



NEWSLETTER



April 2008 Issue 6

Security has a social dimension

EDITORIAL

Strong defence through strong personnel

Armed forces benefit from strong associations which represent the social and professional interests of the military personnel. Let me briefly outline three major advantages that military staff associations bring.

First, professional military associations and trade unions provide a realistic view and high value information about personnel and material problems in the armed forces. Information that normally would not easily reach the military leadership due to the hierarchical structures of armed forces. This gives the leadership valuable insight, and also benefits the political decision-makers by helping to give them a realistic picture of the state of the national defence forces.

Secondly, staff associations lobby for adequate pay rates and working conditions. This helps to ensure that governments and the military leadership have the means to recruit staff who are motivated and qualified. This in a labour market environment in which the armed forces increasingly compete with other sectors for manpower.

Thirdly, most European armed forces are currently undergoing significant transformations. Trade unions

are able to encourage the co-operation and support of the personnel in such cases of restructuring.

Despite these clear advantages to the political and military leadership several European countries still significantly restrict the coalition and collective bargaining rights of their military personnel. In these countries the associations representing military personnel are still fighting for recognition.

In this newsletter we examine two cases where the national military associations were able to establish themselves and become officially recognized. And this within a relatively short time span of 15 years. These countries are Hungary and Ireland which thus joined the established group of countries where servicemen and women are recognized as highly-skilled specialists who have legitimate rights when it comes to their social and professional conditions.

HOSZ in Hungary has today over 10,000 members. The unionization rate in the Irish Defence Forces is nowadays over 90%. This is a fascinating development. History and the present for Ireland and Hungary. Hopefully the future for other countries.

Our friends from HOSZ and PDFORRA will present the key factors of their success also at a special workshop during the coming EUROMIL Presidium meeting in Madrid 25 April. We can learn from each other. This

is one of the basic advantages that membership in EUROMIL brings.

EUROMIL is today, 35 years after its foundation, the main Europe-wide forum for cooperation among professional military associations.

International military cooperation continues to increase in the fields of armament, training and participation in common crisis-management missions. There is thus a growing need to coordinate also the so-



cial and professional interests of the soldiers at international level.

I wish you good reading moments with the latest edition of the EUROMIL-newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

Mikko Harjulehto
Secretary General

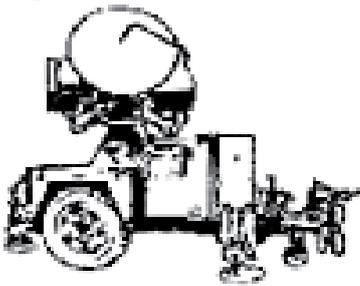
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HEALTH AND SAFETY

The missing link between cancer and radar equipment

A study of the Danish national cancer prevention organisation shows a significant correlation between work on old military radars and certain tumours

In 2004 a register based mapping of the links between work and cancer



in the period 1970-1997 confirmed that personnel in the Danish Armed Forces have a potential increased risk of developing 13 types of cancer compared with other personnel in civil employment within the same range of age.

However, the mapping could not state any specific explanation or causes for this overrepresentation. The mapping was a result of the work carried out by the Danish military association Centralforeningen for Ståmpersonel (CS) in cooperation with the Danish National Television (DR), who in 2002 were the first to make the link between cancer and work in the armed forces.

A particular emphasis was put on personnel working with radar equipment, transmitter tubes, and luminous paint,

where personnel had for many years among comrades. The defence HQ witnessed numerous cases of cancer did not take any action on the prob-

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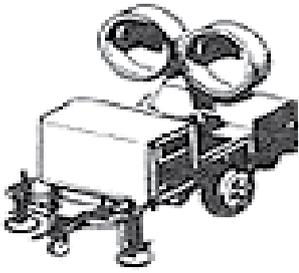
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lem and uncertainties among the personnel before the issue was

raised in the media. As a reaction to the intense debate in the media on the responsibility of the Armed Forces to protect its personnel, the Defence HQ, together with representatives from CS, established a working group, whose primary task was to contain further fear and uncertainties among the personnel. The group made an index of personnel affected by radiation. The Defence HQ did not at any time make any active contact with the personnel – people had to contact the defence HQ themselves if they wanted help. Defence HQ did, however, establish a helpline, where personnel could talk with a doctor from a military infirmary.

Because of the lack of more specific information about the causes of cancer the working group decided to finance a scientific analysis with focus on military personnel. This in the hope to prove or dismantle causes and links. The conduct of the research

was conferred upon the national cancer prevention organisation, Kræftens Bekæmpelse, and the final rapport got published on the 21st of January 2008.

Correlation confirmed by study

The study confirms that there are links between specific types of cancer and work-related functions in the armed forces – one of these being working with radar equipment in the period preceding 1989. Although the research material including interviews with former personnel and/or relatives was scientifically not large enough, Kræftens Bekæmpelse still draws the conclusion that there exists a direct correlation between earlier work with military radar equipment or luminous paint in the 1960s to 1980s and certain types of cancer.

