



Security has a social dimension

Are European soldiers paying the price of the crisis?



The year 2009 is coming to an end and I acknowledge that it has been a year that brought up new challenges to tackle in the future.

Afghanistan and the financial and economic crisis are on the top of our common agenda.

Afghanistan - and other international military missions - with ever increasing military costs- is incompatible with the need and projections to cut defence expenditure. These missions clearly demonstrate that financial commitments have to follow political ones as agreed by EU and NATO governments. The financial and economic crisis does already in some European countries and will eventually demand further cutbacks in defence expenditure.

Both policy choices have a considerable impact on soldiers in Europe.

During the 100th EUROMIL Presidium the delegates discussed together with experts the impact of the financial and economic crisis on armed forces. We learned that current economic policy making is unprecedented, unavoidable and also unsustainable. Although recent signs suggest that government-

tal recovery programmes do work, the full weight of the crisis is only likely to be felt in the coming years. Even as economies seem to slightly improve, it is expected that unemployment will rise and tax revenues decline, while governments will be under pressure to improve public finances.

Some experts predict that developed countries with a large GDP may be less likely to make cuts in security and defence budgets. Other experts are convinced that all nations will reduce or entirely cut major defence programmes and eventually further reduce their troops. The pressure on defence budgets will increase. And, achieving operational objectives are already in most nations made at the expense of lower priority activities and with service personnel being deployed more frequently than is normally and reasonably expected.

Military personnel are likely to pay twice the price as the crisis starts to affect the status of personnel, equipment and social benefits at home and during operations.

Firstly, as individual employees because salaries drop and taxes rise. Some countries already witness stops on recruitment, promo-

tion and even training, while others experience closure of military facilities such as barracks and hospitals. Soldiers will thus have to carry an increased workload upsetting the balance between work and family life.

Secondly, already struggling with inadequate equipment and improvable conditions, soldiers will feel the impact of the crisis on defence budgets during international missions. The gap between commitments made by EU and NATO governments along with the goals of international missions and the reality in the field will widen. In some nations poor equipment has already led to wounded soldiers and to the unnecessary loss of lives.

The challenges are daunting and there are no easy solutions. The member associations of EUROMIL work permanently to prevent the worst effects to bear down on military personnel.

Emmanuel Jacob
President

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By Emmanuel Jacob

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INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

“I am doing my job as a soldier”

Gillis Hinderyckx shares his personal thoughts of working and living aboard a frigate off the coast of Somalia as part of the EUNAVFOR mission to combat piracy

By Gillis Hinderyckx



Gillis Hinderyckx is serving as a CPO (Chief Petty Officer) in the Belgian Defense since 1984. He is a crew member of the frigate BNS Louise-Marie for the EUNAVFOR. He articulates his personal views.

I'm a member of the crew of the BNS Louise-Marie (M-frigate) since 2008. Right now we are involved in the EUNAVFOR anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden.

The BNS Louise-Marie and its crew strive to ensure the success of this anti-piracy operation, currently being executed by different navy ships from different members of the European Union. This includes escorting WFP shipping, Amisom Shipping, other vulnerable shipping and to detect and deter any pirate activity.

As a long-serving member of the Belgian Navy, I'm trying to deal with four aspects of working and living amongst military colleagues. This is even more important in operations like the one we're dealing with right now.

- First and foremost, I'm doing my job as a soldier, whatever my specialty or the task assigned to me. As a consequence, during my career I have been tasked to sail every fourth year. This has already gone on for some twenty-three years after base-and specialty training, since I started my career in 1984. In between, I was assigned to different jobs on land.
- Secondly, I'm living as a person with and amongst my colleagues. Some of them have become real good friends during all those years. As a crewmember aboard a navy ship, it can sometimes be mentally hard to live together with some hundred-sixty men and women during long times at sea with no possibility to suddenly jump ship, if problems crop up.

Nevertheless, one gets used to that kind of situation, or to put it differently, one has to adapt or leave.

Thirdly, I'm serving as a member of a politically neutral military trade union. In this way, I'm dealing with problems of a different kind. Together



“Mighty Servant I” escorting

with my colleagues in the trade union, we are dealing with those problems in a matter of cooperation and understanding with the different authorities and organisations active in Belgian Defense.

This way of handling involves, first and foremost, talking with persons; one is tending to forget that a military authority, although with a higher rank, is not only a superior, but also a human being. In that manner, it is sometimes possible to deal with problems before they arise. This way, a mentality of goodwill is reached between the trade unions and the military authorities.

This means that over the years, although one can not say that this is an overall principle in Belgian defense, the relationship between our trade union and the Belgian defense establishment has evolved to a good cooperation where one can talk to and with each other..

Does this mean that there are no problems in this cooperation? No. Where there are human relations involved, be it personal or related to work, there are different opinions and thus possible conflicts. But at least, there is a way of negotiations created to solve those problems.

One has to remark that, according to Belgian law, a military trade unionist can not take union actions, whilst being deployed on international missions. Therefore I try to resolve problems in a co-operative way with the crew members and military authorities of my unit, and this never in a way that I'm acting as a trade unionist. This will always be me acting as an individual person or as a member of the crew. Until now, this way of working together has succeeded. Nevertheless, contacts with the trade union headquarters are allowed so as to facilitate the exchange of informa-



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Visit of Minister of Defence Pieter De Crem

tion that can be used to resolve issues and conflicts. In my opinion, two persons know more than one.

Fourthly, the most important aspect that accompanies my work aboard is the feeling and knowledge of home, of having left behind family and close friends for a long and successive period of time.

Most of the time, this is the most difficult thing to overcome, because, when leaving your dearest relatives and friends, you know that they are left alone with their problems. On the seven seas, life is tough, but most of the times, it can be even tougher for those, who are left behind.

