

The role of EU Battlegroups in accomplishing EU defence ambitions



SOURCE IMAGE: (Ministry of Defence, Slovenian Armed Forces, 2012)

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Executive summary

This study examines the role the European Union Battlegroups can play in accomplishing EU security goals. In doing so, an assessment is made of the capabilities and shortcomings of the Battlegroups in light of EU defence ambitions.

The security environment of the European Union is changing. Since the Cold War, the EU has not had to cope with traditional ways of conducting warfare. Instead, the EU Member States must cope with new threats such as terrorism. Naturally, a new security environment requires a new approach to conflicts. Recently, the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Global Strategy have outlined new defence ambitions for the EU in order to counter threats. Amongst other priorities, these documents include the ambition to enhance military capability cooperation, capability building, and the ambition to create a larger role for the EU Battlegroups.

In order to better understand what role the Battlegroups can play in accomplishing security goals, their capabilities and shortcomings are discussed. An analysis of the EU military operation Artemis serves as a proxy for studying the capabilities and shortcomings, due to the similarities between Operation Artemis and a Battlegroup operation. In terms of capabilities, the Battlegroups are characterised by their rapid deployment during times of crisis. The EU forces are designed to carry out both military and civilian operations, thanks to a large variety of possible deployment scenarios. Furthermore, the Battlegroups provide a positive contribution to enhancing cooperation and capability building between contributing EU Member States.

The main shortcoming of the Battlegroups is the lack of funding for EU military operations, making their deployment less attractive due to higher costs. Other obstacles include the incoherence of EU forces and EU Member States' lack of military capability.

The study concludes by arguing that in the future, the Battlegroups are more likely to play a larger role in accomplishing EU security goals. The Battlegroups' capabilities align with the EU ambitions, since the EU has articulated the ambition to create a larger role for the Battlegroups. Thanks to the implementation of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), the EU is taking action to remove the obstacles that prevent Battlegroup deployment.

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List of abbreviations

CSDP:	Common Security and Defence Policy
CP:	Conflict Prevention
CSDP:	Common Security and Defence Policy
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
EDA:	European Defence Agency
ESS:	European Strategic Strategy
EU:	European Union
EUBG:	European Union Battlegroup
EUGS:	European Union Global Strategy
EUMC:	European Union Military Committee
EUMS:	European Union Military Staff
FHQ:	Force Headquarter
FN:	Framework Nation
FOC:	Full Operational Capability
HA:	Humanitarian Assistance
HRVP:	High Representative and Vice President of the European Commission
NEO:	Non-combatants Evacuation Operations
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NRF:	NATO Response Force
OHQ:	Operational Headquarter
PESCO:	Permanent Structured Cooperation
PSC:	Political Security Committee
SOPF:	Separation of Parties by Force
SRMA:	Stabilization, Reconstruction, and Military Advice to third countries
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations

Introduction

The European Union (EU) has entered a period in time where more cooperation is needed in order to obtain peace and security on the continent, especially when the wider regions of the Union are becoming more unstable and unstable. New threats appear, and it is time for the EU to develop collaborative and cohesive responses to contemporary security issues. International conflicts, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, failed states, organised crime, and threats to regional security are constantly up for debate in EU institutions. According to Frederica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Europeans must be ready to respond to crises on a global scale, which means that EU Member States need to train their troops to improve their deployability and interoperability (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.47). The term interoperability can sometimes refer to the EU Member States' willingness to join forces and defend EU interest through the Battlegroups (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.3). This provides just a glimpse of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS), or the EU Global Strategy. This document, dated from 2016, outlines the current security priorities of the EU. For example, one of the priorities is to create an integrated approach to conflicts.

This is where the European Union Battlegroups (EUBG) are needed. In terms of military force, Europe has been depending on NATO ever since its creation in 1949. During the armed conflict in Kosovo in the late 1990s, the EU failed in the execution of the effort to solve the conflict. Consequently, the United Kingdom (UK) and France held a summit in 1998, in the French coastal city Saint Malo, to discuss a European security and defence policy. This was a turning point in EU history, as the portfolio for European defence and military capabilities has been expanding ever since. The eventual Saint Malo declaration focussed on creating a common military force that could collaborate with, or operate independently from NATO. After the success of the French-led military operation in 2003, Operation Artemis, France and the United Kingdom sought to build upon this success. In 2004, the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) developed the Battlegroup concept, in order to make the EU more capable, more coherent and more responsive in responding to military crises, especially in coping with terrorism (Matlary, 2009, p.55).

The Battlegroup concept is the main military capability of the EU. EUBGs are battalions holding approximately 1500 troops, including all combat and service support as well as all that is needed to deploy and sustain themselves for at least 30 days, and up to 120 days.

As mentioned earlier, Battlegroups were designed to respond to international conflicts ad hoc. To demonstrate a rapid response, Battlegroups should be available within 15 days following a decision taken by the European Council. Battlegroups are usually formed by a group of member states, with one leading state as the Framework Nation (FN). The EU has access to two Battlegroups to be used in conflict. After a period of six months, the Battlegroups rotate, meaning that two new Battlegroups are on standby (Lindstrom, 2007, p.14). Despite the fact that Battlegroups have been deployable since 2007, they have never been used for military operations.

In my dissertation I will analyse recent EU defence policy in the face of a changing international security landscape. I will examine the capabilities and shortcomings of the Battlegroups concept, which leads to the research question: *What role can EU Battlegroups play in accomplishing EU security goals?*

This question will be answered using the following sub-questions:

1. What are the EU's defence ambitions in tackling contemporary EU security challenges?
2. What are the capabilities of Battlegroups?
3. What are the shortcomings of Battlegroups?

Readers' guide

The research is designed with two components. The first component, or chapter 1, of this thesis will analyse the contemporary defence ambitions of the Union in tackling security issues, since it will provide a clear outline of the direction in which the EU is heading in its defence policy. Additionally, it will contribute to forming a recommendation to determine the most effective way to use Battlegroups. The second component concerns the Battlegroups. Through an in-depth analysis I will address the capabilities and shortcomings of the EU troops, to further determine their role in EU security. This analysis can be found in chapters 2 and 3. In the concluding remarks, the capabilities and shortcomings will be discussed in light of the defence ambitions. The conclusion is accompanied by recommendations for further research. Following this, a list of references is provided.

Methodology

For this thesis, qualitative research methods are applied, since an in-depth approach is required in order to answer the research question. Qualitative research allows for a thorough study of the EU defence ambitions, as well as the capabilities and shortcomings of Battlegroups. Quantitative research methods are only used to provide insight into the military capabilities of EU Members. For this reason, qualitative research remains the most appropriate research method.

The study is divided into two components. The first component aims to acquire insight into the defence ambitions of the EU in tackling security issues, based on the latest documents issued by the EU. The study prioritizes the Lisbon Treaty of 2007, and the EUGS. By establishing the EU's ambitions for its defence policy, the study attempts to determine to what extent the capabilities of the Battlegroups meet with the needs of the Lisbon Treaty and the EUGS. These two documents form the core of the research for the first component. Nonetheless, additional EU policy documents, treaties, and press releases by relevant EU leaders are used to further elaborate on the defence ambitions of the Union. Furthermore, the use of academic articles and secondary sources, contribute to conducting an objective and critical analysis.

In the second component, which provides an analysis of the current state of the Battlegroups, literature based sources are the main foundation of the component. These sources outline the capabilities and shortcomings of Battlegroups, in order to describe the role the Battlegroups can play in accomplishing EU security goals. These sources have been retrieved from online libraries and databases, in order to ensure the academic nature of their research. However, since this study deals with a sensitive area of security and defence policy, several sources are not publicly available. For example, this study has no access to information about Battlegroup training results, or extensive figures on military capabilities. In addition to desk research, an explorative interview was conducted at an earlier stage of the research. The interview was conducted with Lieutenant General Ton van Osch, who is the former Director General of the EU Military Staff, and is a Permanent Military Representative to the NATO and the EU Military Committee. He is an expert on the topic of EU defence, and provided a valuable contribution to this study. Results from the interview have contributed to the better understanding of both research components, since Van Osch provided relevant information on the strategic framework of the EU's defence priorities and on the functioning of the Battlegroups.

To further strengthen the study on the capabilities and shortcomings of the EUBG, this dissertation analyses a case study on Operation Artemis, which was a successful EU military operation with similarities to a Battlegroup mission. It therefore serves as a proxy for studying capabilities and shortcomings, since the Battlegroup has never been deployed. Despite the relevant contribution of this analysis, this study takes into account that conclusions must be drawn while acknowledging that Operation Artemis was not an EU Battlegroup mission.

Based on the analysis of both components, the study concludes what role Battlegroups can play in accomplishing EU security goals. After the conclusion, recommendations provide advice for further research in order to strengthen the Battlegroups and increase their role within EU defence policy.

Chapter 1: What are the EU's defence ambitions in tackling contemporary EU security challenges?

The European Union has reached a point in time where it has to join forces in order to protect its citizens. Since this study aims to find out what role the Battlegroups can play in accomplishing EU security goals, these security goals must firstly be identified. The first chapter explains the Union's defence ambitions in dealing with contemporary security challenges. First of all, the chapter provides a concise overview of the role of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and several EU bodies that help to create and carry out defence policy. Thereafter, the study outlines the EU's defence ambitions as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Global Strategy. The objectives ascertained from these documents are substantiated by relevant implications that support these ambitions.

1.1 Overview

In order to better understand the functioning of EU policy, this study outlines the foundation of EU defence policy, the CSDP. The first part of the chapter concerns the important role of the CSDP, after which this study will elaborate on the EU bodies concerned with creating and carrying out the Union's defence policy.

1.1.1 The Role of the CSDP

The main policy of the EU that concerns defence and security issues is the CSDP. The CSDP is an integral part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which is the foreign policy wing of the EU. According to the European External Action Service (EEAS), the institution that assists in drawing out and carrying out the EU's external policies, the definition of the CSDP is as follows: *"The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) enables the Union to take a leading role in peace-keeping operations, conflict prevention and in the strengthening of the international security. It is an integral part of the EU's comprehensive approach towards crisis management, drawing on civilian and military assets"* (European External Action Service, 2016a). In order to promote peacekeeping, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security, the EU has created several policies over the course of time. Most recently, the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Global Strategy were adopted and laid the foundation to further develop security and defence priorities for the Union (European Union External Action Service, 2016c).

1.1.2 EU Security and Defence Bodies

The HRVP has the ability to submit proposals concerning the CSDP. In doing so, the HRVP can rely on the work of several EU bodies involved with security and defence. There exists several decision-making instruments, to make full use of the capabilities of EU Member States in crisis mode, that fall under the scope of the CSDP.

First of all, the EU Military Committee (EUMC) is comprised of all Chiefs of Defence of the member states and is the highest military body within the Council. The EUMC advises and makes recommendations pertaining to all military matters within the EU. Another important body is the EU Military Staff (EUMS). Under the authority of the HRVP, the EUMS is the main source of military expertise. Together with the HRVP, the Military Staff's main focus is coordinating military missions and operations. Lieutenant General Ton van Osch was the Director General EU Military Staff from 2010 until 2013. One of his tasks was to get approval from the Chiefs of Defence in the EUMC for military operations and missions proposed by the EUMS (Interview, October 11, 2017). The EUMS aims to deploy EU military forces for crises prevention, stabilisation and evacuation missions (European External Action Service, n.d.).

In addition the European Defence Agency (EDA) plays a significant role in European defence policy. The EDA was set up in 2004 to better facilitate the cooperation between EU Member States by developing military capabilities. The tasks of the EDA as outlined in article 45 of the Treaty of the EU (TEU) are: contributing to identifying and evaluating the EU Member States' military capability objectives, proposing multilateral projects, promoting defence technology research, and strengthening the industrial base of the defence sector (European Union, 2007). Nowadays, the EDA has the role of being the main capability-planning instrument in Europe. Besides the aforementioned European bodies involved with European security and defence, many other institutes, colleges, centres and planning cells exist that contribute to better understanding and responding to crises, in addition to developing military ambitions for the EU (European External Action Service (2016b).

1.2 Contemporary Security Challenges for the EU

The second part of the chapter will focus on outlining the contemporary security challenges the CSDP has to cope with. Explaining the main threats to EU security contributes to a better understanding of the specific circumstances in which the Battlegroups can be deployed.

1.2.1 A new security environment

Security challenges have always been present in the European environment. The European Union has been coping with security challenges ever since the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950. Later, during The Cold War, Europe was divided into two camps. Western Europe supported their ally the United States, while Eastern Europe held close ties with Russia. Ever since the end of the Cold War, with the fall of both the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, security and defence have become complex concepts, for both national and European Union leaders to cope with. During the 1990s, the EU began to focus on creating a common defence policy. Politicians started moving towards more cooperation in order to improve humanitarian intervention missions, defence management, force structures and logistics (Quille, 2006, p.6). Summits and European Council meetings resulted in various agreements. The Petersberg Tasks of 1992 introduced the possibility of using military force aside from NATO. The St. Malo summit of 1998 started the debate on European defence capabilities, after the failed military intervention in Yugoslavia earlier that decade. The launch of the Helsinki Headline Goals in 1999 built upon creating those capabilities, with plans outlining the creation of a rapid response force similar to NATO (Šmaguc, 2013, p. 94-97). Additionally, the EU adopted the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaty. These treaties also contained important steps taken in support of common security. For example, in the Amsterdam Treaty the position of the HRVP was created in order to have 'one face' that could speak on behalf of the Union concerning foreign policy matters. Furthermore, the HRVP plays a significant role in the process of security policymaking.

1.2.2 Terrorism

In the EU, times have changed. The Union has to deal with traditional conflicts concerning territorial threats less often, which are easier to deal with than non-territorial threats (Faleg, 2016, p.14). Nowadays, challenges such as terrorism, failed states, civil wars, cyber-warfare or other unconventional ways of practicing warfare are demanding a new approach from the EU. Of the new 'contemporary challenges' terrorism and failed states are causing the most damage to the Union, which makes them top priorities. For example, the call by Islamic State leaders for their followers to independently plan and carry out strikes against European countries has resulted in 589 attacks between 2014-2016, and 561 casualties according to Europol's annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) (Europol, 2017). The fact that non-state actors, like terrorist groups, can easily acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) provides an additional risk to EU security. Terrorism and failed states go hand in hand with each other, since vulnerable states in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa are the breeding places of these non-state actors (Matlary, 2009, p.

20). Despite improved cooperation between the EU and its members, state security remains a policy area in which the EU only has the competence to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the member states. Fortunately, there exists no authority for the EU to overrule national policy, since the Union is concerned with crises management for the benefit of all EU citizens (Matlary, 2009, p.9).

1.3 Defence ambitions of the Lisbon Treaty

One of the breakthroughs in common European defence and security ambitions was realised with the signing of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007. It is one of the major events that influenced the CSDP in the last 15 years, together with the European Strategic Strategy in 2003 and the later revision of this document, the European Global Strategy of 2016 (European Union External Action Service, 2016c). The Lisbon Treaty outlines the ambitions the EU has in carrying out the CSDP policy. With the signing of the treaty, a new path has been forged by the EU for tackling security challenges. By improving political coherence there is more room for flexibility in applying the CSDP (European Parliament, 2017).

The defence ambitions as outlined in the Treaty can be explained through mutual defence, and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). With the mutual defence ambition, the Union aims to create a common approach towards conflicts, by embracing the Battlegroup concept. PESCO is an important tool that allows EU Members to work together to improve military capabilities. Therefore, the enablement of PESCO would increase the chances of deploying Battlegroups.

1.3.1 Mutual defence

Article 42(7) of the Lisbon Treaty, or the mutual assistance (defence) clause, states the following: *“If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States”* (European Union, 2007). Similarities can be found between article 42 of the Treaty and article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Collective defence article 5 states: *“An armed attack against an ally shall be considered an attack against them all”* (NATO, 1949). In November 2015, Article 42 of the Lisbon Treaty was invoked for the first time since its ratification. French Defence Minister le Drian invoked the article when former president Hollande declared that the Paris attacks by the Islamic State were an act of war. The invocation of the article was a successful example of the EU Member States combining their powers to put defence ambitions into practice, in order to tackle the most threatening issue for EU

security, terrorism. The French were victims of an armed attack on its territory and EU Member States had the obligation to provide aid and assistance. For example, the UK and Germany offered support to military missions in Iraq and Syria, while other Member States considered increasing their contribution to United Nations (UN) and CSDP missions, with the possibility of deploying Battlegroups (Anghel & Bacian, 2016, p.2). Despite the fact that several states played a passive role by only considering increased contributions, the invocation of the article, which activated the mutual assistance (defence) clause, was a success. As such, European defence policy was successfully applied by both France and the assisting Members (Anghel & Bacian, 2016, p.2).

The EU should not aim to replace the NATO, which is not what the European Union intends to do through the mutual defence initiative (Patronas, 2017). Any commitments and cooperation in the CSDP shall be consistent under NATO provisions, which remain the foundation of their defence (European Union, 2007). It was in 2008, a year after the treaty was signed that French Defence Minister Herve Morin pointed out that without military capacity Europe could not be a global power. Europe must get out of its military '*infancy*' and '*grow up*' by taking responsibility. Morin: "*France is determined to use all possibilities offered to us under the terms of the Lisbon treaty to reinforce the ESDP in a concrete manner, and to engage with the member states to produce common crisis management capacities*" (Matlary, 2009, p.101,102). The French Defence Minister suggests that Europe requires a more cooperative approach. Additionally, the EU must not only be able to intervene in international conflicts, but also be able to defend Europe. This can be achieved by enhancing mutual defence capabilities like the Battlegroups, the concept of which was adopted under Protocol 10 of the treaty (European Union, 2007).

