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# Ten Years of EU European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) Missions:

**The European Way for Attaining Global Peace and Security**

By Alexandra George
17 November 2009

On 17 November 2009 the European Union marked the ten year anniversary since the Council of the European Union established the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) in June 1999 following the Western Balkans conflicts. The principle goal was to enable the EU to play a greater role in promoting international peace and security thereby becoming a “more capable and credible global actor.” This was stated in a Ministerial Declaration - ESDP Ten Years – Challenges and Opportunities – which was adopted at the External Relations Council meeting in Brussels on 17 November.

 **The case of EULEX Kosovo**

The ESDP is a major element of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and EULEX Kosovo is its biggest mission. In concrete terms, this has meant ever greater EU involvement on the global stage since 2002, the key goal being to deal with “conflict prevention, crisis management and post conflict peace-building.” As of October 2009, the EU had successfully deployed 22 ESDP military and civilian missions and operations in several countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. Six are ongoing in the Western Balkans, Caucasus and Eastern Europe, four are in Africa, three in the Middle East, and one in Central Asia.
EULEX Kosovo -- a police and civilian rule of law mission -- is the largest ESDP Mission to be deployed to date, and includes civilian police, prosecutors, judges and customs officers. Other similar missions, though with more limited mandates, include the EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia; EUPOL in Afghanistan mandated to train the Afghan police force; EUJUST LEX Iraq, a judicial mission which is training 770 judges, investigating magistrates, senior police and penitentiary officers; EUPOL COPPS Palestine which supports the Palestinian civil police, security sector reform and criminal justice. An example of ceasefire monitoring is the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia) established on 1 October 2008 following the South Ossetian war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008.

**A future of global challenges**

Despite such global involvement, many challenges remain, the Ministerial Declaration stated, logistical and budgetary ones for example, especially given the increasing demands around the globe for EU “actions in crisis management” which strive to “strengthen our collective capacity to promote peace, security and stability in the world.”

The Ministerial Declaration further emphasized that EU decisions be built “around our common values of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and rule of law, in conformity with the principles of the UN Charter and international law.” The key aim was to “enhance our own security, as well as the security of our neighbours and the wider world.” Thirteen key areas that the EU needed to act upon were identified.

Firstly, most importantly the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009 will augur a “new chapter in the history of the EU’s common foreign, security and defence policy” by “strengthening its common institutional framework.” For example, the enhanced position of the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, now renamed the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, will mean a “strong, effective and visible role for this office.”

Secondly, a new foreign service, the European External Action Service (EEAS), will provide a more effective framework to undertake early action, crisis management and post conflict development. EU Battlegroups (15 have been established) will provide the EU with a rapid response force.

Thirdly, more efforts will be made to fight cross border crimes like human trafficking, drugs and goods, illegal migration and transnational organized crimes.

Fourthly, the EU calls for deepening EU cooperation with key partners like the United Nations, NATO, and African Union and other international and regional partners and NGOs.

Ultimately, the architecture of “a more secure Europe and a more secure world” depends on the EU’s ability to rise to these tasks and deal effectively with conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict peace building.

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