The publication of the research rapport created a renewed interest in the media. Much to the dismay of CS the defence HQ resigned all responsibility and told personnel to handle any problems on a personal level. CS made a very clear statement regarding the specific responsibility of the employer in cases where personnel get ill because of work-related hazards. This statement had an instant impact. Defence HQ

agreed to be cooperative with CS in making a new register of personnel, who have been affected or fallen ill.

CS supports personnel

At present CS has registered 35 members after the last public appeal to contact CS, which was broadcasted by DR. Approximately 50 % of these members have or have had one or more of the listed types of cancer: cancer in the thyroid gland, cancer in the rectum, prostate cancer and leukaemia.

CS will administer the cases following two tracks to ascertain maximum benefit for the members: First, help and support given by CS, including legal support and indemnification to the persons concerned. Secondly, political activities and creation of broad media attention.

The research further demonstrated that personnel in the Danish Armed Forces run a potential higher risk of developing e.g. skin cancer, bowel cancer, and breast cancer. However these types of cancer are linked to all employees working nightshifts or aboard aircrafts and are therefore not exclusively linked to personnel in the armed forces.

Helena Winther-Ishoy
Press chief / CS, Denmark

FROM WEAK TO STRONG MILITARY STAFF ASSOCIATIONS

A Celtic Success Story The Irish Permanent Defence Force Other Ranks Representative Association

From recognition to professionalization

PDFORRA was initially established by a small group of NCOs who claimed the right to organise under Article 40.6.1.(iii) of the Irish Constitution. This group, subsequently referred to as ad hoc PDFORRA,

recruited many thousands of enlisted personnel but were refused recognition by the Military Authorities and Government. Indeed, the Defence Forces Chief of Staff made it clear that a representative association would be completely inappropriate.

PDFORRA continued recruiting and

‘signed up’ 90% of all enlisted personnel. With this voice the Government, political parties and individual politicians were lobbied to recognised PDFORRA. Links were established with media and it generally supported PDFORRA. Support was also received from EUROMIL, some trade unions and Church officials. However, PD-

FORRAs large membership allied to the pressure it could exert on politicians appears to have led to a change in thinking within Government. During this period it organised fundrais-

Spouses Association (NASA). NASA was an organisation composed of the spouses of enlisted personnel in the Defence Forces. The campaign saw NASA putting forward candidates in

to members of the Defence Forces.

PDFORRA faces a number of important challenges over the next few years. The Government in Ireland frequently



PDFORRA Annual Delegate Conference Photo: PDFORRA

excludes the Defence Forces from employment legislation and this sees members receiving potentially lower employment standards than other workers in circumstances where it cannot be justified.

ing activities – being conscious of how important finance was to the effective operation of PDFORRA.

In 1990 following negotiations between ad hoc PDFORRA and the Government it was agreed to establish a system of representation. This decision appears to have been taken without the active support of the Military Authorities. During the negotiations PDFORRA would not concede on the issue of having an ‘independent’ representative association and, ultimately, this position prevailed. In hindsight this was to see a powerful and effective representative system established. It was also agreed that PDFORRA would be organised in every barracks, aerodrome and ship in the country.

In 1990 elections were held involving all members of the Defence Forces and, in the case of enlisted personnel, all those actually elected were members of PDFORRA. It was agreed that PDFORRA members could have subscriptions deducted from pay and this saw a large volume of funds become available to finance the organisation and its activities. This was to prove crucial in PDFORRAs future development. These developments followed in the footsteps of a public campaign for improved pay and conditions in the Defence Forces by the National Army

the 1989 General Election. In conjunction with favourable media coverage the campaign highlighted the poor pay and conditions in the defence Forces. In response the Government convened the Interdepartmental Committee on Pay in 1988 and the Gleeson Commission on Pay in 1990.

In 1993 PDFORRA and the Department of Defence agreed to establish a conflict resolution mechanism called a conciliation and arbitration scheme. This provided for formal discussions on issues and on certain matters referral to adjudicators for decision. While subject to some criticism – the scheme has seen at least 200 formal agreements concluded as well as a number of favourable adjudication rulings. The introduction and development of the conciliation and arbitration scheme was one of the most important aspects of PDFORRAs future development.

Opportunities and Challenges

The conciliation and arbitration scheme in operation in the Defence Forces is broadly similar to the system that prevails throughout the Irish Public Service. During the period of PDFORRAs existence basic pay increases have been determined by national wage agreements – which have all been applied

PDFORRA is endeavouring to counter this and believes it will be necessary to secure membership of the Irish trade union umbrella body the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) to be completely successful in this area. Currently the Government is blocking PDFORRAs membership of ICTU.