An addition to the mutual (assistance) defence clause the treaty has a solidarity clause. This clause allows joint response to terrorist attacks for Member States. Additionally, it supports solidarity and mobilisation of resources for natural or man-made disasters. The reason why France did not apply the solidarity clause but the mutual defence clause is because they considered the terrorist attacks an act of war (Henn, 2015). It also allowed for obtaining more rapid and flexible results than the solidarity clause. Yet, researchers have claimed that in the long term, the solidarity clause could offer a more fitting framework to address the consequences of the Paris attacks, such as through intelligence sharing. (Anghel & Bacian, 2016, p.3).

1.3.2 Permanent structured cooperation (PESCO)

Permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) is a new initiative to further integrate cooperation between Member States, while increasing military capabilities. It allows states to take practical measures in military capacity building. EU Member States with more military capabilities fulfil a larger role in responding to the most demanding missions. In other words, Member States with greater willingness and capacities will work together. This form of cooperation is aimed at realising the ambition of increasing the military capabilities of the EU (Wilga & Karolewski, 2014, p.24).

In terms of the implication of PESCO, the Union has recently signed the PESCO Notification. On November 13 2017, 23 EU Members implemented Permanent Structured Cooperation to enhance the spending on military equipment and further synchronize defence policies. This was the first time that PESCO had been implemented since it was first outlined in the Lisbon Treaty of 2007 (Boháček, 2017). The document sets out a list of binding commitments among EU Member States based on article 2 of Protocol 10 of the Lisbon Treaty (Boháček, 2017). First of all, cooperation is promoted through multinational approaches. This means that the relation with NATO must be incorporated into plans, and at all times be respected. Secondly, EU Member States will intensively develop defence capacities by increasing budgets. Thirdly, concrete measures are to be taken by EU Member States to enhance the interoperability and deployability of their forces by contributing to the Battlegroups. Finally, participating states will bring their defence policy in line with each other, for the benefit of better cooperation (European Council, 2017).

The commitments of the PESCO Notification paper are only briefly mentioned, since these commitments refer back to the defence ambitions of the EU Global Strategy, in which they are elaborated.

1.4 Defence ambitions of the EU Global Strategy

The second document that outlines the defence ambitions of the Union is the EU Global Strategy (EUGS). In 2003, former High Representative Javier Solana was requested by the European Council to establish principles, ambitions, and clear objectives for EU security issues. Threats such as the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, terrorism, organised crime and climate change were at that time posing threats to the Union's security interests. With the European Strategic Strategy (ESS), Solana set up objectives for the EU in coping with these issues. In 2015, the current HRVP, Federica Mogherini, presented a new assessment of the key changes in global security. This analytic document entitled: The European Union in a changing global environment, addressed the fact that the EU's

strategic environment has changed drastically since the ESS from 2003. Fragile states and ungoverned areas in Africa and Asia have spread over the course of time. Conflicts have arisen over scarce resources, and more states have offered a breeding place for terrorism (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p. 9). Mogherini concluded that the ESS needed to be revised in order to provide the EU with a common, comprehensive, and consistent global strategy in encountering these threats (Legrand, 2016, p.4). Based on this assessment of the EU security environment by Mogherini, the Council requested a revised version of the ESS.

It was for this reason that on 28 June 2016, Mogherini presented the European Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign Policy (EUGS). Mogherini called for a shared vision and common action when facing these threats. Especially with the recent Brexit, the Union will face changes in the way it approaches contemporary challenges, with the emphasis on terrorism and failed states. The goal of the EU is to take measures to create coherence in security and defence policy. Mogherini expressed the desire for all diplomatic action to be based on the Lisbon Treaty, whilst making full use of its potential (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.11). The EUGS identifies a total of five priorities for the EU: the security of the Union; state and societal resilience to the East and South of the EU; the development of an integrated approach to conflicts; cooperative regional orders; and global governance in the 21st century (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.9,10). This study will focus on the ambitions of the EUGS in enhancing the strategic autonomy of the Union that contribute to the strengthening of the EU Battlegroups. This includes the NATO-EU relationship, a credible Union, a responsive Union, an integrated approach to conflicts, and state resilience in the south.

1.4.1 The NATO-EU relationship

The European Union has to take more responsibility for the security of its citizens. Mogherini expressed that despite NATO being the main framework for the defence of most EU Member States Europeans must be better equipped. Lieutenant General van Osch affirmed that NATO remains essential for our military defence. Concerning defence, Europe is not able to sustain themselves without the United States. The EU still misses a lot of enablers: capacities required to make optimal use of military needs of states, drones, aerial refuelling aircrafts, and so on (Interview, October 11, 2017). He continues: *"And that is always supplemented by the Americans. This applies to all armed forces, everywhere Europe has*

horrendous deficits if we should do it ourselves” (Interview, October 11, 2017)¹. Despite capability shortages, van Osch believes that strategic autonomy is achievable (Interview, October 11, 2017).

The EU is dependent on NATO and in particular the United States. With a contribution of 22% to the NATO annual budget in 2016, the US remains of great importance to the Union’s defence (Goodenough, 2017). However, with new security issues for the EU, there will be events where few or no US interests are at stake. This happened in the past during the Yugoslavia Wars in the 1990s. Despite the significant EU interests in the conflict, the Member States failed to solve the conflict without help of the US. Van Osch (2017): *“the Americans eventually bore 70% of the costs made to carry out missions to make Bosnia safe again, but what was the US interest in this conflict”* (Interview, October 11, 2017)². It is a new priority for the EU to defend its citizens, without solely depending on outside partners like the United States (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.79).

Even though the EUGS promotes the interdependence of the EU, it also outlines the ambition to further deepen the partnership between the EU and the NATO framework. This can be achieved through coordinated defence capability development and other actions to counter threats (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.36, 37). As mentioned earlier, the EU is not setting out to replace the NATO framework, and the EUGS confirms this. Mogherini explained that the Union and NATO have worked together in the past in conflict areas, and will do so too in the future, each contributing their own strengths. There exists a division between the tasks of the two organisations. NATO can undertake warfare, due the large amount of troops available. The EU can undertake all the missions that require economic, political, and military tools. This allows for solid and complementary cooperation (Matlary, 2009, p.72). For example, in 2016 NATO and the EU gave new substance to their strategic partnership by signing the Joint Declaration (NATO, 2016). The document contained new proposals to intensify relations between EU and NATO staff. A total of 42 proposals were made that covered areas such as capability development, cyber defence, defence research and military mobility. The next progress report is planned for June 2018, with the aim to further implement the 2016 Joint Declaration (NATO, 2016).

¹ “En dat wordt altijd maar weer door de Amerikanen aangevuld. Dat geldt voor alle krijgsmachtsdelen, overall heeft Europa afgrijselijke tekorten als we het zelf zouden moeten doen”.

² “...” uiteindelijk hebben de Amerikanen uiteindelijk 70% van de kosten moeten dragen om die operatie uit te voeren, om Bosnië weer veilig te maken. Wat is nou het Amerikaanse belang?”.

The relation between the Union and NATO is also mentioned in the PESCO Notification of November 2017. The paper outlines that enhanced defence capabilities of EU Member States will also benefit NATO: *“They will strengthen the European pillar within the Alliance and respond to repeated demands for stronger transatlantic burden sharing”* (European Council, 2017). EU Members must work together, which can only be achieved by participating in capability building projects that will strengthen the strategic autonomy, while taking the relationship with NATO into consideration (European Council, 2017).

1.4.2 Credible Union: increasing defence budgets

In addition to the changing relation with NATO and other partners, Mogherini explains that the Union cannot rely on soft power alone. In order to increase the credibility of the Union in providing security and defence, defence budget spending of EU Member States must increase (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.44). It is obvious that the EU cannot compete with the United States and China, and since there has not been a war in Europe for a long time, the defence capabilities of the EU remains limited. Additionally, we are experiencing a global economic turndown, which prompts states to make budget cuts and capability reductions. It is likely that, across Europe, personnel figures will decrease by at least 20 per cent during the next five years (Heyman, 2014, p.6). This trend has been noticed by US President Trump, who met with NATO Members at his first NATO conference in May 2017. He urged 23 of the 28 NATO Member nations to meet their financial obligations. In 2014, the members agreed to pledge 2 per cent of their GDP to defence (Huggler & Chazan, 2017). Aside from the US (3.36%) only four other Members managed to spend at least 2 per cent of their GDP. These members are: Greece (2.36%), Estonia (2.18%), the United Kingdom (2.17%) and Poland (2.01%) (Goodenough, 2017). Defence budget cuts do not align with the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) concept of the Lisbon Treaty. PESCO calls for enhanced cooperation to increase military capabilities, yet budget cuts have resulted in the opposite.

European Defence Fund

In light of increasing military budgets and creating a credible Union, the European Commission proposed the *European Defence Action Plan: Towards a European Defence Fund* in 2016. The European Commission launched the European Defence Fund to better coordinate, amplify and supplement investments in defence research and technology (Houck, 2017). President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker said: *“To guarantee our collective security, we must invest in the common development of technologies and equipment of strategic importance – from land, air, sea and space capabilities to cyber security”* (European Commission, 2016). It is one of the largest-ever

defence investment plans for the EU. Over the next few years, it should reach an annual 500 million euros for research, and 5 billion to help finance the procurement of drones and other military capabilities (Houck, 2017).

Common funding for Battlegroups

In addition to the Defence Fund, Member States are developing common funding for Battlegroup operations. *"We use Battlegroups together, thus we need to pay for it together"* is what Estonian Minister of Defence Margus Tsahkna explained at a conference for EU Security (Houck, 2017). Estonia held the presidency to the Council of the EU for the second half of 2017, from 1 July till 31 December. The Estonians created several plans for Foreign Affairs to be discussed. For example, the country aims to further implement common funding, by reviewing the Athena mechanism. The review will be done in light of the Conclusions of the European Council in 2016, when Juncker launched the European Defence Fund. In talks with Mogherini, Tsahkna said that the EU must pay closer attention to defence capabilities and pre-existing mechanisms, for example, by improving the usability of Battlegroups. To do so, the monetary burden of the Battlegroups must be shared more equally between EU Member States (Coordinating the Estonian Presidency, 2017). The absence of a proper funding mechanism for the Battlegroups is a problem that is addressed in chapter 3.

PESCO

Mogherini explained in her first annual evaluation of the EUGS the urge to further develop PESCO. *"PESCO holds the potential to make the definitive leap forward in European security and defence. It would create a binding contractual framework in which participating Member States would commit to a shared common objective and ambition together"* (European Union; European External Action Service, 2017, p.23). The PESCO Notification contains feasible ambitions that will contribute to fulfilling the desire of Mogherini to make the EU a credible Union, in which defence budgets are increased. In order to intensively develop defence capacities, Article 2 of Protocol 10 of the Lisbon Treaty states that EU Member States shall: *"(a) cooperate, as from the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, with a view to achieving approved objectives concerning the level of investment expenditure on defence equipment, and regularly review these objectives, in the light of the security environment and of the Union's international responsibilities"* (European Council, 2017). An important element of PESCO is to increase the amount of money spent on military equipment. In order to successfully increase defence spending, EU Member States need to support the European coordinated annual review (CARD) mechanism. CARD was

established in 2016, with the goal to create clear objectives that deepen defence cooperation and ensure more coherence in defence plans (Fiott, 2017). The PESCO Notification states that participating Members will increase their investment expenditure to 20% of total defence spending. Additionally, 2% of total defence spending should be allocated to defence research and technology (European Council, 2017). By investing more in military equipment and research, the Members commit to filling in the gaps in their existing military capabilities.

1.4.3 Responsive Union: Battlegroups

Nowadays, we live in a world of predictable unpredictability. Terrorists conduct a type of guerrilla warfare, which requires a rapid and flexible response from the Union. According to Mogherini, the EU must develop the capacity to enhance the interoperability and deployability of the Battlegroups. This concept offers the rapid response force to deal with conflicts. Battlegroups have existed since 2007, but have always been obstructed by procedural, financial and political obstacles, causing them to have been on standby since 2007 (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.47). There are a couple goals set by Mogherini in order to make the CSDP more rapid and effective. First of all, the political and operational obstacles limiting the use of Battlegroups must be dealt with, to ensure effective use of the rapid response force. The third chapter discusses the financial, political and procedural obstacles. Clearing the way for Battlegroup operation can be achieved by increasing the role and responsibilities of the European Defence Agency. The EDA has a key role in creating peer pressure among Member States to meet obligations and cooperate further. Additionally, the civilian missions must be further developed (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.47). Van Osch: *“I can give you a few examples where the military mechanism [in conflicts] is essential. And sometimes it can be solved with non-military means, which is much better of course”* (Interview, October 11, 2017)³.

In the Global Strategy, Mogherini spoke about removing the obstacles that prevent the deployment of Battlegroups: *“We must develop the capacity for rapid response also by tackling the procedural, financial and political obstacles which prevent the deployment of the Battlegroups. Enhanced cooperation between Member States should be explored in*

³ “ En ik kan je een heleboel voorbeelden geven van Somalië en Libië waarbij soms het militair apparaat keihard nodig is. Want een deel van de evacuatie hebben we wel met die middelen gedaan, ook een Nederlands schip heeft daaraan bijgedragen. Maar vaak zijn andere instrumenten essentieel om ook de militaire operatie nuttig te maken. En soms kan je het zelfs met niet-militaire middelen oplossen, wat veel beter is natuurlijk”.

this domain” (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016). The PESCO Notification allows the EU to enhance cooperation by creating commitments for EU Members that participate in the Battlegroup concept. For example, in creating a responsive Union, the availability, deployability and interoperability of EU forces must be improved. First of all, by developing a database that will only be accessible to participating Members, capabilities required to create and deploy troops are better facilitated (European Council, 2017). Secondly, simplifying cross border military transport in Europe will enable a rapid deployment of military equipment and personnel. Thirdly, the EU States will commit more substantial support to CSDP operations, which includes Battlegroups. This can be achieved by creating the obligation to hold Battlegroup training exercises. The leading state within the Battlegroup (Framework Nation) would be responsible for this and other participating states would have the obligation to participate in these exercises (European Council, 2017). To develop the interoperability of the EU forces, EU Member States will commit to establishing a common evaluation and validation criteria, that will align the Battlegroup concept with NATO standards (European Council, 2017).

1.4.4 Integrated approach to conflicts

The eruption of conflicts poses a threat to common European interests, which is why the EU is working on an integrated approach to conflict. According to the EUGS, the integrated approach is characterised by the following principles: first of all, conflicts require a multi-dimensional approach, by using all civilian and military tools available. Secondly, through a multi-phased approach, the EU will act at all stages of the conflict cycle by investing in prevention, resolution and stabilisation. Thirdly, with a multi-level approach the EU will pursue enhanced cooperation on local, regional, national and global scales. Finally, with a multi-lateral approach the Union acknowledges that no conflict can be solved alone, and that the EU should engage with all parties concerned (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.28, 29).

In order to implement the integrated approach, the EU has access to other policy documents that promote an integrated approach to conflicts. In 2013, the European Commission published a Joint Communication called: The EU’s Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crises (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016, p.49). The Joint Communication aimed to further implement the Lisbon Treaty by creating a number of concrete steps.

First of all, the EU needs to develop a shared analysis for conflict prevention, in order to improve situational awareness. Secondly, and building on that shared analysis, the Union

should work with institutions and EU Member States to develop a common strategic vision for conflict and crisis management. Thirdly, the EU must seek to prevent crises before they emerge. The fourth step is mobilising the different strengths and capacities of the EU to effectively and efficiently response to conflict. Step five concerns the long-term commitments to peacekeeping. The final steps are about linking EU internal policies to make a significant impact on conflict and crisis situations. This means that external policies can impact internal interests of the Union (European Commission, 2013, p.5-11).

In 2015, the HRVP and the European Commission also published a Joint Staff Working document, where the further development of this integrated approach are outlined. The Taking Forward the EU's Comprehensive Approach to External Conflict and Crises Action Plan 2015 prioritised two actions based on the previously mentioned Joint Communication of 2013. The first action aligns with the first step, which is defining a common strategic vision. This was later realised by Mogherini, with the EU Global Strategy. The second action for the EU is to mobilise the different strengths and capacities of the Union. This can be achieved by better coordination between the CSDP and EU Member States. A smoother cooperation will result in more effective use of the EU rapid response force, the Battlegroups (European Commission, 2015, p.3-5).

To return to the Global Strategy, Mogherini said that the EU will implement the integrated approach, by further expanding the meaning and scope. This integrated approach will build upon the objectives of the Joint Communication and Joint Staff Working document. For example, Mogherini established a special division called PRISM (Prevention of conflict, Rule of Law/Security Sector Reform/Integrated Approach, Stabilisation and Mediation). PRISM functions as the centrepiece for the CSDP (European Union; European External Action Service, 2017, p.17). Besides PRISM, more mechanisms, platforms and bodies have been established to implement key instances of the integrated approach such as the European Commission's Emergency Crisis Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) that contributes to faster and more effective deployment of the CSDP missions. The ERCC can make it more attractive to deploy Battlegroups (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016c, p.17,18).

1.4.5 State resilience in the east and south

European defence policy concerns the security of the continent, including its neighbours. The EU holds many ties and interests with states within and beyond Europe's borders. Some of these states, especially towards the Balkans, and Northern Africa are considered to be fragile states. It is in the EU's interest to strengthen the resilience of the states towards

the east and south of the EU, because a resilient state is a secure state. A secure state is less likely to be a breeding place for terrorism. Additionally, resiliency allows states to better prevent and recover from internal and external crises. The CSDP can promote this with civilian and military operations. Finally, the EU should invest in diplomatic missions to create more partnership among non-EU members (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016, p.24,25).