Can one cope with those four aspects while being on active duty aboard? I am of the opinion that one can never be fully ready and trained for the tasks being assigned. Certainly not with modern military operations like the ones we are dealing with right now, and certainly not for the problems that can arise on the home front.

Why is that?

Well, such operations necessitate markedly other solutions and methods in terms of military training, and successfully confronting adversaries. During the Cold War, our task was "simply" to defend NATO member states against possible assaults by the former Warsaw Pact.

Today, governments and we, as members of the armed forces, have to deal with terrorism, fundamentalists, piracy, and much more. Threats of a very different kind than we were used to some twenty or thirty years ago.



Copyright: ACMP

Alarm Training

So, I doubt, whether a soldier can be fully taught and be ready to deal with these new kinds of situations. Rather, I believe that one has to adapt to the challenges in the field.

One can only hope that one is trained and prepared as much as possible for current operations and threats, so as to be able to successfully adapt to the new circumstances.

And one can also hope that the home front will be able to handle the problems that occur to them.

To conclude, while not always colleagues, and sometimes even adversaries, military trade unionists and

military authorities should always try to work in collaboration, not in conflict with each other.

In this way, it is possible that the work as a member of a military trade union and the work as a soldier on active duty in whatever kind of operation, whatever his/her military rank do not conflict with each other.



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Escort "Al Mukhtar"

EUROMIL CALENDAR 2010

6	January	Board	Berlin
18	March	Board	Berlin
19-20	March	Presidium	Berlin
18	April	Board	Cyprus
5	July	Board	Brussels
4	October	Board	Madrid
28	October	Board	Brussels
29-30	October	Presidium	Brussels

Between war and peace-building in Afghanistan?

By Colonel Ulrich Kirsch, Chairman of German Federal Armed Forces Association

Dear friends,

the question of my headline may be clearly answered in some nations. Other European countries may be having the same discussion as we deal with in Germany.

My predecessor, Colonel (ret.) Bernhard Gertz, and I began to talk about German soldiers being involved in a war in Afghanistan some years ago. The former German Minister of Defence (MoD) and officials from the parliamentary committee of defence reacted with statements, in which they declared the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) -mission to be a reconstruction and peace-building mission. According to them German soldiers can not be involved in a war since Germany has not issued a declaration of war, and the German Parliament has not officially declared Afghanistan a "case of self -defense".

Nevertheless, I decided that I will not stop talking about "war" and about soldiers being "killed in action" in Afghanistan.

There are several reasons for my decision, which I would like to summarise in three points:

Firstly, German servicemen and –women feel as if they are fighting a war. They do not talk about being sent on a reconstruction mission. They rather talk about departing to war.

The German MoD and other officials assessment is correct when referring to the first years of the ISAF mission – but meanwhile the circumstances have changed and evolved for the German soldiers in the field. ISAF's goal is to rebuild an Afghan nation that is autonomous and self-sufficient, with civil reconstruction aid under military protection.

And in recent years the number of German servicemen killed by suicide attacks and improvised explosive devices is on the increase. Today the German armed forces have to defend themselves in hourly intensive



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Colonel Ulrich Kirsch is the Chairman of the German Federal Armed Forces Association

armed combats. Thus I will not accept, it if a German official talks about a reconstruction mission with some severe threats in Afghanistan. Nor is it acceptable if authorities talk officiously about soldiers killed in action in Afghanistan as if they were only killed "by accident" in a mission abroad.

As the voice of 207,000 German servicemen and –women I will talk about war.

Secondly, there is an important legal aspect I want to underline about the ISAF mission.

Up to now there have been two incidents when German soldiers had to shoot at advancing cars ignoring orders to stop at a checkpoint manned by ISAF troops and servicemen of the Afghan National Army. The cars were not brought to halt even though ISAF and Afghan

soldiers gave warning shots. Bearing in mind that some days before German soldiers had died by suicide attacks, the young comrades reasonably assumed to be under attack. They shot to stop the vehicle. Tragically, four Afghan civilians died in these two incidents.

The German public prosecutors began the preliminary proceedings to investigate manslaughter. In that case there is an huge difference between a police officer in a German town confronted with a car not stopping and a soldier in Afghanistan, who sees a vehicle driving with high speed towards his ISAF checkpoint. The police officer in Germany may jump aside and then find out why the driver did not stop. In Afghanistan the soldier and most of his comrades may die in an explosion of several hundred kilos of explosives in the vehicle, as it has already happened several times before.

It is important to understand for all German officials that there's no only reconstruction or police work to be done by the ISAF troops. There are also fighting opponent forces that attack with military means and with the intention of killing as many as possible.

Fortunately, the public prosecutors dropped both cases officially. But criminal proceedings are on-going in another incident, where a German Colonel ordered a bombing and several Afghan civilians tragically died.

Thirdly, from an international law perspective I am right when talking about a war in Afghanistan. Leading German international law experts do not agree with the former MoD and its legal definition of ISAF. In Afghanistan there is not an "international armed conflict" because there are not two or several sovereign states at war with each other. International troops are there by invitation of the then provisional government of Hamid Karzai in 2002. The Afghan government did not retract this invitation and is still welcoming ISAF.

But another category can be differentiated between an "international armed conflict" and peace in international law. It is called a "non-international armed conflict", which is the legal term for a civil war. There it is, the small word with only one syllabus: "war".

For German international law experts, the question is not whether a war or "the case of self-

defense" by the German Parliament has been declared. It is a matter of intensity of an armed conflict. It depends on how intense and how frequent the attacks of one part of the population are, if it is still a severe and brutal form of criminal offence or if it is civil war.

Surely nobody will say that there is peace in Afghanistan. Then there would be no need for close to 100,000 servicemen and –women from 42 different countries to protect the civil reconstruction work.