“ PDFORRA continues to have a large membership base with approximately 90% of all enlisted personnel members of PDFORRA ”

Accordingly, PDFORRA must rely on political lobbying and assistance from ICTU to ensure employment legislation is applied to the Defence Forces. Where employment legislation does apply to members of the Defence Forces, PDFORRA has been bringing claims to rights commissioners seeking to enforce the rights embodied in the legislation. This will require the development of officials with the necessary advocacy skills in order that PDFORRA maximise its chances of success in cases. PDFORRA must also ensure that its membership is aware of its rights un-

der the various pieces of legislation.

PDFORRA is also seeking to increase the overall earnings of enlisted personnel through the introduction of new payments and by securing increases in existing payments. The successful processing of such claims to the adjudicator will be the key indicator of success in this area – and will be particularly difficult given the nature of national wage agreements.

It will be necessary for PDFORRA to try and secure an equitable balance between the distribution of work on the existing Internal Security situation which has reduced but remains significant and the expanding conventional role and the large associated overseas commitment.

PDFORRA continues to have a large membership base with approximately 90% of all enlisted personnel members of PDFORRA. It is vitally important that PDFORRA maintains this level of membership as it provides the sound financial base on which the organisation stands.

PDFORRA realises that it must pay attention to developments at the European level and therefore continued affiliation to EUROMIL is important. PDFORRA wishes to influence the content of EU directives where they impact on the terms and conditions of members of the Defence Forces.

PDFORRA committees are organised in every barracks, aerodrome and ship. PDFORRA must ensure that this continues into the future as it allows PDFORRA to recruit, organise and interact with the membership. In addition, it allows PDFORRA to detect new developments occurring at local level and prepare appropriate responses and, ultimately, highlight its relevance to the membership.

Gerry Rooney
Secretary General

INTERVIEW

Deputy General Secretary Reiner Hoffman about the European framework for the right to associate

Q According to your European experience within ETUC, what are the necessary external and internal preconditions to build up a strong organization capable of entering into free collective bargaining with the employer?



“Organising and recruitment are clearly the task of national unions, but the ETUC has a role to play in encouraging and supporting activities, policies and exchanges between its member organisations.”

Photo: ETUC

A You need a partner to negotiate agreements, to sign and to respect them. There is a constant need at the European level to close the widening gap in relation to the integration process and the ongoing process of internationalism of the economy. The right to negotiate is one basic element. But it is not sufficient if nobody is sitting on the other side of the table to talk to. National trade unions should not consider national borders that are getting lower and lower as a demarcation line. Collective bargaining must increasingly consider the need to embed in a European economic and social environment. Unions must go European. Business is doing that. But the employers as a social partner are still hesitating and less interested in opening a European dimension of real social dialogue and negotiations, especially when it comes to binding agreements. In the long run it is not the best way to depend on politics to fill in with legal regulations. Freely negotiated agreements between autonomous social partners – this is a key element of European society building.

QHow can the “European level” support better the establishment of well-functioning trade unions in Europe?

AUnions must do their own job and it is their responsibility to set up credible and functioning European structures. Politics should deliver the legal framework for that, especially in setting up a European framework for the right to associate and workers rights. Twenty years ago, in 1985, at Val Duchesse in Brussels, the then European Commission President Jacques Delors formally launched the bipartite European Social Dialogue between the ETUC and employers. The Maastricht Treaty, which came into force in 1993, recognised the social partners’ right to negotiate binding Europe-wide framework agreements, which are either formalised into EU legislation as Directives, or implemented ‘autonomously’ by the partners at European and national levels.

FACTSHEET

FThe European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is one of the European social partners and is recognised by the European Union, by the Council of Europe and by EFTA as the only representative cross-sectoral trade union organisation at European level with at present in membership 82 National Trade Union Confederations from 36 European countries, as well as 12 European industry federations, making a total of 60 million members.

EUROMIL and the ETUC have co-operation agreement since 1998 on the mutual exchange of issues of common interest as social rights – particularly with regard to the right of association – as well as socio-political developments, including the rights and working conditions of all servicemen.

Reiner Hoffmann is the elected Deputy Secretary-General of the ETUC since its Congress in Prague in May 2003 and has been re-elected in Seville in 2007.

At the EU summit in Nice on 7 December 2000 the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights was proclaimed. This Charter includes provisions which are at the heart of labour law: freedom of association (article 12), rights of collective bargaining, including the right to strike (article 28) and workers’ right to information and consultation within the undertaking. The Charter can contribute to the fur-

ther Europeanisation of industrial relations and will become legally binding in the Lisbon reform treaty.

QHow relevant is the embedment of national trade unions or confederations or European industry federations into a structured European social dialogue?