In short, the role of the CSDP is to create policy that concerns the defence of the EU. This policy is created and implemented by EU security and defence bodies such as the EUMC, EUMS, and the EDA. Cornerstones to the EU's defence policy are the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Global Strategy. These documents outline the ambitions the Union has for tackling security challenges while incorporating the possible use of Battlegroups. The Lisbon Treaty emphasises the desire to create a mutual approach to conflict, by enhancing military capabilities through PESCO. The EUGS elaborated on these ambitions by underlining that through an integrated approach, the NATO-EU relationship must be improved and military budgets must be increased, in order to remove obstacles that prevent the deployment of Battlegroups. The document also established the importance of strengthening the EU's neighbouring countries, to prevent these countries from becoming breeding places for terrorism.

The second chapter will outline the capabilities of the EU Battlegroups, in order to link the defence ambitions with Battlegroup competencies.

Chapter 2: What are the capabilities of the Battlegroups?

The following, and second component of the research will focus on the current state of the Battlegroups by outlining the capabilities and shortcomings of this EU rapid response force. The EU has conducted multiple civilian and military missions in the past, yet never with the help of Battlegroups. Despite not being deployed since their inception in 2007, it can be argued that Battlegroups hold realistic potential to be used for future events, especially with new security threats to the EU. Firstly, this chapter discusses the characteristics and composition of the EU Battlegroups, to better understand their functioning. Secondly, the Battlegroup's competencies shall be outlined, by explaining the different deployment scenarios in which the battlegroups can be used. Furthermore, the positive outcomes of the Battlegroup concept will be analysed. Lastly, the case study on the EU military mission, Operation Artemis, will serve as a proxy to further address the capabilities of an EU led military mission. This will benefit the research due to the similarities between Artemis and a hypothetical EUBG mission.

2.1 Characteristics of the Battlegroup

The foundation of a Battlegroup mission lies in a credible approach, through which the Battlegroup aims to resolve conflicts in cooperation with local authorities in conflict areas (Mölling, 2007). Based on clear objectives set by the EU, the military must achieve these with the minimum use of force. The crucial element that makes a Battlegroup a Battlegroup, is its rapid deployability and flexibility during deployment (Mölling, 2007). Through multi-national cooperation, EU Member States and non-members contribute to the establishment of the taskforce. The Battlegroups approach conflict by a solidarity approach, in which EU Members express their willingness to contribute to the EU defence ambitions, as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and EUGS. Thanks to the flexibility, especially regarding contributions to the Battlegroups, the concept is attractive to smaller-sized EU Members. For these states, contributions usually include specific capabilities, enabling Member States to participate in the Battlegroup concept with limited effort (Mölling, 2007). The Battlegroup also contributes to creating more coherence in military capability building within the EU (European Union; European External Action Service, 2017b). The aspect of military capability building within the Union has been addressed in chapter 1, and will also be mentioned this chapter. Finally, General van Osch further elaborates on the objectives of

Battlegroups (2017): *“There were two objectives, to stimulate military cooperation within the EU, and to work on further interoperability”* (interview, October 11)⁴.

2.2 Composition of a typical Battlegroup

A Battlegroup has its capabilities and shortcomings. In order to better understand the functioning of EUBGs, certain elements of its composition and characteristics must be clarified. Battlegroups can be divided into two components. First of all, the command structure functions as a planning instrument for the operation. Secondly, the core battle group functions as the fighting mechanism.

2.2.1 Command structure

As mentioned earlier, the Battlegroup is characterised by its rapid deployment. In order for a Battlegroup to be quickly deployed for combat, each EUBG needs to establish a specific command structure (Finabel, 2014, p.9). First of all, there must always be a Framework Nation. The FN, or state in charge, usually possesses the most military capabilities, such as France or Germany. The FN carries most of the financial burden, since it delivers most of the military capabilities. For example, the FN is responsible for ensuring that all military capabilities are available at the time the Battlegroup is declared operational. Additionally, the FN has the duty to organise the transport of troops and material to the conflict area (Finabel, 2014, p.9). If no Framework Nation is available, a multinational coalition by Member States can form the Battlegroup. However, a coalition of this sort may slow down the decision making process, since more interests need to be taken into account (Kerttunen, 2010, p.131).

The Battlegroups work through an established chain of command that contains three levels of headquarters. Firstly, the Operational Headquarter (OHQ) is responsible for overseeing the Battlegroup mission on a strategic level. This means that the OHQ is stationed in a participating state and not in the operational area. The EU can access a total of five OHQs, spread throughout Europe. Whenever no OHQ is available, the EU heads of state can establish an operations centre instead (Lindström, 2007, p.22). It is up to the OHQ to ensure that the Battlegroup is prepared to start implementing the mission within 10 days of the EU deciding to launch an operation. This does not mean that the entire Battlegroup should be operational at the destined location within 10 days, but that the execution of the mission has commenced. Additionally, the EUBG must be capable of deployment 6000 kilometres away from Brussels, and able to sustain itself for up till 120 days (Finabel, 2014, p.48).

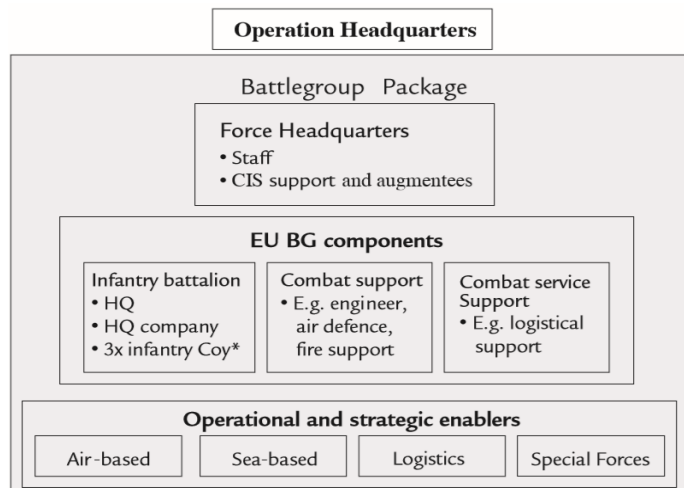
⁴ ... *“twee doelstellingen: om de militaire samenwerking binnen de EU te stimuleren en te werken aan verdere interoperabiliteit”*.

Besides the OHQ, the Force Headquarter (FHQ) functions as a base of operations in the area of conflict by providing command and control over troops on the ground. Lastly, the Battlegroup HQ is responsible for carrying out the tasks given by the FHQ (Finabel, 2014, p.12).

2.2.2 Core fighting unit

The second component of the Battlegroup is the taskforce that gets deployed in conflict areas. This is the core of the Battlegroup, the fighting unit. The core Battlegroup is an infantry battalion supported by armoured vehicles, that is composed by approximately 1500 soldiers, making it relatively small in size (Kerttunen, 2010, p.132). Therefore, the taskforce is supported by, and dependent on operational enablers that provide support on land, in the air, and at sea (Kerttunen, 2010, p.131). Due to the smaller size and operational capabilities, the EU remains modest with its definition of Battlegroups. According to the EU, the Battlegroup is the minimum military force capable of stand-alone missions, or for preparing larger operations by the EU or NATO (European Union; European External Action Service, 2017b). In terms of force composition, a battlegroup could be comprised of a headquarters, three infantry companies supported by combat support elements, and strategic enablers. Combat support elements can differ from air support during battle, to engineer support to maintain vehicles. In addition, medical facilities are essential for the Battlegroups to perform operations independently. However, the amount of combat service support should remain limited to safeguard the rapid deployability and flexibility of the Battlegroup (Lindström, 2007, p. 15). It is important to keep in mind the difficulty of estimating an exact number of personnel and combat support elements required for operations when Battlegroup capabilities can only be measured on paper. Later on in this study, the case study on Operation Artemis will give a more tangible perspective on the capabilities of Battlegroups. Figure 1 provides an outline of a typical Battlegroup composition.

Figure 1: Generic composition of an EUBG



Notes: Communications Information Systems (CIS) refers to personnel, equipment and procedures to transport information. Augmentees are individuals assigned to provide particular skills or to make up for staff shortages. *Company.

Source: (Lindström, 2007, p.16).

2.3 Deployment scenarios

Battlegroups were designed to be used for a number of illustrative scenarios, both military and non-military. In 2004, the European Council adopted the Helsinki Headline Goals, in which numerous tasks for the Battlegroups are outlined. Currently, EU bodies concerning defence and security such as the EUMS and the EUMC are responsible for determining whether Battlegroups could be deployed for the following reasons. Battlegroups need to be capable of engaging in Conflict Prevention (CP), Separation of Parties by Force (SOPF), Stabilisation, Reconstruction and Military Advice to third countries (SRMA), Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO), and Assistance to Humanitarian Operations (HA) (Lindley-French, 2005). The EU aims to further improve the resiliency of fragile states in Africa and the Balkans to prevent these areas from becoming breeding places for terrorism, hence it is in these areas where the deployment scenarios are most likely to be applied. The following scenarios demonstrate the multipurpose nature of Battlegroups.

2.3.1 Conflict Prevention (CP)

The initial thoughts associated with Battlegroups, is that their main purpose is to separate parties by force, through battle. Yet the EU mostly aims to prevent conflict from happening in the first place (European Union; European External Action Service, 2017b p.18). Thanks to their rapid deployability, Battlegroups can be deployed in time to prevent escalation of conflicts. CP aims to employ diplomatic, civil, and military means to identify the causes of

conflict and to take action to prevent further escalation. Actions that require CP from the EU could be the rise of an insurgency, or a nation that fails to ensure law and order (Finabel, 2014, p.16). Battlegroups can engage in CP by preventing the build-up of armed forces, through disarming them. Additionally, to strengthen local authorities, the Battlegroup can provide crowd and riot control to ensure the safety of civilians during elections. According to van Osch the size and rapid deployment of a Battlegroup makes it suitable for preventing election violence. Violence can erupt during election times, especially in countries where there have often been clashes between opposing parties. Two months before the elections take place a Battlegroup can be deployed in order to prevent any conflicts from erupting (Interview, October 11, 2017).

2.3.2 Separation of Parties by Force (SOPF)

When separating parties by force, Battlegroups can play a role in the early stages of the conflict. Due to their limited size of approximately 1500 troops, the EUBG will only make an impact if the opposing parties are not well armed, or lack the numbers to overrun the EU troops. EUBGs are able to sustain themselves for 120 days, after which more capable UN forces take control of the situation. This means that the EUBGs can clear the way for more traditional peacekeeping forces provided by the UN or other EU Members. It could be argued that Battlegroups are merely designed to complement NATO forces rather than to duplicate them (Matlary, 2009, p. 49). SOPF can be achieved by carrying out similar tasks as in conflict prevention. The EUBGs will separate conflicting parties by using force, as established in the mandate by the EU. Additionally, the EU troops can establish and supervise safe areas for citizens. Lastly, the EU troops can outline cease-fire lines to further reduce the effects of conflict (Finabel, 2014, p.17, 18). This was demonstrated in Operation Artemis, where parties were separated by force in order to stabilise an area.

2.3.3 Stabilisation, Reconstruction and Military Advice to third countries (SRMA)

Stabilisation and reconstruction missions aim to establish a secure environment during or after a conflict. This is usually achieved by offering military advice to local authorities. SRMA demands an enduring procedure, in which Battlegroups do not play a significant role. Governmental or civilian actors, on the other hand, are responsible for designing plans that enhance the stabilisation of third countries (Finabel, 2014, p.19). However, if the situation in the third country worsens, the Battlegroup can undertake several actions to support the SRMA process. Battlegroups have the subtask of planning and initiating Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) measures. The aim of DDR is to remove the weapons from the combatants, and remove the combatants from military structures. If this is done successfully, the ex-combatants should be reintegrated into society (United Nation,

2010). Additionally, the EUBGs will provide the protection of key installations like airports, governmental buildings and hospitals. Finally, by establishing and running temporary detention facilities, BGs take over responsibilities from states that failed to protect its civilians and lost control of law and order in parts of the country (Larsson, n.d.).

2.3.4 Non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO)

Another capability of the Battlegroups is rescuing and then evacuating threatened non-combatants, to a place of safety. This is usually the case when the government or local authorities are incapable of ensuring the safety of civilians and desire the help of the European Union. Battlegroups cannot handle this situation solely with ground troops and instead depend on considerable support from aviation and naval forces to provide mobility for the troops, as well as transport for the evacuation of civilians. The role of EUBGs would be to secure non-combatants and key individuals such as government representatives and other VIPs. However, in order to bring civilians to a safe location, the first task is to secure routes for evacuation (Finabel, 2004, p.22,23).

2.3.5 Assistance to Humanitarian Operations (HA)

It is not unusual that armed forces contribute to humanitarian operations. In times of need, armed forces can provide security and stability in conflict areas that require assistance. Whenever situations occur where the EU has to rapidly address humanitarian emergencies, Battlegroups can provide security to safeguard the process of humanitarian aid. Stabilising areas and helping civilians could be achieved by conducting preliminary operations to secure airports, harbours and routes essential for the delivery of supplies. Furthermore, the armed forces can prevent locals from looting by protecting important objects and facilities such as food stores and wells (Finabel, 2014, p.23). All of these activities need to be conducted under an EU state or UN mandate, and in cooperation with relevant non-governmental organisations like Doctors Without Borders.

2.4 The Battlegroups' accomplishments

It would be unfair to determine the Battlegroups' success based on whether they have been deployed or not, since the creation of the Battlegroup has still resulted in several positive effects. So far, the Battlegroups have had a positive contribution to the enhancement of military cooperation among EU Members and on military capability building. The following accomplishments have not solved the issues that Battlegroups are dealing with, but they are part of a process to improve the capability development of the EU. This can be achieved

by removing obstacles that prevent the deployment of Battlegroups, something which is discussed in chapter 3.

2.4.1 Battlegroups contribute to enhancing cooperation

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the two main objectives of Battlegroups are to enhance cooperation and work on the interoperability of EU troops. At the St. Malo summit of 1998, EU members talked about establishing a common European military force. It was in 2007 that the Battlegroups were officially declared operational. The Battlegroup concept is the result of EU Member States who set aside differences in order to create a joint taskforce for rapid crisis management and making the Battlegroup the main forum for defence cooperation between EU Members (Major & Mölling, 2011, p.19). On top of that, several non-EU Members such as Norway and Turkey contribute to the Battlegroup concept, which further strengthens defence cooperation among the contributors. The initiative has created an opportunity for EU Members to organise and coordinate existing capabilities in a more coherent manner, to the benefit of Battlegroups (Major & Mölling, 2011, p.20).

A positive result derived from the Battlegroups is that EU Members have gained more in-depth knowledge of the capabilities and shortcomings of their partners. Setting up a Battlegroup together and searching for alternatives to compensate the shortage of military capabilities requires close cooperation between states. This process contributed to the improvement of the deployability and interoperability of Battlegroups in general (Major & Mölling, 2011, p.20). The EUMC plays a significant role in enhancing cooperation and making it easier to deploy Battlegroups. The EU body concerned with all military activities within the EU framework has created several policy documents (Council of the European Union, 2017). For instance, the EU Rapid Response Concept of 2014 aims to provide a conceptual framework for the joint preparation and conduct of CSDP military missions requiring a rapid response (European Union Military Committee, 2014). The document contains deployment scenarios where the EU may consider using military means. This has been addressed in chapter 2.3: Deployment scenarios. Furthermore, the document incorporated planning procedures for EU Members to follow in order to carry out military missions. Additionally, a list of suggested strategic enablers required for the deployment of Battlegroups has been included to make the Battlegroups more usable for combat (European Union Military Committee, 2014). The EUMC recommends that EU Members offer Battlegroups: combat aircraft/helicopters, transport aircraft/helicopters, strategic air/sealift, naval combat assets, special forces, air-and sea-related logistic support and infrastructures, special forces, gendarmerie and civil-military capabilities (European Union Military Committee, 2014).

In addition to the Battlegroups' contribution to enhanced cooperation among EU Members, the concept also creates obligations for each state in relation to other Battlegroup members. This can be explained by the multi-nationality composition of the Battlegroup. Since one EUBG can comprise of different states, such as the Scandinavian Nordic Battlegroup, agreements must be respected for the taskforce to optimise its full potential. Even though a state has the ability to withdraw its troops from the Battlegroup at any time, it would most likely result in this state losing face politically (Major & Mölling, 2011, p.25).

2.4.2 Battlegroups contribute to capability building

The second accomplishment the Battlegroups have produced is their contribution to capability building. Since Battlegroups are considered the main building block for the EU's rapid response for crisis management, the EU has the ambition to develop military capabilities through the Battlegroups (European Union Military Committee, 2014).

The first accomplishment mentioned is that Battlegroup participants have to work closely together to find alternatives to military capability shortcomings. For this reason, the EU is seeking alternatives for capability shortcomings in the area of leasing and sharing military capacities. For example, France and Germany, who are involved in 7 of the 22 existing Battlegroups, established the European Air Transport Fleet Programme (EATF) in 2011, with the help of the European Defence Agency. With the EATF program the EDA aims to further strengthen the strategic airlift capabilities of the EU by increasing strategic capacities through the possible pooled ownership of transport aircrafts (Vogel, 2008). In addition to the EATF, NATO intends to acquire three or four C-17 aircrafts as part of its Joint Airlift Capability (SAC) agreement of 2007 (Boyer, 2007, p.7). The operational organisation of SAC functions independently from NATO command chains, yet it relies on certain NATO structures. As the SAC agreement transcends military and political alliances such as NATO and the EU, the C-17 flight hours will be distributed amongst SAC Members (NATO, 2015). Therefore, these planes could be made available for EU operations. However, this solution does not cover capabilities that are more difficult to obtain, such as military intelligence devices and medical care (Major & Mölling, 2011, p.21). The third chapter will further elaborate on the scarcity of military resources.