Germany has to understand and to discuss what its soldiers are and are not doing in Afghanistan. German servicemen are killed there and they kill others to fulfil their mission. A true and unvarnished discussion needs undisguised facts about ISAF. Our servicemen and –women, who are sent abroad by the Parliament, the representation of German people deserve an honest discussion. To tell the truth and to use the right terms is the first precondition to it. The new MoD, Dr. Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, admitted that German soldiers might feel to be in a "war-like conflict" some weeks ago. Hopefully this is the beginning of a truthful debate in Germany.



German soldiers in Afghanistan

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Interview with Mr. Arnaud Danjean Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence in the European Parliament



Mr. Danjean is French and represents the European People's Party (EPP) group in the European Parliament. He talks about the work priorities of the Subcommittee.

1 You are chairman of the Subcommittee for Security and Defence. How do you perceive the mandate for the European Subcommittee for Security and Defence and what will be the priorities for the European Parliament in Security and Defence affairs?

I foresee four areas of priority for the subcommittee:

- Follow up on operations and capability development: the subcommittee will keep its focus on main operations (Somalia, Kosovo, Afghanistan) and support initiatives aiming at enhancing the capabilities available to fulfil these missions.
- Monitoring of institutional changes: the subcommittee will contribute to the debate on the implementation of institutional changes, ensuring that the new setting will set the scene for a truly integrated civil-military approach to crisis management.
- Input on strategic issues, such as non-proliferation (in view of the revision of the NPT) and partnership with NATO (in the context of the revision of its strategic concept), which are the most urgent to be addressed.
- Contribution to public awareness on CSDP: as a public forum, the subcommittee will strive to inform the public on CSDP in order to increase its democratic legitimacy.

2 Do you see more possibilities for the European Parliament to influence European Security and Defence Policies with the Lisbon Treaty coming into power?

This policy will remain predominantly intergovernmental; therefore the Parliament will in theory have very limited binding power. However, the association of the Parliament will be constantly increasing, notably because of its implication in voting the CFSP budget. Moreover, it will have more

leverage on the High Representative, as he will also be Vice President of the Commission. The HR will be a central actor in CSDP and he will appear in front of the Parliament more often.

3 What will be the main policies on your agenda that have tangible effects on the military profession?

Presumably, all the work done on CSDP and military capabilities will have a direct or indirect impact on the military profession.

4 Your predecessor, Dr. Karl von Wogau, approved in his report¹ “SAFE” – Synchronised Armed Forces Europe². Are you aware of this project? If yes, what is your opinion and eventually future plans with regard to this project?

I think it is obvious that interoperability between European forces is essential given that most operations in which militaries are mobilised are European or international (ie NATO, UN) operations. There are already a number of initiatives ongoing on this matter such as the initiative for the exchanges of young officers, similar to Erasmus, to harmonise in the long run the training of military personnel. Further steps in this field will have to be carefully thought through.

5 The EU is active in the field of military peace-keeping. With EUFOR ALTHEA and EU NAVFOR there are two military missions ongoing and extended. Where do you see the main challenge of

¹ A6-0032/2009, 28.1.2009, **REPORT** on the European Security Strategy and ESDP (2008/2202(INI)) Committee on Foreign Affairs Rapporteur: Karl von Wogau

² SAFE entails closer co-operation between national armed forces so that they become increasingly synchronised. This framework includes also the idea of a European statute for soldiers, governing training standards, the level of equipment quality, medical care as well as social security arrangements in the event of death, injury or incapacity.

EU military operations? Do you see an increase in EU lead military missions?

In my opinion, the main challenge is to be able to provide sufficient capabilities on the ground. Given the budgetary constraints, this issue will become more and more daunting. However, this should convince member states to do more together in this field.

As for a potential increase of military operations, this would obviously have to respond to a real need on the ground. I do believe that there are areas where an EU military intervention could be useful, not necessarily in the field of peace keeping but rather in the realm of training. The operation, which should be launched soon to train Somali security forces, is a good example.

6 General Henri Bentégeat suggested in an interview³ to create an integrated civil-military “command centre”. This could be a compromise between a permanent EU military operational headquarter (EU OHQ) for ESDP missions and the current arrangement of a “borrowed” EU OHQ in France, Germany or the UK. Would this enhance ESDP capabilities? Is this something that you would support? What would be your preferred option?

On the issue of command and control structures, I believe we have to be pragmatic. What the EU needs is a military operational planning capability that would be permanent and allow for a professional military command. I agree that it would need to be allocated with the civilian planning capability (CPCC) to allow for proper civil-military coordination. However, I do not believe that there should be an integrated chain of command. Furthermore, this should not be an attempt to undermine the military command and control capability, by unnecessarily restraining its size. Given the political constraints, it is only

reasonable to consider a progressive approach but the military structure needs to be staffed with enough good quality planners from the beginning. After all, it is about the safety of our troops on the ground.

The Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) is one of two subcommittees of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET). SEDE assists AFET in the context of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and the European security and defence policy (ESDP). SEDE also keeps a close relation with the EP’s delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.



EUROMIL delegation (President, Vice-President, Board member) at a hearing in SEDE in 2008

SEDE follows closely the evolution of the above-mentioned policies and related subjects by means of monthly meetings with relevant persons from the EU institutions and agencies as well as its Member States and other organisations. It also serves as the discussion floor on draft reports and opinions which are later to be adopted and amended by AFET and ultimately by the European Parliament’s plenary session.

It organises several times per year, either alone or in cooperation with AFET, public hearings as well as conferences on relevant subjects.

In order to obtain facts on policy implementation on the ground as well as meet relevant actors, SEDE sends delegations to geographical areas under its scrutiny.

Source: European Parliament

³ Leo Michel, A general to politicians’ rescue?, EuropeanVoice, 29.10.2009 (online: <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/a-general-to-politicians-rescue-/66271.aspx>).

REVIEW 100th EUROMIL PRESIDIUM

Brussels 6-7 November 2009: The European Organisation of Military Associations celebrates its 100th Presidium at the International Trade Union House

For the first time, EUROMIL organised its Presidium meeting at the International Trade Union House.