AThe European Social Dialogue has to be considered as the forerunner of normal industrial and social relations. In that respect the Social Dialogue that is a part of European legislation is an important cornerstone. Important agreements have been concluded with the employer organisations on parental leave, part time work and fixed term contracts which have been turned into EU Directives. In addition voluntary agreements have been reached on teleworking, stress and violence at work which have been implemented by the social partners themselves. At the sectoral level, 35 social dialogue committees have been established over the last years. Also in future social partners should exploit these potentialities to the maximum. But the more or less institutionalized European Social Dialogue cannot be considered as an end in itself. It is a relevant step on the way to regular social relations.

QNational trade union cultures are very heterogeneous and lead to different approaches with regard to i.e. collective bargaining, labour legislation or co-determination? Are there some best-practice examples you would recommend to organizations that are at the beginning of their development?

AThere is no fast track to paradise. Unions are the outcome of social history and nation state building in European history. There is always a conflict between social tradition and rationality. Unions exist because problems exist. The perception that

more and more of those problems are going European and global is still not widespread in our rank and file. This takes time and needs a careful and wise approach. Rome wasn’t built in a day. But over the decades – step by step – the integration of unions is coming out as a success story. Slow and modest but steadily.

Q As you know some European democratic states hinder the establishment of professional military associations or trade unions. How would you explain this resistance although other professional categories enjoy highly developed trade union rights in some of those countries since the 19th century?

A The ETUC, together with EUROMIL, is standing for the right of soldiers to benefit from workers' and social rights. Indeed, in some countries the armed forces and people working in it are obviously still considered as a special case. But in other countries, namely Denmark, the Netherlands or Germany, soldiers do have the right to organize. That should be considered as an element of a democratic society. In places where unions exist there has never been a problem that threatened the functioning of the armed forces. There is no reason to keep soldiers out of the system of a relevant representation of social and economic interests. We need to say a clear 'goodbye' to archaism.

Q Membership in trade unions are constantly decreasing in most European countries? How can this problem be resolved in the long-term? Which measures has ETUC particularly engaged in?

A The ETUC is not in a position to solve the problem. The decrease of union membership is due to radical changes to labour markets and unemployment but also to a certain lack of capacity on the part of the unions to approach those changes in adequately. Organising and recruitment are clearly the task of national unions, but the ETUC has a role to play in encouraging and supporting activities, policies and exchanges between its member organisations. It is important for trade unions to explore the reasons for decline and set out strategies for how to regain and increase membership, and pay special attention to women, youth, migrants and precarious workers. ETUC is promoting the exchange on problems, experiences and practices. To learn from your neighbour – and everybody has one or more – is a good way to find answers and solutions. Here the ETUC can assist.

Q In a few points can you resume the major challenges the European trade union movement has to face in your opinion?

A Number one is to increase our membership and to strengthen our structures on all levels and to have public opinion on our side. Number two is to work hard to gain a real European social dimension and to build a transnational system industrial relations with workers participation, collective bargaining and effective social dialogue. Number three is to work towards a Europe with an integrated labour market with more and better jobs and social inclusion. We have got some points but this is clearly insufficient. The European Works Councils directive for example needs a revision strengthening workers rights on the company level.

Reiner Hoffmann
Deputy Secretary General ETUC

How to become a strong interest association for soldiers: a Hungarian remedy?



President HOSZ Géza Mészáros
Photo: HOSZ

When a few Hungarian soldiers at the beginning of the 90ies decided to form an interest organization for soldiers, nobody would have thought that one decade later it would have grown into a strong trade union with 10.000 members.

Today the military trade union HOSZ is one of the tone-setting trade unions in the public sector in Hungary. She is member of the confederate union LIGA, of which the majority of its members are from the public sector.

How did we achieve this? What is the secret of this development?

Since years these questions are often posed to representatives of HOSZ by different personalities, organisations from Hungary and abroad.

There is no universal answer.

All organizations have to find the appropriate solution against the background of their own political and economic context. The right solution can be found by a constant and complex analysis of all external factors. Therefore a flexible and adjustable organizational structure and management are absolutely vital. The first and most important step is to take the decision to form an association; moreover, to find motivated and capable people who are willing to overcome all obstacles that can arise from the beginning. This is only feasible, of course, if the legal framework conditions are met and if there is enough public support. Otherwise, it is very thorny. If there is no public support you will primarily have to fight hard for it. The second step is to convince the political and military leadership that a military association and trade union is not the „enemy” but first and foremost a partner. Further it is important to embark on an effective

recruitment to increase membership and to achieve representativeness as quick as possible. Only then the organisation can flex its muscle and be integrated to the social dialogue discussion table. Then, the association has to build a sound economic basis, to provide for more services in order to gain even more members. Different ways are possible but the Hungarian model builds upon the following three structures to achieve it: trade union- foundation- commercial association. That means the attribution of three separate functions: interest representation- public integration- financial support. It is certainly central to have professional dignitaries who are constantly educated and follow vocational training courses. Those professionals are in contact with the members and do represent the trade union. They have to be competent and capable to achieve results at different levels of politics and with the military leadership.