2.5 Case study: the successes of Operation Artemis

The following part of the study focuses on the accomplishments of Operation Artemis. The EU military operation of 2003 will serve as a proxy to better understand the capabilities and shortcomings of Battlegroups. The EU has never deployed the Battlegroup in times of crisis,

which makes it impossible to evaluate its capabilities based on conducted missions. However, important lessons can, and have been learned from Artemis. The military intervention played a significant role in developing EU defence policy. In creating the Battlegroup concept, Artemis was regarded as a role model, due to the success of the operation. It is safe to state that the Union wanted to build upon the success of Artemis. It was a key event that convinced the EU leaders to establish Battlegroups one year later, in 2004 (Matlary, 2009, p.128). It is therefore no surprise that certain similarities exist between the Battlegroup concept and Artemis. The Battlegroup is quickly deployable during a crisis, able to separate parties by force, and provide security to civilians. When France and the UK created the Battlegroup concept, it quickly attracted contribution from 16 EU Members as well as one non-EU Member, Norway (Matlary, 2009, p.128). Operation Artemis was basically a French initiative, but eventually became an EU military operation because France wanted to demonstrate that the EU possessed the military capabilities and cooperation to act independently from NATO (Koenig, 2009).

2.5.1 Preparation and execution of Operation Artemis

Ituri is often described as one of the most violent and unstable regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The country itself is marked by civil wars and conflicts that have been the result of ethnic tensions. Violence reached a climax in late 2002 and early 2003, when in the town of Bunia hundreds of civilians were murdered and thousands were forced to flee (Tomolya, 2015). Local tribes were fighting and there was no authority to stabilise the area. The absence of any national authority in the country resulted in mass rape, killing, torture, and other forms of inhuman treatment in the Ituri area. Human Rights Watch researchers brought the events to the attention of the international community (Tomolya, 2015).

As a response, the United Nations deployed 700 Uruguayan UN peacekeepers in 2003. However, they had insufficient capabilities to stop the violence in Ituri, and better-equipped blue helmets could not be deployed for another four months (Koenig, 2012). In light of this threatening situation, the Secretary General drafted a letter calling for the rapid deployment of a "highly trained and well-equipped multinational force under the lead of a UN Member, to provide security at the airport as well as other vital installations in the town to protect the civilian population". This force would temporarily relieve the UN peacekeepers from Uruguay until September, when a larger UN mission would take over (Homan, 2007). It was at that time inconvenient that the Battlegroups were not fully developed yet, since the concept would have complied with the request of the Secretary General, Kofi Annan. Battlegroups are rapidly deployable, highly trained, and usually designed by multiple states.

Deployment scenarios also include protecting civilians and key locations, including airports. Carrying out these tasks could be complementary to NATO operations, which would have made this a suitable Battlegroup mission.

France responded to the request of Kofi Annan by its announcement to take the lead in the operation to stabilise the Ituri region (Koenig, 2012). The French President Chirac was convinced that leading this operation would be a good opportunity to prove that the EU capacity was enough to act autonomously from NATO (Homan, 2007).

Within a week of the UN providing the mandate (Resolution 1484), EU troops were on the ground in the DRC. France provided the majority of the troops, 1700 in total. In addition to the French soldiers, Sweden was the only other state that provided combat troops (Koenig, 2012). Belgium, and Germany provided mainly engineers, medics, and other non-fighting combat support units. The UK, that initially seconded the operation, also contributed combat support units. For the entire operation, a total of 2060 personnel were involved in the deployment, and from the 18 contributing countries, 12 of them were EU Members (Koenig, 2012). At the beginning of the operation, French troops secured the airport, after which engineers helped to maintain the key installatio, since they ensured the smooth transport of military personnel and equipment. The French forces demonstrated the threat of force in a convincing manner, since it quickly began to stabilize the area (Koenig, 2012). After the airport was secured, the French troops began disarming all people who openly carried weapons. Weapons disappeared from the street scene, but the fighting between the militias did not end with that. However, after several skirmishes between French and rebel combatants, the EU troops took over control of the area. Meanwhile, the UN Security Council adopted a new resolution (1493) to further expand personnel. On September 1st 2003, Artemis handed over the remaining tasks in a well-planned and well-organised manner to UN forces (Koenig, 2012).

2.5.2 Positive evaluation of Operation Artemis

Operation Artemis was the first independent EU military mission outside NATO where its troops engaged in combat to promote national stability (Koenig, 2009). As mentioned earlier, 12 EU Member States contributed either troops or resources to the operation. These contributions allowed the French troops to stabilise an area that was on the verge of genocide.

Artemis also proved that EU military capabilities could be sufficient to successfully conduct military missions. For example, the military firepower allowed the EU troops to secure

Bunia's airport. Additionally, thanks to the logistical capacities, the troops could assist and protect displaced civilians located in surrounding refugee camps (Tomolya, 2015). Furthermore, sophisticated communication technology allowed the interception of cellular phones, excellent night-vision capabilities and the effective use of satellite imagery to track movement of forces (Koenig, 2012). Furthermore, due to the sufficient, previously mentioned military capabilities, the EU troops allowed humanitarian organisations like the World Food Programme to provide aid to the local population (Tomolya, 2015).

The success of the operation was based on the rapid deployment of EU troops to the conflict zone, where the highly trained, flexible troops were able to jointly carry out prescribed tasks (Koenig, 2012). For example, the EU forces understood that their own security depended on securing the surrounding area. As a result of their training they successfully stabilized the area (Tomolya, 2015). Additionally, due to the flexibility of French forces, they were able to communicate with the local population, which facilitated improved cooperation and better intelligence (Koenig, 2012).

In terms of cooperation, the French integrated various EU and non-EU states within the operation, through quickly established headquarters. Besides the European autonomy in conducting this operation, the cooperation with the UN had remarkably positive outcomes. Communication between the UN Security Council and High Representative Solana was direct, and efficient. This was seen as an improvement from the traditional reporting, in the form of a written report every three months (Homan, 2007). Another example of the efficient cooperation between the EU and the UN was demonstrated in terms of complementarity. While Artemis was dealing with the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the UN made preparations to take over the mission with the deployment of 5,000 UN forces (Koenig, 2012).

In short, Operation Artemis was a success. The EU demonstrated that they could autonomously conduct a military operation, with sufficient military capabilities (Matlary, 2009, p.58). However, the Operation still had several shortcomings, which are addressed in chapter 3.

To conclude, the capabilities of the Battlegroups are demonstrated through their rapid deployability and solidarity approach to conflict, meaning that participating EU Member States can set up a Battlegroup through multi-national cooperation. The EUBG itself is comprised of a command structure and fighting unit. Thanks to the several deployment scenarios for which Battlegroups are prepared, they can provide assistance in both military

and civilian operations. Despite the fact that they have never been deployed, Battlegroups have contributed to European defence policy by enhancing cooperation among EU Members and developing the military capabilities of the EU. Through Operation Artemis, the EU demonstrated that it is capable of conducting a military operation, which is why Artemis played a significant role in the development of the Battlegroup concept.

Despite the aforementioned capabilities and accomplishments, the current state of the Battlegroups means that they still have to deal with challenges and shortcomings. The following chapter attempts to explain the remaining financial, political and operational challenges for the Battlegroups. The chapter also contains a critical analysis of Operation Artemis.

Chapter 3: What are the shortcomings of Battlegroups?

It is no surprise that the Battlegroups are dealing with challenges, otherwise they would have been deployed since their Full Operational Capability (FOC) status was established in 2007. In order to increase the chances for Battlegroups to be deployed, High Representative Mogherini appealed to the EU. In doing so, she hoped the EU would be able to tackle financial, political and procedural obstacles that could possibly hinder the deployment of Battlegroups (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016, p.47). The third chapter discusses the shortcomings of Battlegroups, by outlining the obstacles as defined by Mogherini. Out of the aforementioned obstacles, the financial obstacle forms the most pressing problem that hinders the Battlegroups. The study argues that the lack of budget reserved by EU Member States for military capabilities results in political and procedural obstacles.

In explaining the obstacles, the chapter will firstly discuss the financial obstacle, which is the absence of common funding for EU military operations. Secondly, political challenges include the lack of interoperability between EU Member States, and the competition of the Battlegroups with CSDP missions and the NATO Rapid Response Force (NRF). Thirdly, procedural challenges include the lack of military capabilities, which is a result of insufficient defence spending. Lastly, where the previous chapter analysed the capabilities of Operation Artemis, this chapter discusses the shortcomings, in order to provide a critical analysis of the case study.

3.1 Financial obstacle

The first and main obstacle through which the shortcomings of the Battlegroups can be explained is the financial obstacle. In financial terms, Battlegroups have been hindered from being deployed as a result of the absence of proper funding for military operations conducted by the EU. This obstacle is linked to the EU ambition to create a credible Union in which the EU Member States increase their defence budgets. This study argues that a lack of military budgets affects the deployment of Battlegroups, hence the financial obstacle.

3.1.1 Absence of common funding for EU military operations

Chapter one explained how it is one of the top priorities for the EU Members to increase defence budgets, especially with pressure coming from the US. The chapter also outlined that the EU ambition to create a credible Union could only be achieved if EU Members

increase their defence budgets. Yet, instead of spending, governments are cutting defence budgets. Naturally, these cuts have a negative effect on the current state of Battlegroups, since there exists no common financing for Battlegroup operations. Van Osch (2017): *“The Battlegroup has a couple of disadvantages, but the most important reason why Battlegroups have not been deployed is because there is no common funding for the use of Battlegroups. I say ‘use’ on purpose. There exist countries that want common funding for the establishment of Battlegroups as well, but I find that to be nonsense, since everyone needs to contribute according to its own capacity”* (Interview, October 11, 2017)⁵. Lieutenant General van Osch encountered the negative effects of the funding issue in his work as the Director General of the EU Military Staff. He explained how there have been multiple occasions in which the use of Battlegroups could have been authorised by the Minister of Defence of an EU Member, but the government prevented the deployment, due to the lack of budget (Interview, October 11, 2017). The European Union has acknowledged that the main obstacle that prevents the deployment of Battlegroups is the absence of common funding for EU military operations (European Union; European External Action Service, 2017b).

Athena

The expenses of one of the larger Battlegroups, the EU Nordic Battlegroup, are estimated at 350 million euros covering a time-period of 3 years (Lindström, 2007, p.25). Member States should reserve this amount of money whenever they have responsibility over the standby Battlegroup. Unfortunately, states are usually not willing to reserve this amount of money (Interview, October 11, 2017). A possible reason why the costs of deploying and maintaining Battlegroups are this high, is due to the EUBG funding mechanism, Athena. The mechanism was set up in 2004 by the Council of the EU in order to handle the financing of common costs associated with European Union military operations. EU Member states are expected to contribute to Athena based on their Gross National Income, to promote equality among contributors (Council of the EU, 2017).

Unfortunately, the current state of the Athena mechanism contains possible pitfalls that could hinder the deployment of Battlegroups. It is argued that Athena stands for an unequal way of spreading costs for operations. On paper, EU Members commonly finance the

⁵ En er zijn dan een paar nadelen aan een Battlegroup, maar de allerbelangrijkste reden waarom die Battlegroup niet is ingezet, ook al hebben er zit situaties aangedaan waar die inzet zeer bruikbaar was, is omdat er geen ‘common funding is’ voor de inzet. Ik zeg expres voor de inzet, sommige landen willen common funding, dat alle landen meebetalen, ook aan de vorming van Battlegroups. Maar dat vind ik onzin, want iedereen moet gewoon naar draagkracht bijdragen.

operation, but this has not been demonstrated in practice (Symoens, 2012). For example, Germany provided medical evacuation helicopters for operation ALTHEA. The Germans were not compensated for this, but they provided these helicopters because their parliament demands adequate medical support where German troops are deployed (Symoens, 2012). Athena does not guarantee compensation for all costs, which is why it is often argued that for the deployment of Battlegroups “*costs lie where they fall*”, indicating that the states that equip the Battlegroups are also expected to carry the costs (Reykers, 2016). For example, the costs for the preparation to set up and place an EUBG on standby are for the responsible contributors (Lindström, 2007, p.26).

This study argues that a lack of proper common funding for military operations influences the Battlegroup concept. Since EU Member States participating in the Battlegroup have to bear the bulk of the financial burden, they tend to be in favour Battlegroup deployments in general, but not the deployment of their own units (Major & Mölling, 2001, p.22). Lieutenant General Van Osch described that the EU Member States who were expected to deliver the Battlegroup started asking critical questions about the necessity of the operation, which delayed the decision-making process and thus the deployment of their own units. They never had to use the argument: “*...I do not want to deploy, because I do not want to pay for it*” (Interview, October 11, 2017)⁶. It is rather curious to note that, after six months, when another Battlegroup is on standby, these states are all of a sudden in favour of deployment (Interview, October 11, 2017).

On top of that, the lack of political willingness to deploy the Battlegroups creates an additional problem. For example, since the FOC capacity of Battlegroups in 2007, gaps were revealed in the Battlegroup schedule. For each semester, two Battlegroups need to be on standby so the Union could deploy them simultaneously, or for two separate operations. However, there have been two gaps in the schedule. For the second semester of 2015 and 2017 only one Battlegroup was on standby (European External Action Service; European Union Military Staff, 2015).

3.2 Political obstacles

The second obstacle regards the political issues that arise from the absence of a well-organised funding mechanism for EU military operations. Political obstacles that hinder the effective use of Battlegroups are caused by the lack of interoperability of EU Members

⁶ “*...ik wil het niet, want ik wil niet betalen.*”

contributing to Battlegroups and the competition that exists between Battlegroups, CSDP missions, and the NRF.

3.2.1 Lack of Interoperability

The Headline Goal of 2010 outlined that the Battlegroups should be interoperable (Quille, 2006a). Simply stated, interoperability enables coalition building. After the creation of these coalitions, they are sustained by reducing the costs of participation and increasing burden sharing (Hura, 2000). It is often stated that EU military forces are not 'joint' enough. This means that the EUBG, is not sufficiently linked with its air-based and maritime enablers, which negatively influences the efficiency and effectiveness of military operations (Interview, October 11, 2017). The EU forces not being linked with its enablers also affects the EU Members financially. For example, according to the president of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, the lack of cooperation in defence matters costs Europe between €25 billion and €100 billion per year (European Commission, 2017). In order to elaborate on the issue, the lack of interoperability can be explained through the incoherence in both the cooperation between EU Members, as well as the incoherence within the Battlegroup and its enablers. Furthermore, a lack of interoperability is caused by the absence of permanent command structures.

Incoherence

In the current state of the Battlegroups, there exist too many differences in European Member States' training and norms concerning the deployment of units (Quille, 2007). An example of different norms has been mentioned earlier on, with the example of operation ATALANTA. The German government had different norms concerning the deployment of German soldiers, since the government decided that the operation required more evacuation helicopters. The success of the mission could have been endangered if the Germans decided not to provide the helicopters and withdraw their troops instead.

In terms of training, it is of significant importance for the Battlegroups to improve the quality and quantity of trainings. Training better and more often will improve coherence between EU Member States. It also promotes allows better cooperation between the Battlegroup and its strategic enablers (Interview, October 11, 2017). Facilitating trainings is the full responsibility of the Members contributing to the Battlegroups (Kerttunen, 2010, p.140). Unfortunately for the Battlegroups, EU Member States do not train often enough. As a result, Battlegroups are not yet accustomed to exercising together, which could have detrimental effect on the success of a Battlegroup mission (Quille, 2007). For example, Africa is one of the regions where the EU is more likely to conduct military missions due to

the instability and conflicts in the continent (Zandee, 2015). Yet, most European forces have zero to no experience of operating in Africa at all, which may result in horrendous outcomes in combat scenarios (Boyer, 2007, p.4).

Absence of permanent command structures

Secondly, the lack of interoperability is caused by the non-permanent command structures. Chapter two discussed the composition of the Battlegroups, in which there exist three headquarters, all supplied by EU Member States. These non-permanent command structures are set up for crisis management only. EU Member States and institutions are concerned that the current planning and command arrangements could hinder EU Member States to respect the timelines for Battlegroup deployment (Major & Mölling, 2001, p.17). There exist individual fragments of military planners that the EU only activates on a case-by-case basis. If a Battlegroup is deployed, it often occurs that the Operational Headquarters is activated too late in the preparation process, which slows down the decision-making procedure (Lindström, 2007, p.22). It must be noted that the EU has access to the EU Military Staff, and The Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD). These military bodies aim to enhance strategic planning, develop military capabilities and support cooperation between EU Members (European External Action Service, n.d.). However, these permanent structures do not have the required knowledge of the exact capabilities of the Battlegroups on standby (Major & Molling, 2001, p.17).

3.2.2 Competition with CSDP missions and the NRF

The second political obstacle that prevents the deployment of Battlegroups is the competition and overlap of the Battlegroup concept with the CSDP missions and the NRF. It can be argued that this is a luxury problem for EU members, since the Battlegroups are not the only tool for civilian and military operations. Besides the Battlegroups, the EU Member States that are also NATO Members can take part in both CSDP and NRF operations (Vanaga, n.d.). This overlap creates an obstacle to the use of the Battlegroups given the fact that both the CSDP and the NRF have conducted operations while Battlegroups have not. It can be argued that the EU Member States prefer to resort to the CSDP and NRF in conducting military operations.

