



NEWS

ISSUE 26 / September 2013



Security has a social dimension

SYRIA, THE DAY AFTER!

The summer holidays are behind us and it seems that the political world resumed its activities earlier than usually. In some countries, like in Germany, this has to do with the upcoming national elections. Moreover, the European elections of May 2014, sometimes linked to national elections, like in Belgium, are already part of the internal discussions. Even if everybody tries to make clear that government and parliament will continue to work until the last day, the year preceding the elections will always be a special one. A year in which politicians are reluctant to take decisions that could harm their image and therefore calculate more than ever their decisions.

This year, the early start of the post-summer political holiday season is also a consequence of the situation in Syria. The drastic change of attention of the international community to Syria came after the chemical attack outside of Damascus on 21 August 2013. The world reacted with horror, but the international debate on how to act as a consequence of the chemical attack turned in a way we rarely witnessed before. "We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilized," US President Obama said a year ago. "That would change my calculus. That would change my equation." After the 21 August attack, media translated this as "If Syria deployed chemical weapons against its own people, it would have crossed a threshold with the White House" and literally pushed the US President into an intervention in Syria.

For a short period of time it looked as if several nations would react with military force to the chemical attack. The international debate went crescendo until the UK's Prime Minister, David Cameron, and his coalition government failed to pass a motion that

would have authorized military action against Syria. At the same time more and more governments "decided not to decide" as long as proof of the chemical attack was not given by the UN team that investigated on the attack and collected samples in Syria. For several days the international debate was very strange and in some respect even frightening. It was almost as if the debate was no longer on the chemical attack as such, but only on who used chemical substances against the Syrian population. Would the use be less bad if it did not come from the regime? Would the international community be less shocked if the attack did not come from the regime?

Once again the European governments were unable to speak with one voice. The never ending story of a Europe speaking only with the respective national voices started all over again. It looked as if the situation experienced at the time of the intervention in Libya would repeat itself. However, at the Informal Meeting of the EU Foreign Ministers in Vilnius on 7 September 2013, the Ministers agreed on a statement made by the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton. The EU Member States agreed that "it seems to indicate strong evidence that the Syrian regime is responsible for these attacks as it is the only one that possesses chemical weapons agents and means of their delivery in a sufficient quantity". Ashton stated that



Emmanuel Jacob, EUROMIL's President,
Photo: EUROMIL

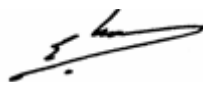
"in the face of this cynical use of chemical weapons, the international community cannot remain idle. A clear and strong response is crucial to make clear that such crimes are unacceptable and that there can be no impunity. We must prevent creating a dreadful precedent for the use of chemical weapons in Syria again, or elsewhere." The EU and its Member States intend to play a full and active part in that context but "urges the UN Security Council (UNSC) to unite in its efforts to prevent any further chemical attack". And with this justified wish

EDITORIAL

to have a decision of the UNSC, the international community risks to be back at square one. Members of the UNSC can, and probably will, use their veto power on a draft resolution on Syria. This will block or at least make the debate and decision-making on a reaction with military power towards Syria even more difficult.

At the time that we publish this EUROMIL newsletter there will probably be a new situation in Syria. Some weeks ago it was looking as if a coalition with or without a UNSC Resolution would be in action. Which nations could participate with which means was totally unclear and impossible to predict. Meanwhile the situation changed again and it seems that a solution without military means is possible. What however can be concluded from this case is that

a change in the European decision-making process on international interventions and the use of diplomatic and/or military means is needed and more than urgent. At the same time it becomes once again clear that the veto power of individual members of the UNSC must be reviewed. It is unacceptable that one or two nations can prevent the rest of the world from intervening in situations where populations are threatened all over the world.



Emmanuel Jacob,
President of EUROMIL

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL		EUROMIL ACTIVITIES	
Syria, the Day After!		1 EUROMIL Establishes Contact with Serbian Trade Unions	
		By EUROMIL	6
THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN		EUROMIL Supports AMTM	
The Albanian Ministry of Defence Signs an Agreement with AKUSH,		By EUROMIL	6
By Dr. Kujtim Cako, AKUSH, Albania	3	Joint EuroCOP and EUROMIL Statement on the Situation in Colombia	
		By EUROMIL	7
MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES		Lots of Discussions on European Defence!	
Human Rights and Members of Armed Forces in Europe,		By EUROMIL	8
By Gerard Guinan, PDFORRA, Ireland	4	Towards a Stronger Union Defence Policy	
Do we live as "Citizens in Uniform" or as caged animals?		By EUROMIL	9
By Oscar Tordesillas Duro, AUME, Spain	4	EUROMIL Calendar 2013	9
Military Personnel on the Cross of the Martyrs			
By Efthimios Gkitersos, AN.E.A.E.D., Greece	5		

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THE ALBANIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENCE SIGNS AN AGREEMENT WITH AKUSH

By DR. KUJTIM CAKO, AKUSH, ALBANIA

The Albanian Ministry of Defence signed in the beginning of September 2013 an agreement with the National Alliance of Albanian Military Associations (AKUSH) in Tirana. This organisation is a full member of EUROMIL, one of the most prestigious international organisations and forum for military personnel, which discusses and builds strategies in order to defend the rights and freedoms of servicemen and -women.