Last but not least is communications. We have learned that it is not enough to achieve results but equally important to sell them.



Otto Heiling Vice-President HOSZ;
Photo: HOSZ

Along these lines I look forward to tell your more about the Hungarian method of working during the spring Presidium meeting in Madrid.

Otto Heiling, PhD
Vice-President HOSZ

EUROMIL Meeting Calendar 2008

27-28	March	Board Meeting	Bonn (DE)
2	April	DU Conference	Geneva (CH)
9-11	April	Working Group Human Rights for Members of the Armed Forces Council of Europe	Strasbourg (F)
24-26	April	Board and Presidium Meeting	Madrid (ES)
27	May	EUROMIL Hearing European Parliament Subcommittee Security and Defence	Brussels (BE)
26	June	Board	TBC
25-26	September	Board Meeting	Berlin (DE)
13-14	November	Congress Meeting	Brussels (BE)

Watered rights for Maltese soldiers An island fighting for recognition

The Association for the dependents of the members of the Armed Forces of Malta (Ghaqda Dipendenti Suldati GHDS) has been established after the present secretary took it up as a personal mission to set up the Association after a member of the Armed Forces helped her son when he was seriously ill. Since it is illegal for the Maltese citizens in uniform to join a union, it was deemed fit to make an association for the dependents of the citizens in uniform. The committee consists of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, media officer and three other members.

The major problems faced by the members of the Armed Forces of Malta are that they are forbidden by the Constitution of Malta to join any Association, therefore, they cannot have a body that airs and negotiates their rights. The complement of the Armed Forces is less than the total number of illegal immigrants presently residing in Malta. Also they have to cater for 400,000 inhabitants and the 1.2 million tourists that visit our island annually. The fact that Malta is an island does not help their job at all. Most of the equipment is old. Notwithstanding the fact that Malta is an island, the Armed Forces of Malta lack sufficient and efficient naval and air force equipment to patrol our shores from illegal immigrants and other illicit activities. By and large the forces have not experienced serious active duties similar to those experienced by other forces in Iraq. Training is provided both in-house and by sponsorship of other friendly countries.

The transparency of the procedure of promotions is still an issue that has to be negotiated to the benefit of all stakeholders. Although the members of the Armed Forces will be benefiting an increase in their income, there is still a long way to go and Ghaqda intends to continue to endeavour for a better quality of life to the members. Due to inferior quality of life, due mainly to poor emoluments and long hours on duty, their family social aspect is being compromised

Now that the Association has been established, its short term objective is to focus on membership recruitment and at the same time establish a line of two way communications with the relevant authorities. Furthermore, Ghaqda intends to look into the possibility of challenging the constitutional prohibition of the members of the armed forces to join an association, provided assistance is forthcoming. If we manage this, it would be a test case for other EU countries.

On the international level, we plan to participate actively within EUROMIL, but as one might expect from a newly established Association, it has first to go through a learning period both at local level and at international level.

Mary Rose Mifsud
Honorary Secretary



V 4

Cooperation amongst EUROMIL Visegrad military associations

The **Visegrad Group** reflects the efforts of the countries of the Central European region to work together in a number of fields of common interest within all-European integration. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia have always been part of one civilisation sharing cultural and intellectual values and common roots of religious traditions which they wish to preserve and further strengthen.

In order to preserve and promote cultural cohesion, cooperation within the V-4 Group will enhance the imparting of values in the field of culture, education, science and exchange of information.

The V4 Group was not created as an alternative



to all-European integration efforts nor does it try to compete with the existing functional Central European structures. Its activities are in no way aimed at isolation or the weakening of ties with the other countries. On

the contrary, the Group aims at encouraging optimum cooperation with all countries, in particular its neighbours, its ultimate interests being the democratic development in all parts of Europe.

The Visegrad Group was formed in a north Hungarian town of Visegrad on 15th February 1991 at a meeting of President of the Czechoslovak Republic Václav Havel, President of the Republic of Poland Lech Wałęsa and Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary József Antall.

To that purpose, also the Ministries of Defence of the Visegrad Group officially meet once per year for consultations. In that context, SV-SR from Slovakia, HOSZ from Hungary, SVP-ACR from the Czech Republic and KDKO-WP and KITUS from

Ukraine as observer, cooperate to discuss policies in the spirit of the MoDs consultations.

Co-operation amongst military associations: SV-SR, HOSZ, KDKO WP, SVPACR, KITUS (Observer)

The co-operation amongst military associations has no institutional structure. Meetings are organized ad-hoc annually on a rotation basis. In 2008 the Visegrad Group is under the patronage of SVP ACR. In addition it is important to mention that this project is supported by the goodwill of the International Visegrad Fund, the only recognized institution of the Visegrad Group at government level.