CSDP operations

The first chapter outlined that the CSDP is an integral part of the EU's comprehensive approach towards crises management, drawing on civilian and military assets (European External Action Service, 2016a). While it is true that the Battlegroups can be deployed through this EU policy, EU Member States can also carry out civilian or military operations

without the specific use of Battlegroups. The previous chapter discussed the wide range of deployment scenarios for the Battlegroups. It could be argued that if Battlegroups are able to do everything, they are good for nothing (Vanaga, n.d.). With the expectation for Battlegroups to have both civilian and military capabilities, they compete with CSDP civilian and military missions. So far, CSDP missions have been favoured by EU Member States, since they tend to agree more on launching missions and operations than on deploying Battlegroups (Vanaga, n.d.). For example, since the implementation of the CSDP in 2003, the EU launched 34 operations, 10 of which were military, 23 which were civilian, and one which was a mixed civil-military mission (Carrasco Márquez, et al., 2016). On the contrary, Battlegroups have yet to see action since their Full Operational Capability status was declared in 2007.

NRF

The Battlegroups also have to compete with NATO's own rapid response force, the NRF. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Battlegroups are capable of a wide range of missions. These encompass evacuation missions, humanitarian aid, peace-enforcing and peacekeeping operations. NRF activities are identical to these scenarios, since the NRF can be deployed to provide assistance after natural disasters, and to prevent the eruption of a conflict by showing force (Lindström, 2007, p.46). Due to the similarities between the Battlegroups and the NRF, there exists the issue of 'double-hatting'. In other words, with both force packages prioritizing rapid response, it is a challenge for contributing countries to deal with overlaps or duplications in terms of personnel or headquarters committed to both forces (Lindström, 2007, p.49). For example, contributing countries are possibly facing challenges regarding the rotation of forces between the Battlegroups and the NRF. To illustrate, in 2007, France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Luxemburg were responsible for troop contributions to NRF. At the same time, France, Germany, and Belgium were also responsible for two Battlegroups (Lindström, 2007, p.49). While larger countries are currently able to balance contributions to both forces, a lack of military capability may become more visible in the event of a Battlegroup deployment (Lindström, 2007, p.49).

3.3 Procedural obstacle

Thirdly, the procedural obstacle that hinders the deployment of Battlegroups concerns the lack of military capabilities.

3.3.1 A lack of military capabilities affects deployability

The European Union finds itself in a difficult position in terms of military assets. Despite 29 countries contributing to the Battlegroups concept, the EU Member States cope with a

shortage in equipment, personnel and other military assets (Vanaga, n.d.). Naturally, Battlegroups suffer from the lack of military capabilities of the EU Member States, since the same states provide the capabilities for EUBG formations.

Improving the military strength of the EU played a significant role in the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Global Strategy. The Lisbon Treaty encouraged states to progressively take action to improve their military capabilities and make them available to the EU for the implementation of the CSDP (European Union, 2007). The EUGS stressed the importance of high-end military capabilities to respond to external crises and to keep Europe safe (European Union; European External Action Service, 2016). Military capabilities are of great importance to the Battlegroups, especially when critics argue that having an out-dated mobilisation force like the Battlegroups, is equal to having no force at all (Matlary, 2009, p.101). Van Osch adds that a shortage of equipment weakens the Battlegroups significantly, due to their dependence on air and maritime support. For most of the conflicts where Battlegroups can be deployed, the scale of the conflict is simply too large for the size of an armed force (interview, October 11, 2017).

An example that illustrates the shortage of military capabilities is the lack of air support. Van Osch explained how the Battlegroups depend on air and maritime support, which is why it is essential to the effectiveness of the EUBGs that these components are well developed. However, this is not the case based on the quantity of military aircraft available to the EU. Battlegroups need aircraft to provide a rapid response to crises, since the fastest way to get to a conflict area is by plane. For a Battlegroup to be deployed, approximately 200 C-130, or 30 C17 military transport aircrafts must be available. It is important to note that the C-130 and C17 are large sized, or in military terms, oversized aircrafts. This number is based on the assets deployed for Operation Artemis, due to the similarities between the EU military operation and a Battlegroup mission (Lindström, 2007, p.31). Where approximately 300 aircrafts are required for a deployment, the EU has access to 600. Of these 600 transport airplanes of the EU Member States, half of them are small-to-medium sized. The other half consists of the larger C-130 and similar C-160 planes. In addition, the EU only has access to four C17 planes, which has trice the capacity of a C-130 plane (Lindström, 2007, p.31-35). Only four C17 planes is insufficient for a Battlegroup deployment, especially when considering that they belong to the United Kingdom (Lindström, 2007, p. 35). The problem with this is the increased difficulty for the UK to participate in defence cooperation with EU Member States after Brexit. Non-EU states like the UK are only able to join after negotiations and with an agreement on providing funds (Sengupta, 2017). The lack of oversized aircrafts is only one of many military capability shortcomings of the EU. Van Osch

explains that the Members do not acquire enough high-tech enablers, since individual countries are not able to afford such expensive technology. Examples of these enablers include: long distance drones, air-to-air refuelling aircrafts, digitalised command and control systems, precision-guided munition, and so on (Interview, October 31, 2017).

Brexit

The lack of military assets is posing a threat to EU security, especially after the British population voted out of the Union in 2016. While Mogherini explained Brexit as an opportunity to enhance European integration, the UK will be missed in terms of military capabilities. As the United Kingdom, with its military capabilities, is leaving the EU, this has created operational challenges for the Battlegroups.

Lieutenant General Van Osch considered Brexit to be a “*disaster*” for all of us, since the UK is one of the strongest Member States in terms of military capabilities (Interview, October 11, 2017)⁷. The UK always has been a major military power in the global scene. In 2017, the British army counted a total military strength of 232,675 soldiers (Global Firepower, 2017d). The other main military powers of the EU, France (387,635), Germany (210,000), and Italy (267,500), will have to take more responsibility after the UK will weaken the Union with their departure (Global Firepower, 2017a; 2017b; 2017c). Van Osch explained how the United Kingdom always contributed and often took the lead in operations, including the Battlegroups. The Dutch marines for example, cooperate closely with the British marines by forming an UK/NL amphibious force (Van Osch, interview, October 11, 2017). This cooperation, which formed a core element of the Battlegroup between the two countries, will not be prolonged if the UK has no desire to do so.

3.4 Case study: the shortcomings of Operation Artemis

The second chapter discussed Operation Artemis from a positive angle by outlining the accomplishments of the operation. The following section provides a more critical analysis of the shortcomings of Operation Artemis.

First of all, the Union had to deal with a shortage of strategic transport. For example, the EU Member States involved, relied too heavily on the Franco-German built C160 carrier aircraft. This aircraft is very limited in terms of capacity, which increases the number of round trips required. The problem was partially solved by leasing an aircraft from the Ukraine. However, the lack of military capabilities could have seriously endangered the

⁷ Ik vind het persoonlijk een ramp voor ons allemaal, ook voor de Britten.

mission (Homan, 2007). Additionally, since more round trips were required, a more rapid build-up of Artemis forces could not be achieved (Koenig, 2012).

Secondly, the contributors failed to properly design command centres and headquarters that could secure long-distance communications (Homan, 2007). Despite France establishing communications between several states, it left much to be desired. Effective intelligence sharing is essential in a military operation, especially to promote interoperability (Homan, 2007).

The previous chapter outlined how Artemis served as a catalyst for the creation of Battlegroups. The EU Member States wanted to build upon the successes gained in Operation Artemis. Unfortunately, several shortcomings of Artemis were not solved with the creation of Battlegroups. The lack of military assets and other factors influencing the interoperability of the EUBG, remain fundamental issues to this date. Yet, due to a changing security environment, these issues have not gone unnoticed. As outlined in chapters 1 and 3, the EU is taking action to remove obstacles that prevent the deployment of the Battlegroups. It must however, be taken into account that this study analysed Operation Artemis as a proxy, since the fact that Battlegroups have never been deployed make it impossible to evaluate their conduct.

In conclusion, the shortcomings of the Battlegroups can be explained through a threefold argument, based on the obstacles for Battlegroups as defined by the High Representative Mogherini in the EUGS. Financial, political and procedural obstacles prevent the deployment of the EU Battlegroups. Of these three obstacles the financial problem can be considered the main reason why Battlegroups have never been deployed. A lack of common funding for Battlegroup operations makes the use of Battlegroups less attractive for EU Member States, since more of the burden has to be carried by the state in charge. Political and procedural obstacles support the statement that Battlegroups are less attractive due to high costs. Concerning the political obstacles, this study argues that there is a lack of interoperability in both the cooperation between EU Members, as well as incoherence within the Battlegroup and its enablers. On top of that, the competition between Battlegroups, CSDP missions and the NRF further hinders the implementation of the Battlegroups. The procedural obstacle is the lack of military capabilities of the EU Member States. The shortage of military strength can endanger the effectiveness of a military operation or prevent the launching of that operation in its entirety. For example, Operation Artemis exposed the vulnerability of EU military operations when EU Members do not have

access to sufficient military capabilities. Artemis could have been endangered if the EU was not able to lease military aircrafts from the non-EU Member State of Ukraine.

Conclusion and recommendations

The results of my study aimed to answer the following question: *What role can EU Battlegroups play in accomplishing EU security goals?* The aim of the study was to analyse the capabilities and shortcomings of the Battlegroups in light of the defence ambitions of the European Union, as established in recent policy documents. Based on this analysis, the role of the Battlegroups in accomplishing EU security goals would be determined. Based on the conducted research, I argue that the Battlegroups can, and will play, a significant role in accomplishing EU security goals.

The study argues that the Battlegroups are more likely to be deployed thanks to recent developments in EU defence policy making. The study outlined that the European Union is taking significant action to adjust the Union's defence policy to cope with the changing security environment. Nowadays, terrorists are striking closer to home with every attack, which requires the EU to take action and tackle the problem at its roots. In order to counter terrorism, defence ambitions have been derived from the CSDP. With ambitions laid down in the Lisbon Treaty and the EUGS, the Union aims to improve military cooperation within the EU, as well as the cooperation with NATO. This can only be achieved by intensifying military capability building through the ambitions articulated in the aforementioned documents. The Battlegroup's capabilities and characteristics align with the contemporary defence ambitions of the EU. For example, the EUGS outlined the desire to improve the resiliency of neighbouring states, to prevent them from becoming breeding grounds for terrorism. The rapid deployability, and the wide variety of deployment scenarios of the Battlegroup allows for a quick response in defending EU interests, such as the stabilising of troubled conflict areas in failed states.

Furthermore, the Battlegroups contribute to enhancing cooperation and capability building. The study argued that thanks to the Battlegroups, the EU Member States have gained more in-depth knowledge of the capabilities and shortcomings of their partners. Based on this knowledge, 7 EU Member States established the European Air Transport Fleet (EATF). Through this initiative, the EU aims to strengthen its strategic aircraft capabilities by working closely with NATO. These positive contributions to EU defence align with the ambitions discussed in this thesis. The EUGS set the goal to improve cooperation with NATO, as well as the ambition to create a responsive Union by removing Battlegroup obstacles such as the lack of military capabilities. In other words, the EU has the ambition to give the Battlegroups a greater role in accomplishing security goals.

On a critical note, Battlegroups encounter financial, political and procedural obstacles that hinder their deployment and have a negative impact on their potential role in accomplishing EU security goals. The EUGS mentioned the ambition to tackle the current obstacles that prevent Battlegroup deployment. This study argued that the main problem for the Battlegroups is that there is no common funding for EU military operations. Furthermore, the EU lacks military capabilities, and the present forces are not collaborative enough.

It is up to the EU to address the shortcomings as outlined in this study, with the emphasis on designing a solution for the funding issue. This study argued that dealing with the funding problem would most likely trigger a domino effect. After solving the main challenges that hinder the possible deployment of Battlegroups there would be more political will to take care of operational challenges, since the Battlegroups would become cheaper for all EU Member States concerned. For example, Lieutenant General van Osch worked with politicians who had the intention to deploy the EUBG, but decided not to as a result of a deficient military budget. For this reason, the study recommends that EU Member States further explore PESCO projects, as they did in November 2017. Research showed that PESCO gives the opportunity for EU Member States to develop common funding for Battlegroup operations, as well as capability building and enhanced cooperation among EU Member States and NATO. In doing so, the EU would improve the current state of the Battlegroups in light of the defence ambitions outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and the EUGS.

To conclude, Rome wasn't built in one day, and developing solutions to clear the way for Battlegroups to deploy will take time as well. Nevertheless, if the main obstacle, the common funding of EU military operations, can be taken care of, the Battlegroups will most likely be deployed sooner rather than later.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Transcript Interview

Location: Instituut Defensie Leergangen (IDL) – Den Haag

Interviewee: Lieutenant General A.G.D. van Osch

Interviewee profile: Since 15 June 2007, Lieutenant General A.G.D. van Osch, MA, is a Permanent Military Representative to the NATO and EU Military Committee in Brussels, Belgium.

Date: 11 October 2017

Time of interview: 13:00 – 14:20

Language in which the interview was conducted: Dutch

I: Interviewer (Rens Koppejan), **G:** Geïnterviewde (Ton van Osch)

Student Ethics Form

European Studies Student Ethics Form

Your name: Rens Koppejan

Supervisor: Santino Lo Bianco

Instructions/checklist

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). If you are planning research with human subjects you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

- a. ☐ Read section 3 that your supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
- b. ☐ Complete sections 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
- c. ☐ Ask your project supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and sign the form.
- d. ☐ Append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation.

Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)

(i) **Title of Project:** The role of EU Battlegroups in accomplishing EU defence goals

(ii) **Aims of project:**

This study examines what role the European Union Battlegroups can play in accomplishing EU defence goals. In doing so, an assessment is made of the capabilities and shortcomings of the Battlegroups in light with the EU defence ambitions.

(iii) **Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)**

☒ YES

If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your supervisor. You have completed this form.

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects. I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature not applicable - date not applicable

If yes: you should complete the rest of this form.

Section 2 Complete this section only if you answered YES to question (iii) above.

(i) What will the participants have to do? (v. brief outline of procedure):

The participant will have to answer several questions during the course of the interview.

For my thesis I have interviewed one individual, who delivered qualitative data to the benefit of my study. This interview took place in a predetermined location with full consent of the participant. We held an interview in which I asked approximately 10 questions, to which the interviewee gave answer to.

(ii) What sort of people will the participants be and how will they be recruited?

The participant will be approached by means of email, due to the relevant knowledge this individual possesses concerning the scope of my research: EU defence policy.

(iii) What sort stimuli or materials will your participants be exposed to, tick the appropriate boxes and then state what they are in the space below?

Questionnaires[]; Pictures[]; Sounds []; Words[X]; Other[].

Contact will be sought through email. The interview will take place after an appointment is made with the appropriate conditions. The interviewee will thus be exposed to written and spoken words.

(iv) Consent: Informed consent must be obtained for all participants before they take part in your project. Either verbally or by means of an informed consent form you should state what participants will be doing, drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. You should also state how they can withdraw from the study at any time and the measures you are taking to ensure the confidentiality of data. A standard informed consent form is available in the Dissertation Manual.

The participant will have to sign the informed consent form and permission is required to record the interview. I will also inform that the participant can withdraw from the interview at any time if so required.

(vi) What procedures will you follow in order to guarantee the confidentiality of participants' data? Personal data (name, addresses etc.) should not be stored in such a way that they can be associated with the participant's data.

The participants personal information will not be used if no consent is given. Data collected during the interview will not be shared with the public, except with The Hague University of Applied Sciences by means of handing-in of the final product.

Student's signature:  date: 23-02-18

Supervisor's signature (if satisfied with the proposed procedures):  date: 24 February 2018

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

- 1) The role of EU Battlegroups in accomplishing EU defence ambitions
- 2) Rens Koppejan

This study examines what role the European Union Battlegroups can play in accomplishing EU defence goals. In doing so, an assessment is made of the capabilities and shortcomings of the Battlegroups in light with the EU defence ambitions.

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

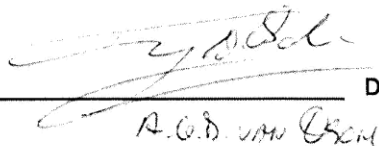
All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Signed: _____



R. O. B. van Oort

Date: 17-2-2018

Vraag 1: I: Zou u iets meer over uzelf kunnen vertellen, en dan vooral over uw achtergrond en taken als Director General bij de EUMS?

G: De directeur generaal militaire staf is een militair adviseur van de HRVP, dus hoge vertegenwoordiger binnen de EU. En dat is onder de '*Council*', en daar valt het buitenlands beleid en defensie onder andere onder. Maar ze is ook vicepresident van de commissie. En de commissie gaat, zoals je weet, over bijna alle andere instrumenten. Daar zit landbouw in, maar ook economische zaken, interne zaken. '*Home*', heet dat dan. '*Industry and enterprises, Growth*' heet het. En waarom heeft ze eigenlijk die twee functies, twee petten? Hoge vertegenwoordiger en vicepresident? Omdat zij in die twee functies alle externe acties van de EU kan coördineren. Ze is niet de baas van al die instrumenten. Je moet het eigenlijk een beetje vergelijken met een minister van buitenlandse zaken. In NL is die verantwoordelijk voor de coördinatie van alle buitenlandse beleid, maar elke minister heeft ook zijn eigen mening over wat er in zijn vakgebied op buitenlands beleid moet gebeuren. Minister van landbouw gaat ook naar Brussel voor vergaderingen, ministers van economische zaken ook, enzovoorts. Dus er is altijd een beetje gezonde spanning, zo noem ik het maar, tussen de minister van buitenlandse zaken en alle andere ministers. Want je moet ze op een spoor krijgen voor de buitenlandse zaken issues. En ik trek die vergelijking omdat sommige mensen teleurgesteld doen over wat in dit geval de HRVP voor elkaar krijgt, maar zij is niet diegene die beslist. Zij komt wel met voorstellen, of krijgt voorstellen van anderen, waar ze binnen de Raad consensus over moeten krijgen, binnen de Commissie een positief besluit van de voorzitter van de commissie, de president van de commissie en ze moet verantwoording leggen aan de Europese raad, '*heads of state*', daar is ze lid van. Maar ze moet ook verantwoording afleggen aan het Europees parlement. Dus ze heeft een hele complexe positie. Dat is de afweging geweest. Als we heel graag willen dat er iemand is die alles coördineert, waardoor we veel effectiever worden, dan moet je ook accepteren dat er complexe besluitvorming is, omdat er heel veel verschillende meningen zijn.