The meeting was opened by EUROMIL President Emmanuel Jacob and was attended by Jamie Shea, director of the NATO Secretary General's Private Office, who regretted the lack of investment on the part of the Alliance countries on defence. He underlined that soldiers clearly have a right to ask for the right equipment and strategy, when they are sent abroad on international missions.

German Christian Democrat Michael Gahler, who belongs to the European Parliament subcommittee on security and defence, called for the creation of a permanent EU centre for integrated civil-military command. He urged the Parliament to draft a White Paper on European defence. Mr. Gahler also stressed the need to discuss harmonised working conditions for



Jamie Shea, Director of Private Office of Secretary General of NATO, Michael Gahler, Member of European Parliament and Dr. Derek Braddon, Professor of Economics and Head of the Defence Economics Research Group at University of West of England



John Monks, General Secretary of European Trade Union Confederation

military in EU operations, in order to ensure that the “spirit” of the Corps is developed. Mr. Gahler who is a member of the German Armed Forces Association (DBwV) recognised the importance of the work done by the military associations and EUROMIL.

Finally, the General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation, John Monks, welcomed the EUROMIL Presidium delegates in the International Auditorium at the European Trade Union House. He also welcomed the planned discussion on the 100th Presidium agenda on the possible application of EUROMIL to become an “Industry Federation” in the ETUC and said the door of his organisation was open to EUROMIL and that it awaits EUROMIL's candidature.

The consequences of the crisis on armed forces and defence

In a workshop organised during the 100th Presidium meeting in Brussels on 6 November experts and delegates of EUROMIL discussed the effects of the economic and financial crisis on the armed forces.



Gerry Rooney, Secretary General of PDFORRA moderating the workshop

Dr. Derek Braddon, Professor of Economics and Director at the Defence Economics Research Group from the University of the West of England, took the view that the effects of the economic and financial crisis will not be felt on the armed forces until 2010. This is all more worrying given the major cuts in defence spending on equipment in the coming year: - 3% in the United States and France, -5% in the UK and -7% in Italy and Spain. A large part of the US and NATO defence budgets will disappear according to Braddon. There will, therefore, be greater pressure on European governments to take on a larger share of the NATO defence burden. These cuts will thus come at a time when the economic and financial recession risks entailing greater instability in certain regions of the world, as well as new threats. Hence the vital question: how can such shortfalls be managed? The effects will be felt on planning, the defence industry, as well as on the armed forces and their families.

Moreover, the evolution of the Belgian armed forces was presented, which have been trimmed down consider-

ably in the past few years: 79 954 (with conscripts) in 1992, 47 500 in 1993, 39 500 in 2000, 37 500 in 2009, with a target of 34 000 for 2012. Maintaining barracks further to the intervention of municipal authorities corresponds to 6% of the Belgian defence budget. The presenter believed that the gap that already separates “high tech” forces, namely United States, from the “medium tech” forces, e.g. the United Kingdom, France and Germany, will necessarily widen. Small “medium tech” forces such as those of Belgium will become “low tech” forces. This evolution will entail new interoperability problems. To budgetary problems must be added that of recruitment due to the inverted age pyramid in most European states. The conclusion is that the future necessarily calls for more specialisation and more co-operation.

During the debate, Flemming Vinther, chairman of HKKF, was slightly more optimistic, saying that in Denmark it had been possible to convince the public of the need to increase the defence budget because it had



Professor Derek Braddon, Head of Defence Economics Research Group at University of West England presenting to Presidium

been shown that “our forces could be effective in Afghanistan”. He deplored the fact that one can continue to spend money by calling up conscripts that will never be used.

Antonio Lima Coelho, chairman of ANS underlined the paradox that led European states to reduce training and equipping means for personnel, while there is a growth in requests to take part in missions. He deplored the fact that outsourcing is used to support private companies while military personnel duly trained for maintenance are forced to fold their arms and do nothing.

Gerry Rooney, Secretary General of PDFORRA, who was moderating the workshop, reported that the first consequences of the financial crisis were already felt on Irish defence forces: 6% projected decrease of military personnel’s salaries, the introduction of a pension levy and the end of recruitment.

Bernhard Gertz, Vice-President of EUROMIL argued that countering inflation as the main priority in the Eurozone, will lead to a decrease of public expenditure to reduce budget deficits in the long run and this will certainly include defence activities. While this will encourage governments to move towards more specialisation and a division of roles among national armed forces, he doubted that the precondition for such a development, namely a further decrease of sovereignty, will happen quickly.

Photos left

German delegation

Italian delegation

Dutch delegation (last photo beneath)

Photo right: Swedish and Swiss guest delegation from left to right



Associations and unions examine if European social legislation applies to armed forces

During the 100th EUROMIL Presidium about 80 delegates from members associations and unions of EUROMIL discussed the introduction to the question whether EU social and labour legislation is applied to the armed forces of EU member states.

Mr. Laurent Vogel, Director of the Health and Safety Department of the European Trade Union Institute, introduced the Safety & Health Directive. He explained that the legislation excludes certain activities but it cannot do so for individuals or services as a whole. He added that those exceptions from the scope of the directive should be defined and regulated in the light of the objective of the directive and interpreted as narrowly as possible. Four potential problem areas for health and safety legislation would arise according to Vogel in the Armed Forces: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder since it is not defined universally; depleted uranium ammunition and electromagnetic fields where no causality to health problems is commonly recognised. Lastly, the privatisation of military services which will undermine any legislation by using an opt-out for employees.

Mrs. Catelene Passchier, Confederal Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation introduced the Working Time Directive covering health and safety as well as work-life balance aspects. In general, the directive applies to all workers unless activities “inevitably conflict” with the directive. She recommended that unions and professional associations need to be



Laurent Vogel, Director of the Health and Safety Department of the European Trade Union Institute

involved in the processes to identify, define and regulate such activities considered as “inevitably conflicting”. She advised that derogations from the directive allowed under article 17 could be used to work out tailored regulation, which ideally is based on negotiations with the workforce.