The ad-hoc working meetings have the following aims:

- to exchange views on common problems and interests of our organisations,
- to compare legislative situations;
- to inform each other about experiences on the way to build a well-organised and well-

worked structure of the body representing professional soldiers in a modern European state;

- to share our experiences on creating a code of conduct (rules of behaviour) of professional soldiers in a modern European state;
- to find common initiatives towards strengthening the friendship and co-operation inside our “military family”;
- to exchange experiences as members of EUROMIL, the European



Organization Military Associations.

The co-operation of the Visegrad Group countries will continue to focus on regional activities and initiatives aimed at strengthening the identity of the Central European region. In this context, the co-operation amongst military associations will be based on concrete projects. It will maintain its flexible and open character.

**Adam Zajac International Relations Officer
KONWENT**

OPERATIONAL WELFARE

EUROMIL presents recommendations for international operations to Chairman of the EU Military Committee

The President Emmanuel Jacob and Secretary-General of EUROMIL, Mikko Harjulehto met with General Bentégeat and his chief of cabinet Rear-Admiral Bruno Nielly on 10 January 2008 to present EUROMIL's recommendations for multi-national crisis-management missions.

General Henri Bentégeat is the Chairman of the European Union Military Committee. The European Union Military Committee (EUMC) is the highest military body of the EU. It is composed of the Chiefs of Defence of the Member States, who are regularly represented by their permanent military representatives.

The President and the Secretary-General presented the conclusions of the EUROMIL workshop “Challenges

of European Soldiers in the Field- the Human Factor in International Missions” including the 10 recommendations that were drawn from this 1 1/2-day workshop at the Presidium meeting in Paris 2007.



From left to right: M. Harjulehto, Secretary General EUROMIL, E. Jacob, President of EUROMIL, Gen. Bentégeat, Chairman of the EUMC, Adm. Nielly, Chief of Cabinet

The Secretary General emphasized that the special value of this EUROMIL- workshop lies in the fact that delegates from 21 military associations and military trade unions from 17 countries were entirely free in their exchange of experiences without having to observe any special considerations as set by official national positions or by a chain of command. The results of the workshop

discussions constitute thus the uncensored view of the European soldiers.

EUROMIL highlighted the increasing burden soldiers

and their families face due to the increasing participation in international crisis management missions. The necessity of more organized family support and the wish of EUROMIL's member associations to reduce national caveats as well as to develop minimum medical standards within EU and NATO were discussed.

The General congratulated EUROMIL for this "excel-

lent initiative" and approved positively the results of the workshop. He commented the conclusions of the document as very useful and practical to that extent that he could have made use of them in his former position as France's Chief of Defense. Bentégeat wished to be informed of EUROMIL's coming work in the field of operational welfare and post-mission support.

EUROMIL recommendations for multinational crisis-management and peace-keeping missions

IN THE PRE-MISSION PHASE

- 1 To diminish national caveats and to increase common rules of engagement.
- 2 To increase common pre-deployment training of multinational troops to ease the cooperation of different national contingents on the ground.
- 3 To increase the length of pre-deployment training. The amount of new information poured upon soldiers during pre-deployment training is currently too big to be absorbed to a sufficient level.
- 4 To put in pre-mission training more focus on the knowledge of international law, on language skills and on cultural awareness training.

DURING DEPLOYMENT

- 5 To put a priority on the personal combat equipment, logistic supply as well as on the armament of vehicles according to the theatre and the mission.
- 6 To emphasise adequate physical and psychological medical care before, during and after military operations. To promote the psychological stability of soldiers by peer support programmes.
- 7 To fully involve families of soldiers in all support and adaptation programmes in all deployment stages.

AFTER DEPLOYMENT

- 8 To guarantee long term medical surveillance and treatment for returning soldiers and veterans. PTSD should be recognised as an occupational sickness of soldiers that have served in crisis-management missions.
- 9 To establish vocational and retraining schemes which facilitate the employment of veterans in the public administration or civilian labour market.
- 10 To establish employment schemes which permit seriously injured military personnel on request to be employed by the public administration.

EUFOR Tchad/RCA mission

The EU has officially launched the military operation in the Republic of Chad and in the Central African Republic. On 28 January the rules of engagement and the operation plan was approved. The deployment of troops was delayed in December when three rebel groups (UFDD/RFC/FUC), temporarily united attacked the capital N'Djamena. Given the shifting nature of rebel alliances amongst armed groups and their leaders in Chad, the sustainability of this alliance and the current balance of forces is highly unpredictable.



They entered Chad on 28 January despite Chadian air raids into Sudan. All the rebels's movements have been monitored by the French military forces which have not intervened directly but were accused by a spokesman for the rebels on 3 February of having deployed troops around the presidential palace to deter an attack. Warnings had been issued before by rebel leaders when they heard about the launching of the EU operation because they were not sure about the "neutrality" of the force. (Source: EU Institute for Security UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs <http://www.irinews.org>)

Some EU Member States were also concerned about a French hidden agenda and its continuing support to President Deby while launching the EU operation.