Zij was dus mijn baas, maar waar ging ik over? Dat heeft weer te maken met dat ik ook het militair comité ondersteun in de EU. Die mogen mij richtlijnen geven. Daar hou ik altijd rekening mee, want in het militair comité zitten alle CDS-en: commandanten der strijdkrachten van de EU, en als ik een operatie wil doen voor de EU, dan moeten die commandanten mij de middelen leveren. Dus natuurlijk hebben die ook een grote '*say*' in of zij die opties wel of niet goedvinden. Waar gaan die CDS-en over? Over lopende operaties en problemen die er zijn. Over de planning van toekomstige operaties en de advisering aan de politiek. Over interoperabiliteit en training. En over toekomstige

capaciteiten-ontwikkelingen, waarvan de militaire kanten ook operationele militaire behoeftes voor hebben. Dan heb je dus een heleboel landen met verschillende meningen, en mijn rol is dan om op militair gebied, op al die delen, consensusbesluiten te krijgen.

I: Uitdagend?

G: Uitdagend en soms zeer frustrerend, maar als je terugkrijgt naar een periode dan ben je soms ook verbaasd wat je allemaal hebt bereikt.

I: waar bent u het meest trots op wat u hebt bereikt?

G: Ik denk dat dankzij de nieuwe structuur die is ontstaan na het verdrag van Lissabon, dus het nieuwe EU-verdrag, dat we nu daadwerkelijk iets gaan doen, al aan het doen zijn, maar lerende wijs naar voren gaan. Wat we vroeger '*integrated approach*' noemden, dan heel lang '*comprehensive approach*', alomvattend, dus met gebruik maken van alle informatiebronnen en instrumenten. Nu noemen ze het weer '*integrated approach*', maar het is hetzelfde. Dat je van alle machtsmiddelen die we hebben, gebruik maakt en die gecoördineerd kan inzetten om dezelfde politieke doelstellingen te halen. En daar kan ik inmiddels een heleboel voorbeelden van geven, dat we daardoor veel succesvoller beginnen te worden. Ik zeg niet dat het makkelijk is overigens, het is ook complex.

Vraag 2: I: uiteraard. Goed, dan wil ik het hebben over de Battlegroups. Er wordt veel geschreven over de Battlegroups dat het een papieren tijger is in de zin van: op papier staan ze er maar ze zijn nog nooit ingezet voor operationele missies. Kunt u de Battlegroups als een succes beschouwen? Of zijn ze mislukt? Of is dat een te groot woord?

G: Dan moeten we beginnen met de doelstellingen van de oprichting van de Battlegroups. Waren twee doelstellingen: om de militaire samenwerking binnen de EU te stimuleren en te werken aan verdere interoperabiliteit. Daar is het een succes geweest, maar op zeer kleine schaal. Want iets vergelijkbaars deed NAVO op grote schaal met de '*NATO response force*', en nog steeds. Als het gaat om inzet, heeft ook de Battlegroup dezelfde problemen als de NRF. Inzet gebeurt met consensus, en de NRF is eenmalig ingezet voor een aardbeving in Pakistan. Toen hadden de Spanjaarden de leiding. Kijk, NAVO besluit bij consensus over inzet, maar het principe van wie betaald is: '*costs fall where they lie*'. En de kosten werden gedragen door Spanje. Dus heel NATO besloten om iets te doen, Spanje maakt vervolgens enorme kosten om zijn deel van de NRF in te zetten en niemand anders

wil ervoor betalen. Die les heeft iedereen onthouden, zowel binnen NAVO als de EU, voor een belangrijk deel zijn dat ook dezelfde landen. En er zijn dan een paar nadelen aan een Battlegroup, maar de allerbelangrijkste reden waarom die Battlegroup niet is ingezet, ook al hebben er zich situaties voorgedaan waarbij die inzet zeer bruikbaar was, is omdat er geen '*common funding*' is voor de inzet. Ik zeg expres voor de inzet, sommige landen willen '*common funding*', dat alle landen meebetalen, ook aan de vorming van Battlegroups. Maar dat vind ik onzin, want iedereen moet gewoon naar draagkracht bijdragen. Iedereen kan de vorming van de Battlegroup plannen, het oefenen plannen. Daar kun je dus budget voor vrijzetten. Maar de landen reserveren geen budget voor inzet. Want je weet helemaal niet of je in die zes maanden dat je het bent, en sommigen doen het een jaar, dat die dan wordt ingezet. En je bent voor een Battlegroup tot 500 miljoen euro kwijt. Als je daar de bulk van levert, met strategisch transport, en hoelang die daar moet zitten, en materieel dat slijt en vervangen moet worden, dat gaat heel snel, je bent heel snel tussen de 250 en 500 miljoen kwijt. Als je dan binnen defensiebudgetten gaat reserveren en je hebt het niet gebruikt, dan ben je aan het eind van het jaar, zo is het met de meeste landen, ook in Nederland, ben je dat geld weer kwijt, gaat het naar financiën. Dus voor inzet reserveren de meeste landen, of helemaal niks, of zoals Nederland een heel klein beetje, de '*HGIS pot*'. Maar dat is absoluut onvoldoende om ineens zo'n Battlegroup in te zetten. Dus ik heb verschillende keren gehad, bij verschillende landen dat ministers van defensie of buitenlandse zaken, want dat zijn diegene die mij het meeste aansturen, vragen of ik een operatie voor hun voorbereid. En dan doe ik dat door onder andere gebruik te maken van een Battlegroup, maar in alle gevallen is het geblokkeerd door landen die dan zelf de kosten moeten dragen. Landen vinden het niet erg om die kosten te dragen, als het maar naar draagkracht is. Maar het is oneerlijk dat als jij de beurt hebt en dan wordt besloten, dat je dan opeens alle kosten moet dragen, of in ieder geval veel meer. Kijk, de commando structuur wordt dan betaald door '*common funding*'. Maar de grote kosten zitten dan uiteindelijk in het daadwerkelijk inzetten, het betalen van je personeel, etc. Iedereen is daarin even slecht. Nederland heeft heel vaak geklaagd dat andere landen dat deden, dat ze de besluitvorming vertraagde. Als jij de beurt hebt, ontwikkelt zich een crisis. Wat ook gebeurde, dat landen die dan de beurt hadden allerlei kritische vragen gingen stellen over het nut van die operatie, waardoor ze de besluitvorming vertraagden en nooit het argument hoefden te gebruiken van 'ik wil het niet, want ik wil niet betalen', en dan zijn ze in een keer vooruit als het hun beurt niet meer is, maar dan begint weer iemand anders te vertragen. Ik spreek er geen kwaad van, want het is heel logisch. Ik zal je zeggen, een keer is er ook een Nederlandse minister naar mij gekomen om mij uit te leggen dat het wel een heel slecht idee was, omdat wij bij defensie eenmaal ook grote financiële problemen hebben. En zo zijn velen naar mij toegekomen. Ik heb zelfs een geval gehad dat een land had gezegd, u kunt hem inzetten. En dat was best

wel een belangrijke operatie die we zouden doen ter evacuatie van mensen uit Libië. Daar had ik een Battlegroup voor nodig, daar wilde een land het schip leveren, de CDS en die minister van defensie hadden wel gezegd dat ze het zouden willen. Maar er was geen budget voor, dus we moesten nog wel naar het kabinet. En dan heb je in een keer grote tegenstand, van de minister van financiën, maar ook al je andere collega's. Want als de minister van financiën besluit om dat geld daarvoor te besteden, dan moeten anderen dat inleveren.

I: Zulk soort uitdagingen, problemen, ligt het eraan dat de Battlegroups nog in de babyschoenen staan, dat het nog een relatief jong concept is. Ze zijn nog maar '*deployable*' sinds 2007.

G: dat is toch 10 jaar.

I: dat is toch 10 jaar, zeker. Maar ligt het eraan dat het nog een jong concept is, of omdat er zulke onoplosbare problemen zijn?

G: Nou die '*common funding*' heb ik mij over verbaasd dat het zo moeilijk is op te lossen. En we hebben in 2013 geloof ik dat het was, besloten dat, bij wijze van proef, dat behalve de commando structuur ook de strategische verplaatsing naar het operatiegebied deel van '*common funding*' te maken. Maar dat is nog steeds onvoldoende, je moet nog steeds de inzet '*common funding*' maken of daar standaard een budget voor in de EU reserveren, waar die landen gebruik van mogen maken als zij net de beurt hebben. Daar zijn nu allerlei verbeteringen. Ik weet niet in hoeverre je het hebt bijgehouden wat er op dit moment in de EU is gebeurd. Maar je kan op het web horen zeggen dat bij de laatste informele raad ministers van defensie, maar het finale besluit gaat volgens mij dit jaar vallen, over een eerst noemden ze het '*startup fund*', maar dan heb je ook een '*defense fund*'. Dus we gaan voorwaarts, en er zullen zich situaties voordoen dat de kans dat we hem gaan inzetten steeds groter wordt. Als je het financiële probleem oplost, wordt de kans veel groter. Nogmaals, ik heb situaties gehad dat de Battlegroups ideaal waren om gebruikt te worden. Dat was een keer in Chad, in Ivoorkust en in Libië.

Nu andere nadelen van de Battlegroups, er is een hele lijst aan taken die de Battlegroup moet kunnen uitvoeren, dat is een mooi voorbeeld van politieke manipulatie. Het is heel duidelijk aan de inleidende zin aan die lijst met taken, dat die niet limitatief is. Maar landen die net de beurt hadden, en ik wilde hem inzetten, verwezen dan soms naar die lijst. 'Het staat niet op de lijst'. Ja maar die lijst is niet limitatief, dit kunnen we er wel mee. Want je

kan hem uit elkaar halen, want als je voor humanitaire steun heel snel capaciteiten nodig hebt zoals, transport, waterputten slaan, of bulken '*fuel*', of medische steun, genie. Dat zit ook allemaal in zo'n Battlegroup. Als voor humanitaire steun onder de '*Oslo guidelines*' daarnaar wordt gevraagd door '*Ocha*' of '*Echo*', zouden we dat kunnen doen. Maar, er zijn dus echt landen geweest die zeiden, 'de hele Battlegroup of niks, dat staat niet in het concept'. En elke keer als ik doorvroeg, zijn de argumenten die worden gebruikt publiekelijk en in de raad anders dan dat je uiteindelijk op stafniveau te horen krijgt. Ja je wordt er gek van, maar uiteindelijk gaat het om geld. En ik begrijp het wel, we moeten gewoon dat concept vervangen. Het goede nieuws is dat ze dat nu ook willen doen. Er zijn ook stappen gemaakt, maar dan loop je nog steeds aan tegen andere nadelen. De voorbeelden die ik noemde waren evacuatiesituaties. Dat je heel snel ergens in gaat en een gebied beveiligd. Daar kunnen dan vluchtelingen naar toe of evacuees. Die laat je instappen aan boord van een schip of vliegtuig en dan laat je iedereen vertrekken, ideaal. Mits het in een gebied is waar je geen luchtsteun nodig hebt. Dan pak ik het eerste nadeel van een Battlegroup. Die ziet nog niet goed ingedekt in een '*joint*' omgeving. Dat is anders dan bij de NRF, de NAVO. Daar heb je een landcomponent, daar praat men altijd over, maar voor de inzet van de NRF houdt NAVO ook rekening met de inzet van luchtmacht en ze hebben de NAVO '*standing maritime groups*' die ook deel kunnen zijn van de NRF als het nodig is. Daar is binnen de EU wel een doctrine over ontwikkeld, maar dat zit nog niet in het gereed stellingsproces. Dus dat duurt nog veel te lang en heel vaak moeten er dingen snel gaan. Een andere taak waar ze heel geschikt voor waren, dan konden ze in Europa blijven, is als strategische reserve, of operationele reserve als je kijkt naar de omvang, van een EU-missie. Zoals bijvoorbeeld in Chad. Weer een voorbeeld, want de landen die toen leverden wilden dat niet, want dan zit je de hele tijd te wachten, want je kan niks anders met die troepen, dat is nadelig. En als ze wel nodig zijn kost het jou verschrikkelijk veel geld. Dus als je aan mij vraagt of de Battlegroups een succes zijn is mijn korter antwoord na deze uitweidingen: het is een succes, want het heeft zeker multinationale samenwerking binnen de EU verder getriggerd. We hebben hem nooit ingezet met die reden, maar dat wil niet zeggen dat de militaire eenheid Battlegroup per definitie ongeschikt is voor dat soort missies. Dat heeft veel met een financiële reden te maken, maar er staan dingen op die lijst, van wat ze allemaal moeten kunnen, zoals '*initial entry force*'. Dat kan die wel, maar dat kan alleen als ogenblikkelijk daarna ook andere troepen komen. Want echt het nadeel van de Battlegroup, voor de meeste conflicten waar we heel snel moeten kunnen optreden, is de omvang de Battlegroup eigenlijk te klein en niet '*joint*' genoeg. Dus niet voldoende gelinkt met luchtmacht en marine.

I: Is dat ook een van de redenen dat de NATO toch de belangrijkste vorm van defensie is voor Europa? Omdat Battlegroups te klein in omvang zijn en financieel problemen opleveren.

G: Behalve dingen die ik over de EU ga zeggen, blijft NATO essentieel voor onze militaire veiligheid, vanwege het feit dat Europa absoluut niet in staat is om zonder de Verenigde Staten om de eigen veiligheidsbroek omhoog te houden. We missen een heleboel 'enablers': in de ruimte, specifiek nauwkeurige munitie, veel te weinig, veel te weinig tankvliegtuigen, veel te weinig van heel veel dingen: helikopters, gedigitaliseerde landstrijdkrachten, gevechtsvliegtuigen hebben we wel veel, maar lang niet genoeg met de kwaliteit die we nodig hebben. En dat wordt altijd maar weer door de Amerikanen aangevuld. Dat geldt voor alle krijgsmachtsdelen, overal heeft Europa afgrijselijke tekorten als we het zelf zouden moeten doen. NATO zorgt ook voor de interoperabiliteit, dat we met elkaar kunnen samenwerken. Dat zijn allemaal NATO standaards. Dat dupliceert de EU niet, maar dat betekent dat als de EU een militaire operatie wil uitvoeren, kan dat alleen maar omdat NATO zorgt voor die interoperabiliteit. Dus NATO moeten we vooral houden, ik maak me ook vooral zorgen als dat minder gaat worden. Maar tegelijkertijd zullen er situaties zijn waar grote Europese belangen op het spel staan en waar gewoon veel kleinere of helemaal geen Amerikaanse belangen op het spel staan. Dat is de hele reden waarom dat is ook gebeurt. De eerste Europese veiligheidsstrategie werd geschreven door Solana en is goedgekeurd in 2003. Die was gebaseerd op de gedachte dat Europa, de VN allemaal hadden gefaald in Bosnië en uiteindelijk hebben de Amerikanen 70% van de kosten moeten dragen om die operatie uit te voeren, om Bosnië weer veilig te maken. Wat is nou het Amerikaanse belang? We hebben een heel groot Europees belang. Dat was ook de reden waarom de eerste Europese strategie, die had als ambitie zo'n 60 duizend man, maar dat was precies wat NATO nodig heeft gehad in Bosnië. Die begonnen met 60 duizend. Dat was 'peace-enforcing', dus als je echt strijdende partijen uit elkaar wil halen moet je ook vechten, en daar hebben we in totaal zo'n 60 duizend man voor gebruikt. Daarna ga je 'peace-keeping': er is vrede, maar de spanningen zijn nog hoog en daarom hebben we jaren achtereen met zo'n 30 duizend man gezeten daar. Dat is tot vorige jaar de ambitie gebleven van de EU, maar met de nieuwe strategie waziger geworden, maar groter. Er wordt nu niet gesproken over getallen, maar de EU moet in staat zijn, of in samenwerking met NATO of als nodig apart, om alle dreigingen tegen Europa aan te kunnen. Dan moeten we wel heel hard gaan investeren in onze defensies als we dat mogelijk willen gaan maken. Zowel in omvang als in kwaliteit als in enkele 'enablers' die we eigenlijk helemaal niet hebben, omdat het altijd door te de Amerikanen of grotendeels door de Amerikanen wordt afgedekt.

I: Dus daar moeten we eigenlijk vanaf, van die afhankelijkheid van de Amerikanen?

G: ik heb daar twee gevoelens bij, ik vind dat de wereld veel veiliger is als onderlinge onafhankelijkheid blijft, want Amerika is ook afhankelijk van Europa in zekere zin. Want Amerika had nooit alleen Afghanistan kunnen doen, ja misschien het eerste deel, maar nadat de oorlog was gevoerd en de taliban uit het zadel was geholpen en al Qaida kampen waren uitgeschakeld, als je weggaat komen ze gelijk weer terug. Zonder bondgenoten hadden ze nooit voor elkaar gekregen dat we daar in ieder geval aan stabiliteit hebben kunnen werken. Helaas, in mijn ogen, zijn we te snel teruggegaan, we hebben te snel afgebouwd om daar structurele veiligheid te brengen. Maar het is in ieder geval veel veiliger dan voor '9/11'. Want toen zat er een vijandige regering die al Qaida accepteerde dat die de kampen hadden, en je hoeft geen bewijs te zoeken, want ze zeiden dat ze achter de aanslagen zaten.