Emmanuel Jacob, in his function as General Secretary of ACMP/CGPM explained that in Belgium the Health and Safety Directive, including the amendments, are fully implemented in the Armed Forces. Only during missions abroad are the health and safety regulations not strictly applicable. However, even then it is foreseen that the protection of the soldiers must be as close as possible to the safety rules in normal working conditions. The commander is thus responsible for the welfare of his soldiers, and it is his duty to prevent actions that entail unnecessary risks. While the Working Time Directive has been implemented in the Belgian public sector in December 2000, the Armed Forces and police personnel are still excluded.

In the subsequent question and answer session, Antonio Lima Coelho shared his experiences and commended on the lack of implementation of EU social and



Catelene Passchier, Confederal Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation

labour legislation in the Portuguese armed forces. Especially in a multinational environment such as NATO the differences become clear. Mrs. Passchier replied that without strong unions, a compromise on minimum standards was likely if national legislation was to be completely harmonised. Mr. Vogel added that the Framework Directive provides (art. 11) for participation and consultation with workers to enable co-operation and an opportunity to bring together best practices to achieve high standards for each case.

approach to the question whether soldiers should be included or remain excluded. For some unions this poses a battle on two fronts, towards the own members and towards the employer. Both experts, Mrs. Passchier and Mr. Vogel, admitted that such internal discussion, especially in health and safety matters across sectors are not unknown and mainly based on stereotypes and clichés. It is, for instance, not easy to convince a construction worker to use sun-lotion to reduce the risk of skin-cancer.

Flemming Vinther stated that EU legislation is indeed important and valid for soldiers. But in his experience, not even within and among the unions is there a united



The Swedish association of military officers (SAMO)

SAMO joins EUROMIL during the 100th EUROMIL Presidium in November 2009

By Lars Fresker, Chairman of SAMO

Photo: Ulf Looke



The Association of Military Officers in Sweden was founded in 1995, when the two unions Svenska Officersförbundet and Officerarnas Riksförbund merged. The origin of these two unions goes back to 1907 when the first military trade union was established. The early unions sprung out of the then existing three categories: officers,

warrant officers and instructor categories. When a new Swedish officer system was introduced in 1983 and all regular military personnel on duty named “career officer”, it became an ambition to organise all of the officers into the same trade union.

At the time of the merging of the two unions in 1995 the number of members came to over 16 000 officers. This number has gradually decreased due to several decisions in the defence sector implying organisational downsizing. Today SAMO organises approximately 9 000 members.

It is nowadays a professional association concerning military matters and a trade union for all regular military personnel from soldier to admiral and general.

The main task for the union is to achieve the best service as possible for its members, and to look after the interests of the military personnel by taking part in the processes of decisions that are influencing officers working conditions.

The goals to achieve are good working conditions and good training for the members pursuing these interests by participating in decision-making processes.

SAMO’s supreme decision making body is the union meeting. This assembly is composed of representatives from regional officer’s union and gathers every third year. Between union meetings the union representatives can meet in a federal council, which is a consultative assembly.

SAMO’s organisation implies that at local/ regional officers union (ROU) level, it has developed as a equivalent negotiator to each local employer – the regiment.

A trade union board and a central office carry out the executive and central part of the trade union work.

When a union meeting is not convened the board of SAMO is the supreme decision making body. The board consists of 15 members with various defence branch experiences and is elected by the union meeting. The board meetings take place approximately once a month. Its main task is to ensure that the association’s activities are executed in accordance with the union meeting policies.

The secretariat of SAMO is the board’s preparatory and executive body, employing secretaries (ombudsmen) with various expertise as e.g. working environment, legal aid and missions abroad. In order to provide the best possible service to the members there are also secretaries specializing in various service branches of the armed forces. The secretariat also consists of personnel



Copyright Daniel Skoglund (SAMO)

Advancing rifleman

working with finance, member and insurance services. The organisation employs a public relations officer and regularly publishes the union magazine called “OfficersTidningen”.

Copyright: Daniel Skoglund (SAMO)



Swedish Paratrooper



Copyright: Daniel Skoglund (SAMO)

CH 130 Hercules

TRAINING SEMINAR

Portugal, 21-23 November 2009: EUROMIL organises seminar on Recruitment & Organising

On 21- 23 November 2009, some 20 participants gathered in the small Portuguese village of Sesimbra for the second EUROMIL sponsored seminar on “recruitment and organising”.

In the course of the two and half days, the participants were encouraged to think about recruitment as a comprehensive activity, involving careful planning of resources. It was thus not simply about attracting numbers, but also about holding on to members, once they had registered.

In this context, using group activities and presentations, the participants started by examining the reasons why people choose to join unions, before considering how to plan and organise a recruitment drive – also bearing in mind the image of the union within and towards the target population. In this, the participants were supported by two presentations by Mr. Koos Stauthamer (AFMP/FNV), who explained about the system and lessons-learned in the Netherlands.

In the final session, the participants were challenged to use the information of the past two days to design an action plan setting out forward leaning activities to be implemented in their national associations.

The seminar, organised in co-operation with the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI), followed an earlier pilot course in 2008. Due to the positive feed-back, the EUROMIL Board subsequently decided to continue the process, and to organise a new seminar targeted towards

a limited number of countries at the time. As such, the latest event brought together representatives from Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.



A time of Celebration!

Päälystöliitto, the Finnish Institute Officers' Union turned 80 this midsummer.

Over the years, the Finnish Non-Commissioned Officers' Union founded in the Old Castle of Vyborg has matured into a modern trade organisation within the Defence Forces and the Frontier Guard, the Institute Officers' Union.