EUFOR is deployed for the duration of one year counting from the time when the EU declares initial operational capacity, probably about 15 March. (Source: Europe Diplomacy & Defence 18 February 2008)

On 19 February the European force has initiated first reconnaissance operations. Deployment will be complete by June.

EU Member States are variously participating to the military mission financially and operationally. More specifically;



14 EU member states in field

France, Ireland, Poland, Romania (pending political decision), Belgium, Austria, Netherlands (pending political decision), Sweden, Finland, Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia

18 EU member states in-theatre

France, Ireland, Poland, Romania, Belgium, Austria, Netherlands (pending political decision), Sweden, Finland, Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Luxembourg

22 EU member states at the Operations Headquarters

France, Ireland, Poland, Romania, Belgium, Austria, Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Hungary, Germany, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Lithuania, Bulgaria.

Please find the legal basis:
Decision 2008/101/CFSP here:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=1366&lang=en

Peace through dialogue!

EUROMIL President at Munich Security Conference

The 44th Munich Conference on Security Policy took place from 8 to 10 March. Emmanuel Jacob in his function as President of EUROMIL took part as an observer.

High-ranking heads of state, foreign and defence ministers and diplomats provided impetus for security policy. Amongst them were Recep Tayyip Erdogan (Prime Minister of Turkey), Sergey B. Iwanow (Substitute Prime Minister Russia),



E. Jacob, President EUROMIL at M. Security Conference

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (Secretary General NATO) and Robert Gates (MoD USA). A call was put out for an atmosphere of creative and

constructive debate in NATO to be established. Catchwords which are above all expected to influence the future of NATO's engagement. A year after Putin's spectacular speech on the last conference, Russia struck a more conciliatory tone. Other subjects addressed were proliferation, Asia and Russia.

Particular appreciation was expressed at this year's security conference for the commitment shown by soldiers deployed on peace and stability missions around the world. Representing all the NATO soldiers on such operations, Private Michael O'Rourke from Canada was decorated with the Peace through Dialogue medal endowed by the Munich Conference on Security Policy. Conference director Horst Teltschik and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer presented the young soldier the medal in a short ceremony on Saturday morning.

The private put his own life at risk to rescue several wounded fellow soldiers during a military operation in southern Afghanistan. O'Rourke, who lives in the Canadian province



Private Michael O'Rourke, NATO Secretary General

of Ontario, accounted for his exemplary action by saying that he had only done his duty.

In his laudatory speech, NATO Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer emphasised that the soldiers deployed for the promotion of peace and security, many of them far away from their homes, merited great respect: *"here he is representing all the men and women in uniform to whom we in NATO owe a tremendous debt of gratitude"*.

The peace medal is awarded to deserved individuals since 2004. Last year, it went to Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

International Meeting Calendar

28-29	March	Informal meeting of Foreign Ministers	Brdo (Slovenia)
31	March	Sub-Committee for Security and Defence European Parliament	Brussels (Belgium)
2-4	April	High-Level Committee Public Health	Brdo (Slovenia)
2-4	April	NATO Summit	Bucharest (Romania)
1-2	April	Committee Employment Social Affairs	Brussels (Belgium)
2-3	April	Committee Women and Equality European Parliament	Brussels (Belgium)
14-18	April	Council of Europe Plenary Session+ INGO Session	Strasbourg (France)
28	April	Troika OSCE-EU	Luxembourg (LUX)
9-10	June	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO)	Luxembourg (LUX)
19-20	June	European Council	Brussels (Belgium)

EUROMIL briefs members of the Slovak Military Academy

From 27 to 29 February 2008 the President of EUROMIL, Emmanuel Jacob, visited the Slovak Soldiers Association (S.V.A.) and participated at a workshop at the Military Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš. Emmanuel Jacob and the President of S.V.A. Michal Bohunický dedicated the first day of the visit in Bratislava to brief members of the Slovak Ministry of Defense about EUROMIL and the the right of association for military personnel. Successively they talked with Brigadier General Jozef Viktorin (Directorate General Defence Policy-International relations and Legal Affairs), General Dipl Eng Lubomir Bulik (Chief of the General Staff) and the Member of Parliament JUDr Pucik Rudolf (Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security).

On 28 February S.V.A. organized an international workshop under the theme of 'civil and human rights in the armed forces of the Slovak Republic'. The venue of this workshop was the Slovak Military Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš. About 120 participants, amongst them several students of the Military Academy retired soldiers as personnel in active duty discussed actively fundamental freedoms, the right of association and political rights in the Slovak Armed Forces. The President of EUROMIL focused in his presentation on recommendation 1742 T(2006) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the



President of S.V.A. Michal Bohunický, E.Jacob President EUROMIL, W. Treszkowski
KONWENT Photo: S.V.A.