I: Dan ben ik wel benieuwd, is de rol van de EU misschien meer gericht op het '*peace-keeping*' dan op '*peace-enforcing*'?

G: Nou, je moet eigenlijk beginnen met het Europees verdrag, het verdrag van Lissabon. Daar staan de taken in die je moet kunnen. [meneer van Osch laat artikel 26,28 van het verdrag van Lissabon zien]. Dit is de oude nummering, maar alle taken staan genoemd. Maar ook dat het kan groeien tot '*common defence*'. Wat bij NATO artikel 5 is, een voor allen en allen voor een. Is het artikel bij de EU zelfs nog krachtiger dan bij NATO. Dus het verdrag geeft de mogelijkheid om al die taken uit te voeren, en het begint laag in het spectrum, bij humanitaire steun, evacuatie operaties, maar ook '*peace-keeping*' en '*peace-enforcing*' staat genoemd. De ambitie is gebaseerd, bij Solana staat '*common defence*' er helemaal niet bij, we gingen ervanuit dat NATO dat zou doen. En eigenlijk is het nu nog steeds zo, als het grootschalig wordt dan hebben we daar de Amerikanen voor nodig en wordt het NATO, want de Amerikanen zullen nooit onder bevel stellen bij de EU. Maar een heleboel andere crises, en vooral die crises waar een '*comprehensive approach*' nodig is, NATO kan dat niet, omdat NATO eigenlijk alleen het politieke en militaire instrument is. Maar het politieke en diplomatieke instrument bij NATO is volledig gebaseerd op het militaire instrument. Bij de EU kunnen alles coördineren, dus er begint een soort rolverdeling te ontstaan, dat het grootschalig conflict is voor NATO, en dat is complex genoeg. Laat NATO zich daar zou voornamelijk op richten, dat sluit ook helemaal aan bij de '*main purpose*' of NATO: '*guarantee the integrity of its member states with planetary and political needs*'. En van de EU: '*the well-being of its citizens*'. En als je even doorleest valt

er ook veiligheid eronder. En dat hebben ze dat opgesplitst in interne en externe veiligheid. Maar dat moet de EU wel kunnen. Je ziet nu in de *Global Strategy* van de EU, de nieuwe strategie, dat we vinden dat de ambitie groter moet worden dan het Bosnië scenario. Dat we al deze taken moeten kunnen en in sommige gevallen ook dit [wijst naar artikel 26 van het Lissabon verdrag]. Dat betekent nog al wat, want nu zijn we eigenlijk in Europa niet in staat om zonder de Amerikanen veel meer te doen dan 'peace-keeping'. 'Peace-enforcing' hebben we altijd al gezegd dat we dat moeten kunnen doen, want dat was in 2003 al de ambitie. Maar die ambitie hebben we nooit gehaald. We zeiden: 'we moeten versterken', maar in werkelijkheid hebben we alleen maar gekrompen. En nu praten we zelfs over dat er situaties ontstaan dat we dit ook moeten kunnen. Voor de Battlegroups betekent dat, als die ambitie er is, zal je zien komt er grote druk dat die Battlegroup qua omvang groter wordt en 'joint'.

I: hoe haalbaar is dat?

G: dan moet ik echt een inschatting maken. Er is elke keer een verschil tussen de deskundigen die allemaal vinden dat dat moet. Ik geloof dat er geen enkele deskundige is die het oneens met me is als je kijkt naar de dreigingen om ons heen, dat dat zo moeten voor ons welzijn, waar veiligheid er een van is. Uiteindelijk moet dat ook betaald worden, en in elk land ga je dan de discussies krijgen die je ook in Nederland hebt. Deze keer heeft defensie er wat bij gekregen, maar er is toch een gevecht tussen onderwijs, medische zorg, etc. uiteindelijk is het aan onze regeringen om dat te optimaliseren. Nu slaat de wijzer weer een beetje door naar defensie. Het zou nog veel mooier zijn dat dat niet nodig was. Maar als ik mijn inschatting maak, ik werk nog steeds voor NATO, we gaan in november de grootste oefening ooit draaien op militair strategisch en operationeel niveau. Dit met alleen maar hoofdkwartieren, dus dan doet zo'n beetje alles mee wat voor een grote operatie nodig zou zijn. Eigenlijk zou Europa niet leveren wat noodzakelijk is, want we hebben de Amerikanen keihard nodig. Maar het is helemaal niet ondenkbaar dat tegelijkertijd, natuurlijk immigratie problematiek weer groter wordt, terrorisme groter, conflicten die escaleren die er al zijn waardoor essentiële belangen van Europa worden geschaad. Allerlei essentiële grondstoffen van ons in Noord-Afrika en Midden-Afrika, als wij daar niet meer bij zouden kunnen, stort onze economie in. Daar gaat NATO niet optreden, dus daar treedt de EU nu al op. En dat is niet altijd militair, soms wel, maar in Afrika gaat het altijd om het stabiliseren, het versterken van democratische regeringen en het helpen opleiden van veiligheidsinstanties, zoals het leger. Dat moet je doen met militairen, dus de EU missietraining in Mali, Somalië. Het zou me niet verbazen als dat ook weer gaat gebeuren in Libië. Waarom trainen we de 'coast-guards'? Omdat we willen dat zij de vluchtelingen

tegenhouden. Het gaat veel makkelijker om vluchtelingen tegen te houden vanuit 'sub-Sahel', als we het niet alleen doen aan hun kust, maar als zij in staat zijn om dat ook te doen aan hun grenzen. Dus moet je die landen helpen om hun grenzen beter te bewaken. Dat wordt niet door NATO gedaan, maar de EU zet daar wel op in. Waarom de EU wel en NATO niet? Ten eerste gaat het een beetje buiten het NATO verdragsgebied, maar ten tweede heeft de EU veel meer de combinatie van middelen om het te doen. Want als je de 'coast-guards' opleidt en de militairen traint, dan moeten ze wel onder een goed democratisch model, en dat hoeft niet eens ons democratisch model te zijn, als het maar een ons-gezind regime gaat. Dat functioneert. Dus de EU heeft ook de capaciteit om ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 'good governance' en dat soort instrumenten, dat heeft NATO allemaal niet. En als je dat nodig hebt om allemaal problemen op te lossen in conflictgebieden, dan gaat dus de EU dat doen en niet NAVO.

Vraag 3: I: Duidelijk, dank u. Als we kijken naar vraag drie, welke rol kunnen Battlegroups spelen in het aanpakken van hedendaagse EU problemen? Wil ik vooral terrorisme eruit pakken, anders kunnen we er nog wel een uur over praten natuurlijk. Aangezien er in het Lissabon verdrag ook het vechten tegen terrorisme wordt beschreven, hoe kan een Battlegroup daar een bijdrage aan leveren.

G: Ik was hier toch van plan hier wat breder te gaan. Want nu moet je kijken voor waar die Battlegroups geschikt voor zijn en dat is eigenlijk voor hele kleinschalige militaire operaties. Of als het grootschalig is, dan moeten ze deel uitmaken van een groter geheel. Hoe linkt dat aan terrorisme? Niet aan terrorisme in de EU, want dat is voor de nationale staten, maar daar wordt wel veel samengewerkt binnen de EU, want die hebben met 'justice' een samenwerkingsverband, en met de politie een samenwerkingsverband. Maar als je kijkt naar de oorzaken van terrorisme, ontstaat het vaak in falende staten. Neem ik Somalië: Al Shabab, al Qaida gerelateerd. Ik denk dat de hele hoorn van Afrika vecht tegen piraterij, maar ook steun geven aan die 'failed states', waardoor nu een door ons geaccepteerde regering in ieder geval iets meer grip heeft op zijn eigen land en Al-Shabab in een verdediging heeft gestuurd. Al Shabab is niet meer de baas in Mogadishu en de omgeving. Ze doen er nog wel aanslagen, maar ze zijn er niet meer de baas. Dat doen ze met militairen die door de EU zijn opgeleid. Daarvoor gebruik je niet de Battlegroup, de Battlegroup gebruik je voor wat meer grootschaliger militair inzet. Maar die kan van belang zijn bijvoorbeeld als er besloten wordt om een 'peace-keeping' operatie uit te voeren in Syrië of Libië. Of het stabiliseren van Mali. Kijk de Battlegroup is zeker aan de orde geweest als optie als de EU die operatie heeft gedaan. In dit geval duurde het weer allemaal te lang voor onder andere uitgelegde redenen, en hebben de Fransen met steun van de

Amerikanen het zelf gedaan. Maar uiteindelijk moesten daar toch Mali militairen getraind worden, dat doet de EU. De VN heeft meer de stabilisatie missie gepakt. Als de VN wordt geblokkeerd omdat Rusland of China dat niet willen. Dan zou de EU het moeten doen, en voor dat soort '*peace-keeping*'-achtige operaties kan je de Battlegroup gebruiken als deel van een groter geheel, of begin van een groter geheel.

I: Vraag 4, wat hebben Battlegroups al bereikt? U had het al over....

G: Sorry, maar met Mali bijvoorbeeld leg ik niet gelijk de link met terrorisme, maar die is er natuurlijk wel. Want waarom is Mali een probleem? Omdat de Toearegs daar zelfstandigheid willen over meer landsgrenzen, maar ook Al Qaida in Maghreb is geïntegreerd en dan weer gerelateerd aan kleinere terroristische cellen. Dus om terrorisme te bestrijden begint het met dat soort landen, waar het vandaan komt te stabiliseren, zodat landen het zelf kunnen tegengaan.

I: Het gaat meer over voorkomen in plaats van genezen.

G: Ja.

Vraag 4: I: Goed, u had het net al over wat de Battlegroups hebben bereikt, dat de samenwerking tussen Europese staten op het gebied van veiligheid en defensie enorm is verbeterd. Wat is er verder bereikt?

G: Wat we dus bereikt hebben is echt die internationale samenwerking. Over inzet hebben we nog niks bereikt, want we hebben ze nog niet ingezet. Dan moeten we eerst de problemen oplossen die ik net heb gezegd.

I: Als we terugkijken naar, ik weet niet precies, volgens mij 2003, toen Frankrijk operatie Artemis uitvoerde. Dat had een soort vergelijkbaar doel als de Battlegroups zouden kunnen hebben, terwijl Frankrijk zelf als '*framework nation*' de operatie heeft geleid en dat relatief succesvol heeft gedaan. Moeten we zulk soort operaties ook verwachten van de Battlegroups in de toekomst?

G: Artemis is een goed voorbeeld die qua omvang en snelheid geschikt is voor een Battlegroup. Als er verkiezingen zijn in een land waar partijen jarenlang sterk tegenover elkaar hebben gestaan, zoals we in Centraal Afrika hebben gedaan. Centraal Afrika, de christelijke en moslim partijen hebben daar hevig gestreden met elkaar. Op een gegeven moment stabiliseert dat. Dan kan je daar troepen naartoe sturen, voor langere veiligheid,

maar er doen zich daar pieken voor bij verkiezingen. Dan kan je een Battlegroup mooi gebruiken voor even erin, dan doe je dan twee maanden voordat de verkiezingen beginnen, tijdens de verkiezingen zelf en dan kijk je hoe het daarna loopt en dan kan je weer afbouwen. Dus voor de Battlegroups als die nu is en als we het financiële probleem oplossen, blijven er zinvolle opdrachten. Maar als je kijkt naar wat de ambitie wordt als we met zijn allen tot de conclusie komen, wat we met zijn allen zijn, want die '*Global Strategy*' is goedgekeurd door de Europese Raad. Dus al onze landen en regeringen staan daarachter. Als we die ambitie willen gaan uitvoeren: dus tenminste dat en we moeten rekening houden dat het eventueel kan groeien naar '*common defence*'. Dus alle taken die genoemd staan in de '*Treaty*'. Dan hoort er ook bij dat je grootschalig moet gaan optreden. Als je dat wilt zal je dus ook grootschalige '*quick reaction force*' moeten hebben.

Vraag 5: I: we hadden het net al over het financiële kaartje wat eraan hangt, de financiële uitdaging. Ook zijn Battlegroups ook afhankelijk van politieke wil van lidstaten, om materiaal en dergelijke te leveren. Welke taak heeft de EUMS daarin om dit te stimuleren, om meer politiek wil te creëren onder de lidstaten. Of is dat vooral weggelegd voor mevrouw Mogherini?

G: Een stelling, de politiek wil is sterk gerelateerd aan geld. Minder aan risico van mensenlevens. Dat klinkt keihard, maar mijn ervaring. En vraag me niet naar voorbeelden, want die zijn allemaal pijnlijk. Maar ik durf de stelling aan dat politieke wil om iets te doen heeft niet zozeer te maken met het risico van mensenlevens, militaire mensenlevens. Natuurlijk is dat altijd een overweging en ergens ligt een grens. Maar politici denken ook, we hebben een krijgsmacht om hem in te zetten, en die mensen hebben daarvoor gekozen. Sommige landen hebben nog een dienstplicht, maar dan heeft iedereen zijn beurt. De terughoudendheid ontstaat veel meer als er geen geld voor gereserveerd is en het ten koste moet gaan van allemaal andere belangrijke dingen. In die discussie speelt de EUMS weinig rol anders dan dat ik elke keer heb gepleit, uitgelegd, zelfs ook met voorbeelden in besloten vergaderingen, ook met ministers erbij, waarom we elke keer dat ding nou niet inzetten. Want het zijn dezelfde ministers die zeggen, 'ja u zet nooit die Battlegroup in'. En dan kan ik komen met het voorbeeld dat we wel een zinvolle inzet hadden, maar toen een van u weigerde. En dan weet iedereen wie dat is die dat blokkeerde, omdat daar geen geld voor was. Ik durf te zeggen dat sommige dingen daardoor uit de hand zijn gelopen. Sommige conflicten hadden we beter kunnen aanpakken, maar dat doen we niet door de combinatie van politieke wil gekoppeld met geld, maar ook toch ook door een gebrek aan middelen. Als je A zegt moet je B zeggen. En B is vaak veel kostbaarder dan die eerste stap. Wat kan de EUMS verder doen? We hebben gewerkt aan allerlei concepten samen met CMPD, de

'Crisis Management Planning Department', de civiele planning cel, waar ook veel militairen inzitten, aan allerlei verbeteringen aan Battlegroups. Andere rotatieschema's. Dat waren allemaal, al zeg ik het zelf, prima ideeën, die bijdroegen aan een betere Battlegroup. Heel veel zijn er ook van uitgevoerd, maar als je niet de hoofdreden aanpakt waarom ze niet worden ingezet, doe je het een beetje voor niks. Voor de rest is de EUMS verantwoordelijk voor de planning van de operaties, dus je moet wel komen met een goed plan, anders zeggen de politici geen ja natuurlijk.

I: Het is makkelijker om nee te zeggen.

G: het is makkelijker om nee te zeggen inderdaad.

Vraag 6: I: Het verenigd koninkrijk heeft de EU verlaten, welke invloed heeft dat op de Battlegroup, aangezien het toch een grote staat is?

G: Nou, groot. Ik vind het persoonlijk een ramp voor ons allemaal, ook voor de Britten. Ik zal het eerst uitleggen in mijn vakgebied. Militair zijn ze natuurlijk een van de sterksten, en dragen altijd bij en nemen regelmatig leiding. Dus die zullen we missen. Dan dragen ze regelmatig bij aan de Battlegroups. Dat is vooral pijnlijk voor Nederland. Want de Britse mariniers werken samen met de Nederlandse mariniers. Dat is een uitstekende samenwerking, maar die samenwerking kan op zich doorgaan, maar heel vaak vormen zij samen een Battlegroup. Dat gaat niet meer door als de Britten daar niet meer door willen gaan. Dan moeten we voor de mariniers op zoek gaan naar andere middelen. De mariniers zijn net als de landmacht heel vaak er deel van geweest. Ook van andere missies van de EU. Er zijn heel veel Britten die er serieus over denken dat als de Brexit doorgaat, dan blijven er een heleboel belangen, die we gemeenschappelijk hebben, die gemeenschappelijk moeten worden opgelost. En de Britten houden graag een vinger in de pap van hoe ze worden opgelost. Omdat de Britten heel belangrijk zijn binnen de EU, hebben ze ook altijd invloed gehad op prioriteiten. Ik noem maar wat als we praten over de ontwikkelingen in de hoorn van Afrika. Dan wilden de Fransen liever beginnen in Djibouti, maar de Britten wilden liever naar Kenia en Tanzania, waar zij veel grotere belangen hebben. En dan krijgen ze toch voor elkaar dat we investeren in de veiligheidssteun aan Kenia. Ze denken er dan in ieder geval over om partner te worden, net zoals veel andere landen als Noorwegen, die partner is van de EU. Noorwegen doet elke keer mee aan de *'Nordic Battlegroup'*. Noorwegen doet ook vaak mee aan EU militaire operaties zoals ATALANTA. Dat kunnen de Britten natuurlijk ook doen. Het heeft een verschrikkelijk groot nadeel. Je draagt de kosten, maar je hebt geen vinger in de pap meer bij de besluitvorming.