By Antti Kuivalainen, Chairman of Päälystöliitto



Chairman Antti Kuivalainen leads Päälystöliitto with more than twenty years of experience in the union work

Every success in improving the members' standing and financial compensation is based on this guiding principle.

Over the course of our history, the underpaid and undereducated NCO has grown into a skilled and valued professional soldier with a high level of education and competitive pay. Our unions' functionalities and activities have had a crucial role in these developments, and merging the institute officers' and officers' categories as stated in the personnel policy, is a well justified measure.

The upcoming history of our union proves that a trade union has to be firmly rooted in its own time, always conform to the changes around it and base its operations on long-term plans and visions. Throughout its history, the Institute Officers' Union has emphasized the importance of a high level of education and professional development.

The Institute Officers' Union has already outlined its future and looks forward to it with confidence. Our members' standing will be secured while developing our activities.

We have several different strategies to choose from, ranging from a completely independent union to various forms of cooperation.

Our set of values includes cooperation, appreciating and utilizing all participants, which we will continue to emphasize.

Our members show an especially high level of professionalism and work ethics. The employer feedback is consistently positive.



A part of international and EUROMIL co-operation. Our polish colleagues visited in the National Defence University in Helsinki. Brigadier general Vesa Tynkkynen Rector of the National Defence University hosted our visit.

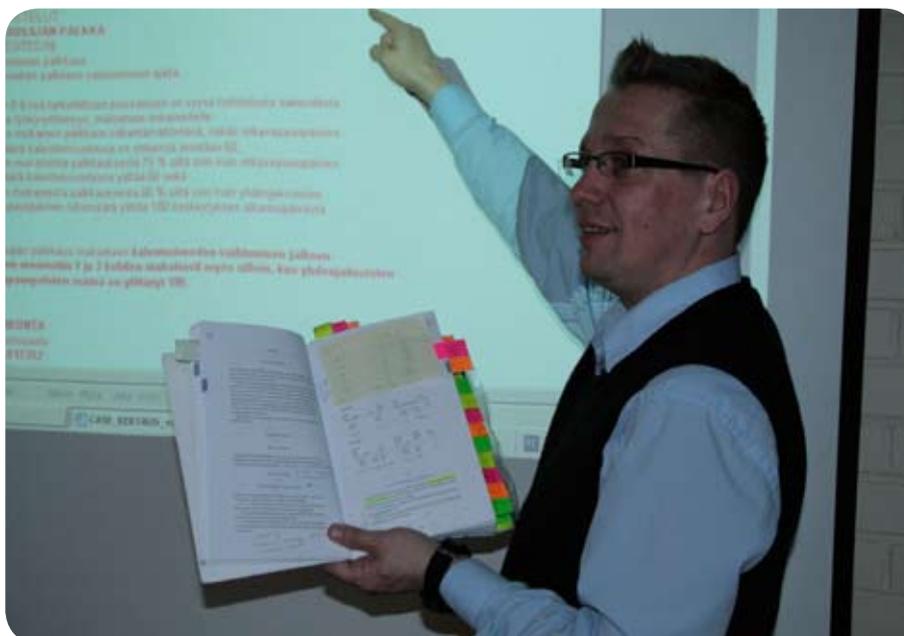
As employees, the institute officers are very much in demand. It is an essential mission for us to secure our members' standing and salary level also in the future.

The representatives from local associations will convene on October 13th and 14th to decide on the main policies and to elect functionaries for the next four-year term.

It is a tradition in our union to elect skilled people to represent us and for them to have the members' full confidence. This has been and also will be a comfortable setting for the representatives to work in.

The representatives' convention will be a busy one, but at the same time it is also appropriate to celebrate our long and successful history together with people from local associations and our partners.

At the opening ceremonies as well as evening banquet we will have a presentation of our history and, in the form of other diversions, samples of our members' professional activities.



Our skilled representatives (ombudsmen) have a key part of the union activity in the workplace. Chief ombudsman of the Army Marko Jalakanen is teaching agreement matters for ombudsmen in units.

50 years is no age!

The Danish military trade union HKKF celebrates its 50th anniversary

By Tine Nørholtz, Press and Media Adviser (HKKF)

50 years is no age! At least not for a trade union in Denmark. Actually, the Association of Enlisted Personnel and Corporals (HKKF) is one of the youngest organisations in the Danish trade union movement, which originated in the 1870s. It took 90 years before enlisted personnel and corporals in the army were to have their own union, when HKKF was established on 5th September 1959.

The long run-up reflects the special circumstances that apply to us as a military association. It thus did not follow automatically, that soldiers could organise along with the other employees.

Today, we often take these rights for granted, and may

fail to fully appreciate them. But we are reminded of their value, when we see how hard our colleagues in other European countries are struggling to achieve such rights. In some countries it is, unfortunately, still quite normal that soldiers have no rights. Seen from this perspective, we have come a long way in Denmark in the last 50 years!

Denmark has some of the world's strongest military associations and, at the same time, our members are involved in some of the most vicious battles in Afghanistan. Our soldiers are only praised and recognised, and even senior military leaders from allied countries refer with respect to the efforts of Danish soldiers. If anything, the fierce fighting in Afghanistan has demonstrated



Copyright: Karsten Weirup

Flemming Vinther, Chairman HKKF and Søren Gade, Minister of Defence

beyond doubt, that there is no contradiction between combat efficiency and union rights – on the contrary.

HKKF has always prided itself in being close to our members, yet at the same time, we have always attached importance to influencing the society surrounding us. Those employed in the military do not constitute a “state within the state”. We are a part of the society as such, and if we, as an organisation, only concentrated on military issues, we would only have completed half our work.

HKKF’s history is thus also strongly influenced by developments in society in general, and in labour market and security policy in particular.

Today, members of HKKF are struggling in international missions under conditions that defy description. And this with an attitude of professionalism which rightly generates respect. In HKKF, we are pleased to continue working to ensure the best possible conditions for the members of the armed forces - together with our members and partners, not least EUROMIL.

