, and both NATO and the EU need much closer integration with each other, which now is doable.

In late 2007, EC's Vice President Guenther Verheugen proposed the creation of a common European arms market to optimise EU spending. This first step by the Commission is commendable. But the definitive decision is imbedded in an option, provided by the Lisbon Treaty. EU27 must agree on how to transfer national defence policies within the competence of EU, which to harmonize the defence efforts of the 39 European nations of NATO, EU and the Balkans, as

well as the distribution of labour with our trans-Atlantic Allies -- USA and Canada.

CED will have several huge positive side effects: it will strongly boost science and education, EU space activities and EU Space Agency, research and development, IT sector and industry. CED will consolidate the fragmented EU defence sector into a more attractive and competitive partner to the American one. Thus the **CED will become a major magic key to materialization of the Lisbon Strategy**, LS, which aims at making EU the most competitive economy in the world, in particular at least as competitive as the US. (But let us remind that the US has one national Pentagon, not 50 state ones.) To get off the ground, LS obviously needs new unconventional means and large financial support for intellectual activities, which are duplicating activities which frequently fit within the defence sector. Therefore -- especially in context of periodical financial crises – the natural and smooth realization of LS should be found only in synergy with CED, in joint opposition to GW.

In terms of values, CED will be acknowledgement that **common security is not only a common privilege, but also a common duty**. And therefore we shall have to recognize (some of) the national defence spending for contribution to common EU cause and set up some common EU standards for them. CED will also accelerate the creation of a common European (not only EU) army -- which seems to become inevitable some day – but the longer we delay it, the more opportunities we miss. Countries that prefer to stay out of CED may be welcomed to contribute, alternatively, to other joint EU efforts: say, fight GW or achieving UN millennium goals.

CED will build upon the roots of the Euro-Atlantic community – the European Coal and Steel Communities and NATO, both conceived in 1949, as a first step to reunite Europe. Only this way will the EU take the place it deserves of a Great Power in world defence, security, industry, science and technology, which is the moral of the Lisbon Strategy.

*) The article is part of a national discussion "Europe Reload", under the auspices of European Minister of Bulgaria, inviting the citizens to recharge Europe with fresh ideas, leading to new quality of life.

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