Working Group on Human Rights of members of the Armed Forces that was established by the Committee



of Ministers in January 2007. This Working Group has the task to draft a recommendation on Human Rights of Military Personnel for the Committee of Ministers before the end of 2008.

At the end of the workshop the President of S.V.A. concluded with a declaration that will be submitted, discussed and perhaps amended before approval by the members of the Slovak Association. This declaration stated that S.V.A. wanted to lobby for the implementation of the recommendation 1742 in the Slovak Armed Forces, in particular concerning the right of association, active and passive political rights for active serving personnel and the instauration of an ombudsman for the Slovak Armed Forces.

Considering the conclusions of the workshop and the positive reactions of the military and political representatives that met with EUROMIL a debate on the highest decision-making level about the right of association for members of the Slovak Armed Forces will be launched in the near future. EUROMIL will monitor the implementation of the right of association for active duty personnel in Slovakia. Therefore, it plans to organize a hearing at the Committee on Defence and Security of the Slovak Parliament.

Emmanuel Jacob
President of EUROMIL

Azerbaijan: First military association launched with help of EUROMIL

At the end of 2006 the Deputy Head of the OSCE Office in BAKU (Azerbaijan), Robin Seaward, invited EUROMIL and other stakeholders to participate at a roundtable about Democratic Control on Armed Forces (DCAF) in February 2007 in Baku. This roundtable led to a project under the lead of the Baku Office to bring Azerbaijani associations and NGO's together to discuss about the social protection and welfare issues for soldiers and former military personnel of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces. A second meeting was organized in August 2007 as a national workshop entitled 'The provision of welfare support. National Perspectives'.

The President of EUROMIL Emmanuel Jacob participated at both meetings sharing the experiences of EUROMIL with the delegates of the Azerbaijani political and military leadership and the delegates of several national associations and NGO's. After several national meetings and discussions the new Political-Military Officer of the Baku Office, John MacGregor as of the first meeting managed to bring the delegates of the associations and NGO's together for several discussions. EUROMIL stayed in close contact with him to support his work and provide the Azerbaijanis with the necessary information on the right of association and welfare in the Armed Forces.

On 8 and 9 March 2008 John MacGregor of the OSCE Office Baku and the President of EUROMIL Emmanuel Jacob had a two day follow-up session in Baku. The

first day the set up of an Azerbaijan umbrella association and the recommendation 1742(2006) of the PA COE with five designated representatives of the more than thirty associations and NGO's was discussed. On the second day the results were submitted to and discussed by the delegates of all the associations and NGO's in a plenary session and this under the chairmanship of their own representatives.



A unique moment was the set up after long and thorny discussions of the first umbrella association for former and active serving soldiers in the history of Azerbaijan.

The goals of the newly established Azeri military association are the social protection and the welfare for the soldiers, retired soldiers and their families as well as the cooperation of the associations and the NGO's in this field and other military related issues.

EUROMIL wishes all success for this new association that will speak with one voice.

Emmanuel Jacob
The President of EUROMIL

EUROMIL IN BRIEF

Founded in 1972, the European Organisation of Military Associations is the umbrella organisation of 36 military associations and trade unions in Europe.

Together EUROMIL's member associations promote the social and professional interests of about 500.000 Europeans in 24 countries, soldiers of all ranks and status groups and their families.

Funded exclusively by membership fees, EUROMIL keeps to strict non-denominational and politically independent policies.

EUROMIL has participatory status at the Council of Europe and observer status at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. It upholds contacts with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and represents members' interests towards the EU-institutions. EUROMIL has a co-operation agreement with the European Trade Union Confederation since 1998.

EUROMIL's member associations and unions are committed to the principle of the Citizen in Uniform. A soldier has the same rights and obligations as any other citizen. A serviceman, who is to protect and defend the rights and freedoms of his fellow citizens and the constitutional order of his country, must be entitled to enjoy and perceive the same democratic rights and freedoms.

This requires certain states to lift all existing restric-

tions on civil and social rights of soldiers which do not inevitably result from the military assignment.

EUROMIL advocates the right of European soldiers to form and join military professional associations or trade unions. The right of association for military personnel can be restricted by a denial to strike. The member associations of EUROMIL do not use the right to strike.

EUROMIL promotes the inclusion of professional military associations and trade unions into a regular social dialogue.

EUROMIL provides a common forum of debate for member associations to exchange information, to formulate guidelines and best practice on social and personnel matters of military personnel.

EUROMIL supports member associations in their national lobbying work whenever it is asked to do so.

EUROMIL supports the inclusion of military service personnel into the social legislation of the European Union.

EUROMIL follows closely the development of NATO and the ESDP to provide its member associations with updated information on international developments in the field of security and defence.

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