Want het is al complex genoeg om consensus te krijgen met de lidstaten, dus als je dan nog rekening moet houden met alle partners, dan krijg je nooit meer besluitvorming, omdat er altijd wel eentje is die het tegenhoudt. Dan kan je zeggen: 'de Britten zijn een heel belangrijke partner dus dan geef je die wel zeggenschap bij de besluitvorming'. Ja maar de Turken waren de grootste troepenleverancier, na Oostenrijk in Bosnië. Dus dan moeten de Turken ook zeggenschap hebben en voor je het weet heb je iedereen erbij. Kortom, ik verwacht bij een Brexit dat ze wel een strategische partner zullen worden van de EU, maar geen zeggenschap. De Noren hebben er wel voor gekozen om hun beurt in de Battlegroup te pakken en accepteren dus dat als er consentbesluitvorming is binnen de EU, Zweden heeft vaak de '*lead*' in de Battlegroup, dat ze dan hun troepen inzetten ook al hebben ze zelf geen '*say*' gehad in de besluitvorming. Hooguit kunnen ze naar Stockholm gaan en zeggen: 'hee we willen dat je nee zegt of we trekken onze troepen terug'. Uiteindelijk kan elk land zijn troepen terugtrekken, maar dat is wel een heel groot gezichtsverlies en ook gelijk het einde van de samenwerking op het moment suprême. Ik denk dat het voor de Britten nog moeilijker zal zijn dan voor de Noren om troepen te leveren en om te garanderen, terwijl je geen formele invloed heb op de besluitvorming, behalve informeel lobbyen.

I: Mevrouw Mogherini had het er ook over in de Global Strategy van 2016, dat toen het Verenigd Koninkrijk de EU verliet, zag zij het, naar mijn mening, meer als elk nadeel heeft zijn voordeel. We zijn nu nog meer een hechtere natie in Europa en we kunnen het ook wel zonder het Verenigd Koninkrijk. Bent u het daarmee eens?

G: Er zijn verschillende voorbeelden waaruit ik het heel erg zou vinden als we de Britten niet zouden hebben. Laat ik een voorbeeld pakken. De Britten kregen voor elkaar dat we binnen alle verschillende opties die we hadden om die stabiliteit in de hoorn van Afrika te gaan bouwen, we vrij hoge prioriteit hebben gegeven aan Kenia. Tegelijkertijd is het zo dat ze redelijk invloedrijk zijn binnen Kenia, dat helpt natuurlijk mee. En dat nog afgezien van de capaciteiten die ze leveren en de kwaliteit van hun militairen. En er zijn een paar '*enablers*' om operaties uit te voeren. En die hebben eigenlijk alleen de Fransen en de Britten in ongeveer even sterke mate. Dus daar valt 50% van de '*enablers*' capaciteiten weg. Dan kan je zeggen dat we er in Europa weer aan gaan werken om dat te compenseren, maar dat kost weer wel geld, terwijl die capaciteit er wel is. Dus ik vind het echt een groot verlies, ik ben een groot voorstander van geen Brexit. Vervolgens dan een softe Brexit, en dan binnen die softe Brexit dat ze in ieder geval een partner blijven op veiligheidsgebied.

Vraag 7: I: Duidelijk, dank u. Vraag 7, daar ging het over de Global Strategy van de EU, waar nieuwe prioriteiten en ambities beschreven, zoals meer strategische autonomie, maar toch meer samenwerking met de NATO. In hoeverre is dat haalbaar?

G: die strategische autonomie is haalbaar, sowieso op alle ‘*comprehensive*’ machtsinstrumenten, met uitzondering van militair. Want daar doet de EU eigenlijk al heel veel goeds, ik ben daar echt over verbaasd. Ik kan je voorbeelden geven dat we conflicten opgelost hebben. Ik noem een voorbeeld. Ivoorkust was het eerste conflict, er was een burgeroorlog. Het was het eerste conflict waar ik mee geconfronteerd werd als DG. Toen waren we nog het verdrag van Lissabon aan het implementeren, maar we zaten in ieder geval allemaal in hetzelfde gebouw, dus we gingen lerend voorwaarts in een grote reorganisatie binnen de EU. Vroeger zouden we dat vooral hebben opgelost met militaire en politieke middelen. Nu gebeurde er wat er logisch is om te doen als je verantwoordelijk bent voor de coördinatie en er is een conflict en ga je met alle bazen van de instrumenten rond de tafel en dan ga je het hebben over: wat is er precies het probleem? Hoe gaan we dat oplossen? Welke opties hebben de verschillende instrumenten? Dan heb je zulk soort sessies, waarbij sowieso iedereen eerst zijn informatie gaat geven. Ik laat mijn directeur inlichtingen vertellen, maar in de EU heb je ook een civiele directeur die coördineert met alle AIVD-en. Je hebt een Management Director die de baas is van alle EU ambassades in Afrika. Je hebt de Directeur Generaal Ontwikkelingssamenwerking die projecten doet in dat land. Dus ze hebben allemaal informatie over het land en de regio. Waardoor je een heel goed inzicht krijgt. In de eerste vergadering wordt behandeld dat het zo belangrijk is en dat er zoveel belangen spelen, wie moeten die steunen? Er waren twee presidenten, de oude wilde niet gaan, die vonden we corrupt. Nu was er een nieuwe gekozen, die steunden we wel en deze twee voerden strijd. Dan komt iedereen met opties, ik kwam met militaire opties. Evacuatie van EU burgers, beveiligen van een vluchtelingenkamp en de route daarnaartoe. Zo kwam iedereen met opties en de directeur financiën zat te luisteren en vroeg op een gegeven moment aan mij: ‘generaal, weet u eigenlijk wie de naasten zijn, de echte ondersteuners van president Gbagbo?’ Dat was die corrupte man die we weg wilden hebben. Daar hadden inzicht in. ‘Want als u mij dat geeft, dan kunnen wij wellicht alle bank accounts blokkeren van zowel de president als zijn vrouw en naasten’. We hebben uiteindelijk geen enkele militaire operatie uit hoeven oefenen toen publiek werd dat de EU dat ging doen. Dat was al voldoende voor de milities om te stoppen met vechten voor Gbagbo, want de reden dat hij in het zadel bleef, ondanks dat een deel van het reguliere leger niet meer loyaal was omdat zij ook de nieuwe president steunden, de reden dat hij in het zadel bleef was omdat hij door corruptie veel geld verzameld had en milities kon

betalen. Maar toen wij het uiteindelijk ook gingen doen, het blokkeren, stopten ze gewoon met vechten.

I: Dus zo kan het kennelijk ook.

G: Dus zo kan het ook. En ik kan je een heleboel voorbeelden geven van Somalië en Libië waarbij soms het militair apparaat keihard nodig is. Want een deel van de evacuatie hebben we wel met die middelen gedaan, ook een Nederlands schip heeft daaraan bijgedragen. Maar vaak zijn andere instrumenten essentieel om ook de militaire operatie nuttig te maken. En soms kan je het zelfs met niet-militaire middelen oplossen, wat veel beter is natuurlijk. Dus met civiele machtsapparaten begint het goed te werken. Militair zijn we gewoon echt nog te zwak, daar hebben we het al over gehad. In heel veel conflicten als je moet vechten heb je moderne inlichtingenmiddelen nodig die alleen de Amerikanen kunnen leveren. Heb je precisie munitie nodig om niet teveel burgers te treffen. Je moet veel nauwkeuriger zijn, vroeger accepteerden men duizenden slachtoffers in oorlogen. Nu proberen we dat met zo weinig mogelijk *'collateral damage'*.

I: Met proportionaliteit

G: En het proportionaliteitsbeginsel is er altijd.

Vraag 8: I: De laatste vraag hebben we al behandeld, maar zijn de Battlegroups er nog over 10 jaar? Zou u dat kort kunnen toelichten?

G: Ik denk dat er EU *'high readiness forces'* zullen blijven, die snel kunnen reageren. Ik verwacht dat het *'common funding'* probleem opgelost gaat worden, omdat dat altijd door de Britten werd geblokkeerd overigens. Dus als Mogherini zegt dat elk nadeel zijn voordeel heeft dan is de mogelijkheid om het hele defensie veiligheidsbeleid te ontwikkelen toegenomen zonder te Britten. Maar omdat de Britten zijn weggegaan is onze totale capaciteit wel afgenomen. Overigens, waarom blokkeerden de Britten vaak die ontwikkelingen? Daar hebben ze veel argumenten voor. Vaak zeggen ze dat ze geen duplicatie willen van NATO. Maar ik durf de stelling aan dat er geen duplicatie is met NATO. NATO zit niet in Mali, Somalië, Libië. Maar daar zitten wel grote Europese belangen. Er is ook geen duplicatie te creëren met capaciteiten, want die capaciteiten blijven van de landen en die landen kunnen nog steeds die voor NATO inzetten of de EU. Mijn ervaring is dat al deze dingen gebeuren uit nationaal belang. En de Britten hebben gewoon een hele belangrijke invloed binnen NATO. Zij zijn de brug van Amerika naar Europa. Zij hebben veel meer invloed in Amerika en dus ook in het NAVO-beleid. In de EU hebben Frankrijk en

Duitsland een even grote 'say' als de Britten. En al helemaal omdat ze altijd dwarsliggen. Ik zal je niet alle voorbeelden geven, maar ik kan met voldoende bewijzen zeggen dat dit erachter zit. Zij zijn bang invloed kwijt te raken bij hun verdere doorontwikkeling, daarom remmen zij dat. Dit is een van de vele argumenten overigens, maar ik kijk altijd naar de belangrijkste, welke moeten ze als eerste oplossen? Dit zit er heel vaak achter.

Dus als we teruggaan naar jouw vraag, waar zullen de Battlegroups zijn over 10 jaar? Dan zullen we de '*UK/NL amphibious force*' als de kern van de Battlegroup gaan missen, denk ik. Of hooguit als partner, maar het zou raar zijn als ze de lead hadden als een niet-lid. Maar de mogelijkheid om het door te ontwikkelen, bijvoorbeeld met '*common funding*' wat zij altijd blokkeerden. Ze riepen altijd 'ik wil niet twee keer betalen'. Dat heb ik altijd een flauwekul argument gevonden. Ze zeiden 'ja, we betalen al voor onze eigen eenheden en dan moeten we straks ook nog voor andere eenheden betalen'. Dat is onzin, want als zij de Battlegroup '*turn*' hebben en we zetten hun Battlegroup in, dan betalen de anderen voor hen. Maar goed, je moet een reden verzinnen waarom je tegen bent. Want als een argument raar is, is er altijd een belangrijker argument is, wat ze niet willen zeggen. Maar dat is voor iedereen zo hoor. Dus ik verwacht dat ze het probleem met '*common funding*' gaan oplossen. Dan wordt de politieke wil veel groter om ze in te zetten. Want als ze dan worden ingezet hoef je alleen je eigen deeltje te betalen. Nederland gaat dan naar 4,7% ofzo. Dat is een groot verschil, of je 4,7% van ergens tussen de 250 tot 500 miljoen moet betalen. Want als je de '*lead*' hebt in een Battlegroup dan moet je snel 80% van de kosten betalen. Dus dat zal de politieke wil om hem daadwerkelijk te gebruiken aanzienlijk vergroten. Dan gaat het nog over de geschiktheid vergroten. Daar merk ik in ieder geval dat op professioneel niveau zowel militair als civiel ambtelijk, dat iedereen wel inziet dat dat moet. Als wij dit [Lissabon art 28, '*common defence*'] willen afdekken, maar inclusief '*peace-enforcing*'. Kijk als Finland wordt aangevallen, het is een EU-lid maar geen NAVO-bondgenoot. Die heeft dus geen artikel 5 garantie. Nou zijn er allerlei andere regels. Oekraïne was ook een partner van NATO, maar geen lid en daar heeft Obama wat over gezegd. Toen hij de vraag kreeg van een journalist waarom hij ze niet militair hielp, was zijn antwoord dat Oekraïne geen lid was van NATO. En Oekraïne dacht waarschijnlijk: 'nou zijn we formeel partner, we leveren troepen aan elke operatie, maar nu worden we niet gesteund'. Dat denken Finland en Zweden, want die voelen zich vooral bedreigd, maar ook niet NATO-landen als Cyprus, Ierland, Malta, Oostenrijk.

Dus waar zijn de Battlegroups over 10 jaar? Het grootste probleem heeft een grote kans om opgelost te worden, misschien nog dit jaar. En dan als overal de budgetten weer gaan stijgen zullen we misschien ook de bereidheid gaan krijgen om het concept van de

Battlegroup qua omvang en '*jointness*' te gaan versterken, waardoor ze voor meer van de takenlijst kunnen worden ingezet dan alleen voor kleinschalige evacuatieoperaties of strategische reserves.

I: Dus u ziet het positief in?

G: Ja, als de EU niet uit elkaar valt zie ik het positief in. Ik denk overigens ook niet dat de EU uit elkaar gaat vallen, maar er zijn genoeg politieke problemen die opgelost moeten worden. We zullen geen federale staat worden. Ik denk niet dat ik dat mee ga maken. Nederland wil dat ook niet, maar dan moet je wel accepteren dat de besluitvorming moeizaam gaat. Want jij wil je veto houden, maar dan moet je er ook rekening mee houden dat de rest ook zijn veto wil houden. Maar we hebben elkaar wel nodig om onze gezamenlijke problemen op te lossen en daar ben ik uiteindelijk toch positief over dat we dat gaan doen en dat het dus verder zal verbeteren zoals ik net uitlegde.

I: Dan heb ik eigenlijk geen vragen meer en wil ik u hartelijk bedanken voor uw tijd.

Appendix B: Email to Lieutenant General van Osch: 31 oktober, 2017

Beste meneer van Osch,

Ik had een vraag over een term die u gebruikte tijdens het interview. U had het over 'enablers'. Nu vroeg ik mij af wat u daar precies mee bedoelde? Mijn eerste ingeving was: de militaire capaciteiten van een staat.

Ik heb een fragment van het interview toegevoegd waarin u dit gebruikt.

Behalve dingen die ik over de EU ga zeggen, blijft NATO essentieel voor onze militaire veiligheid, vanwege het feit dat Europa absoluut niet in staat is om zonder de Verenigde Staten de eigen veiligheidsbroek omhoog te houden. We missen een heleboel 'enablers'. In de ruimte, specifiek nauwkeurige munitie, veel te weinig, veel te weinig tankvliegtuigen, veel te weinig van heel veel dingen: helikopters, gedigitaliseerde landstrijdkrachten, gevechtsvliegtuigen hebben we wel veel, maar lang niet genoeg voor de kwaliteit die we nodig hebben.

Het zou vervelend zijn als ik dit verkeerd zou interpreteren, vandaar dat ik u een mail stuur.

Alvast bedankt.

Met vriendelijke groet,
Rens Koppejan

Antwoord: 31 oktober, 2017

Beste Rens,

Goed dat je het vraagt. Het woord 'enablers' is inderdaad een typisch jargon woord geworden van alle mensen die zich bezig houden met het ontwikkelen van militaire capaciteiten. Een formele definitie bestaat denk ik niet, maar over het algemeen verstaan we er het volgende onder:

'Enablers' (in the context van de ontwikkeling van militaire capaciteiten) zijn capaciteiten die nodig zijn om de militaire middelen van landen optimaal in te kunnen zetten. Kenmerken: technisch zeer hoogwaardig en/of zo duur dat de meeste individuele landen niet in staat zijn om die zelfstandig aan te schaffen. Voorbeelden: Technologisch hoogwaardige Joint Strategic Intelligence (lange afstand drones en inlichtingen middelen

in de ruimte), Air to Air refueling (tankvliegtuigen die gevechtsvliegtuigen of helicopters in de lucht kunnen bijtanken waardoor ze veel langer inzetbaar zijn), gedigitaliseerde commandovoeringssystemen die de capaciteiten kunnen koppelen van land-, zee- en luchtstrijdkrachten en die van Special Forces, de overkoepelende techniek om slimme munitie te kunnen inzetten, strategisch en tactisch transport om militaire eenheden snel te kunnen verplaatsen, technologisch hoogwaardige logistieke systemen om de strijdkrachten op grotere afstanden te kunnen ondersteunen.

De gedachte is dat er niet alleen gekeken moet worden naar hoeveel schepen, landmachteenheden en vliegtuigen landen hebben, maar of die landen (al dan niet gemeenschappelijk met andere landen) ook kunnen beschikken over de 'enablers' om die zo effectief mogelijk in te kunnen zetten. De Europese landen binnen NATO en EU zijn voor die 'enablers' nog zeer afhankelijk van de US en zelfs met steun van de US bestaan er grote tekorten.

Om bij jouw onderwerp de 'EU Battle Group' te blijven. Het heeft geen zin om alleen maar de gevechtseenheden in de EU Battle Group te hebben. Je moet ook voldoende strategische en operationele inlichtingen kunnen verwerven voordat je ze inzet en tijdens inzet, transportmiddelen om ze te verplaatsen, afdoende logistieke ondersteuning en de commandovoeringsmiddelen om ze integraal (joint) in te kunnen zetten. De landen hebben meestal nog wel de tactische organieke middelen (m.u.v. helikopters) om hun eenheden te kunnen ondersteunen, maar niet de operationele (joint) en strategische enablers. Die zijn alleen maar te betalen als we die gemeenschappelijk met andere landen regelen. Dat is de belangrijkste reden waarom er zo wordt gehamerd op meer internationale samenwerking. Politici denken dan vaak gelijk dat meer efficiency kan leiden tot lagere kosten, maar de werkelijkheid is dat het gaat om middelen die Europa nog niet of veel te weinig heeft. Dat bemoeilijkt dus ook de inzet van Battle Groups, met name bij inzet hoog in het geweldsspectrum, omdat de 'enablers' met name dan essentieel zijn voor succes.

Hoop dat dit helpt. Meer detail gaat al snel in het geclassificeerde domein, maar alles wat ik tot nu toe aan je heb gezegd kan je gebruiken.

Ton van Osch

Luitenant-generaal b.d.