Anniversary Gift for Children in Helmand

In a pleasant atmosphere, the Association of Enlisted Personnel and Corporals (HKKF), in September 2009, held a reception on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. Yet the mood still lifted considerably, when Mr. Flemming Vinther, chairman of the association, announced that HKKF would donate a check worth. DKR 102,000 (c. 13,600 euro) to a project for youth and children in Afghanistan. The check reflected the generous contributions of the guests at the reception, who kindly donated the money as part of their anniversary present to the association.

“As a union we want to support the important work carried out, daily by our members in Afghanistan. We have therefore chosen to support a project in Helmand in connection with the anniversary”, Mr. Vinther explained.

The actual project, which will benefit from the sum, will be identified by the local Danish head of the civil-military section (CIMIC) in consultation with the local population and authorities.



Former Treasurer of EUROMIL talking with former Chief of Defence Staff



Chief of Danish Army

Athens 13-19 October 2009: The Russian cosmonaut Alexander Volkov and the Chairman of Russian ITUS visit Athens

By Panos Mertikas, Hellenic Air Force Colonel (ret.)

Thanks to EUROMIL which organises military associations from Russia to Portugal and from Finland to Cyprus we had the opportunity for the third time to exchange views with military colleagues from EUROMIL in Athens.

For the celebration of the 60th anniversary and successful operation of the Air Force Academy Technical School (STYA) we invited our colleagues from the Russian Association ITUS to Athens.

The cosmonaut Alexander Volkov and Valerian Nesterov accompanied by his wife Anna accepted my invitation. The military band honored their presence by the national anthems of Russia and Greece. Russian Air Force Colonel (ret.) representing ITUS honored the unknown soldiers at their monument in a wreath-laying ceremony.

During the main part of the ceremony, Alexander Volkov gave a presentation and lecture of his experience in space and at the space stations to the engineers, pilots and the teaching personnel of the Hellenic Air Force Academy. He received a lot of questions from the interested public about his flight and experiments he undertook at the space station. He had been flying with a speed of 8000m/sec in a high of 350-400Km with a total flying time of 391 days 11 hours and 50 minutes.

This gave me as well the opportunity to brief our political and military authorities honoring our celebrations with their presence about the need for European soldiers to cooperate closely not only during military missions, but also on social and personnel matters.



Valerian Nestorov, International Officer Russian ITUS, former cosmonaut Alexander Volkov, Panos Mertikas, honorary President of SAS and from 2004-2008 member of the EUROMIL Board

Paris, 1-3 December 2009: EUROMIL observing plenary session of the European Security and Defence Assembly

Assembly President Robert Walter, MP stresses EU defence spending at European Security and Defence Assembly

The European Union (EU) should boost defence spending, despite the economic downturn, strengthen cooperation and create a permanent structure for strategic dialogue with the United States, Assembly President Robert Walter MP (United Kingdom, Federated Group) said during his opening speech of the three-day plenary session of the European Security and Defence Assembly (ESDA).

“If the member states are serious about putting flesh on the bones of CSDP [Common Security and Defence Policy], they will have to provide the appropriate financial means”, he said. “The EU should now make a dedicated effort to close the gap between the discourse on CSDP and how it is actually put into practice. (...) In this fragile [geopolitical] environment, it is important for CSDP to be sustainable”. Furthermore, financial constraints and budget cuts “should be an incentive to increase defence cooperation and further develop standardisation and interoperability”, he added.

The Assembly’s role in highlighting the defence challenges facing the EU is unique, Mr Walter declared. “Defence spending is never at the top of the priority list, but through our work here we know only too well what the challenges are”, he added.

On the EU’s external relations, Mr Walter said he did not dismiss bilateral dialogue between individual member states and the US, but stressed that a “regular all-encompassing strategic EU-US dialogue” would be “more in line with the acknowledged ambition of the Lisbon Treaty’s CSFP”. There is “an urgent need for such a structure”, he said. But first the EU must “be prepared to speak with one voice. That may be a tall order, but a divided Europe will



Colonel (ret.) Bernhard Gertz (Vice-President) and Emmanuel Jacob (President) in Paris

not have the strategic clout it needs if it is to be heard”.

The EU should also channel more energy into improving relations with NATO, he said. “There is no denying that they are still problematic, which, among other things, makes the Berlin Plus Arrangements unworkable”, he added. The arrangements specify strategic cooperation between the EU and NATO.

EUROMIL President Emmanuel Jacob and Vice-President Bernhard Gertz participated at the 57th plenary session as observer.

On Tuesday 1 December the President of European Security and Defence Assembly and Mr PANGALOS, Deputy Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, representing the Greek Presidency of WEU, took part in the ceremony to rekindle the Flame of Remembrance at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. The ceremony was dedicated to the memory of all Europeans, men and women, who have given their lives in operations in 2009 – 181 to date: roll of honour of the member of the Armed Forces in European countries in 2009.

The roll of honour of the members of the Armed Forces of European countries for 2009



Assemblée européenne de sécurité et de défense
Assemblée de l'Union de l'Europe occidentale
European Security and Defence Assembly
Assembly of Western European Union

Liste des Membres des Forces armées des Pays européens tombés au Champ d'honneur en 2009 Roll of Honour of the Members of the Armed Forces of European Countries for 2009

Cyprus	Lieutenant Charalambous Charalambos Lieutenant de réserve Chatzispirou Iakovos Aspirant Ieronimidis Manios Soldat Panagiotou Ilias Soldat Athini Konstantinos Soldat Pavlou Tefkros	Latvia	Corporal Dāvis Baltābols Sergeant Voldemārs Anševics Private First Class Andrejs Merkuševs
Denmark	Overkonstabel Andreas Søgaard Brohus, Konstabel Mads Lerche Rasmussen, Konstabel Martin Abildgaard Konstabel Steffen Bloch Larsen Sergent Michael Ebert, Konstabel Rune Westy Zacharias Nielsen	Luxembourg	One Member of the Armed Forces
Estonia	Master Sergeant Allain Tikko Master Sergeant Eerik Salmus Sergeant Raivis Kang	Netherlands	Sergeant Major Mark Leijsen Corporal Kevin van de Rijdt Private Azdin Chadli
France	Sergent Johann Hivin-Gerard Caporal-Chef Ihor Chechulin Soldat 1ère classe Kevin Lemoine Adjudant Yann Hertach Brigadier Gabriel Poinier Caporal Johan Naguin Caporal Anthony Bodin Caporal Nicolas Belda Capitaine Patrice Sonzogni Twelve Members of the Armed Forces	Norway	Captain Trond Petter Kolset Private Christina Rødstøl
Germany	2nd Lieutenant Alexander Janelt Private 1st Class Conrad Hötzel Private First Class Sergej Motz Private First Class Alexander Schleiernick Private First Class Oleg Meiling Private First Class Martin Brunn	Poland	Senior Staff WO Andrzej Rozmiarek Captain Daniel Ambroziński Sergeant Marcin Poręba Senior Private Artur Pyc Corporal Piotr Marciniak Corporal Szymon Graczyk Corporal Radosław Szyszewicz
Italy	Capitano Antonio Fortunato Sergente Maggiore Capo Roberto Valente Caporal Maggiore Capo Massimiliano Randino Caporal Maggiore Scelto Matteo Mureddu Caporal Maggiore Scelto Giandomenico Pistonami Caporal Maggiore Scelto Davide Ricchiuto Primo Caporal Maggiore Alessandro Di Lisio	Romania	Major Tibenius Petre Major Vasile Unguras Second-Lieutenant Claudiu Chira.
		Slovenia	One Member of the Armed Forces
		Spain	Two Members of the Armed Forces
		Switzerland	Two Members of the Armed Forces
		Turkey	Colonel Faruk Albay Sungur Specialist Sergeant Baydur Mevlüt
		United Kingdom	Sergeant Robert David Loughran-Dickson Corporal Loren Owen Christopher Marlton-Thomas Rifleman Andrew Ian Fentiman Rifleman Samuel John Bassett Rifleman Philip Allen Serjeant Phillip Scott Warrant Officer Class 1 Darren Chant Sergeant Matthew Telford Guardsmen James Major

Liste communiquée par Sources officielles
Communicated by Official Sources

**United Kingdom
(continued)**

Corporal Steven Boote
Corporal Nicholas Webster-Smith
Staff Sergeant Olaf Sean George Schmid
Corporal Thomas 'Tam' Mason
Corporal James Oakland
Lance Corporal James Hill
Guardisman Jamie Janes
Acting Corporal Marcin Wojtak
Private James Prosser
Acting Sergeant Michael Lockett MC
Acting Sergeant Stuart McGrath
Trooper Brett Hall
Kingsman Jason Dunn-Bridgeman
Corporal John Harrison
Private Gavin Elliott
Lance Corporal Richard Brandon
Sergeant Stuart 'Gus' Millar
Private Kevin Elliott
Sergeant Lee Andrew Houltram
Fusilier Shaun Bush
Serjeant Paul McAleese
Private Johnathon Young
Lance Corporal James Fullarton
Fusilier Simon Annis
Fusilier Louis Carter
Sergeant Simon Valentine
Private Richard Hunt
Captain Mark Hale
Lance Bombardier Matthew Hatton
Rifleman Daniel Wild
Private Jason George Williams
Corporal Kevin Mulligan
Lance Corporal Dale Thomas Hopkins
Private Kyle Adams
Craftsman Anthony Lombardi
Trooper Phillip Lawrence
Warrant Officer Class 2 Sean Upton
Bombardier Craig Hopson
Guardisman Christopher King
Captain Daniel Shepherd,
Corporal Joseph Etchells
Rifleman Aminiasi Toge
Corporal Jonathan Horne
Rifleman William Aldridge
Rifleman James Backhouse
Rifleman Joe Murphy
Rifleman Daniel Simpson

Private John Brackpool
Corporal Lee Scott
Rifleman Daniel Hume
Trooper Christopher Whiteside
Captain Ben Babington-Browne
Lance Corporal Dane Elson
Lance Corporal David Dennis
Private Robert Laws
Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Thorneloe MBE
Trooper Joshua Hammond
Major Sean Birchall
Lieutenant Paul Mervis from 2nd Battalion
The Rifles
Private Robert McLaren from The Black
Watch
Rifleman Cyrus Thatcher
Lance Corporal Nigel Moffett
Corporal Stephen Bolger
Lance Corporal Kieron Hill
Lance Corporal Robert Martin Richards
Sapper Jordan Rossi of 25 Field Squadron
Fusilier Petero 'Pat' Suesue
Marine Jason Mackie
Lieutenant Mark Evison
Sergeant Ben Ross
Corporal Kumar Pun
Rifleman Adrian Sheldon
Corporal Sean Binnie
Lance Sergeant Tobie Fasfous
Corporal Dean Thomas John
Corporal Graeme Stiff
Lance Corporal Christopher Harkett
Marine Michael 'Mick' Laski
Corporal Tom Gaden
Lance Corporal Paul Upton
Rifleman Jamie Gunn
Lance Corporal Stephen 'Schnoz' Kingscott
Marine Darren 'Daz' Smith
Corporal Daniel 'Danny' Nield
Acting Corporal Richard 'Robbo' Robinson
Captain Tom Sawyer
Corporal Danny Winter
Marine Travis Mackin
Serjeant Chris Reed
Private Ryan Wrathall
Seven Members of the Armed Forces

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We wish you all fair and beautiful holidays and a happy New Year



European Organisation of Military Associations

Merry
CHRISTMAS

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