Founded in 1972, EUROMIL (European Organisation of Military Associations) is a nonprofit independent organisation. It is composed of 39 military associations from 26 European countries.

The Vice-Minister of Defence, Prof. Dr. Arta Musaraj, the General Chief of Staff of the Albanian Armed Forces, General Major Xhemal Gjünkshi, as well as other Generals, senior officers of the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff, political leaders and members of the National Alliance of Albanian Military Associations participated in the ceremony organised for the signature of the agreement.

This agreement, which has 11 articles, contains important dispositions determining, among others, the way of communicating between the Ministry of Defence, the General Staff and the Alliance. It established points of contact within the Ministry of Defence, the General Staff and the Alliance; it also stipulates the procedure for the administration when receiving requests or when problems are raised by the Alliance and establishes procedures for drafting acts and laws related to the social problems of servicemen in reserve.

General Major Xhemal Gjünkshi mentioned that this agreement



materializes the special concern of the Albanian government for the veterans, reserve and retired officers, who represent the glorious generations of the Albanian army, who served with professionalism and devotion to protect their country.

The President of the National Alliance of Albanian Military Associations, Kujtim Cako, noted that the agreement resulted from continuous negotiation between the Alliance and the Ministry of Defence. ■



Photos: AKUSH

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

HUMAN RIGHTS AND MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE

By GERARD GUINAN, PDFORRA, IRELAND

On 24 February 2010 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation CM/REC(2010)4 on human rights of members of the armed forces.

In adopting the recommendation, the Committee had regard to Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe which provides:

"In appropriate cases, the conclusions of the Committee may take the form of recommendations to the governments of members, and the Committee may request the governments of members to inform it of the action taken by them with regard to such recommendations."

The Committee, in making its recommendation, considered a broad range of legal conventions and precedents including the Parliamentary Assembly's Recommendations on "Human Rights of

members of armed forces" (2006).

The Committee recommended that governments of member states:

- Ensure that the principles set out in the appendix to the recommendation are complied with in national legislation;
- Ensure wide dissemination of the recommendation to, among others, "members of the armed forces, with a view or raising awareness of human rights";
- Examine the implementation of the recommendation two years after its adoption.

In general terms the Committee set out that members of armed forces should enjoy the protection afforded by the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, subject to the derogations contained within Article 15 of the aforementioned Convention and Article 30 of the EU Social Charter.

However, no derogations were permissible in relation to the rights to life, prohibition on torture... the principle that no punishment can be inflicted without a law and the right not to be tried or punished twice.

The appendix of the Committee was far reaching in its scope, dealt in detail with the fundamental rights as outlined above and where necessary expanded on the general principles.

The document provides a useful insight into how the rights of members of armed forces are perceived at a European level. Further, it allows for direct comparison between member states as the replies to the questionnaire, which the member states submitted following a request by the Committee in 2012, demonstrate.

The replies to the questionnaire are available online at www.coe.int ■

DO WE LIVE AS "CITIZENS IN UNIFORM" OR AS CAGED ANIMALS?

By OSCAR TORDESILLAS DURO, AUME, SPAIN

Since its creation in 2005, AUME has been battling against the Ministry of Defense and even against the government for all human rights which, supposedly, the Spanish and European citizens are entitled to benefit of.

It seems that the freedom of expression, one of the fundamental human rights, or the decision by a judge to deprive someone from its liberty, is not compatible with the concept of "Citizen in Uniform". Because in Spain, admittedly, even if it sounds quite incredible in the 21st century, soldiers continue to be deprived of their liberty without the intervention of a judicial authority, just by the signature of an officer of the MoD and through an administrative procedure.

This procedure is contrary to Articles 5 and 6 of the European Human Rights Convention and therefore, to keep within the law, government continues to make a reservation to such articles, although we should have had overcome our lack of rights of the



pre-constitutional era. This shows the lack of maturity that our democracy offers to those who are tasked to defend the constitution, the Spanish military personnel.

As a result, our delegate in Cadiz, Jose Antonio Esnaola, was detained for 24 hours; the Secretary on Women issues, Teresa Franco, was detained for 10 days; and most recently, the delegate in Murcia, Jose Salazar, was arrested and imprisoned for 33 days, just because, as an AUME representative, he supported Teresa Franco by giving a conference while she was deprived of liberty. Now they are paying the conquest of rights with an expensive price, their freedom, as the President of AUME, Jorge Bravo, experienced some months ago.

We hope that these actions, which are incompatible with the most elementary human rights, will be the starting point towards a change, and could help to awaken our politicians on how to route the modification of the Law on Military Career, currently in progress, and very important too, the New Disciplinary Regime. AUME will be present to inform and new changes in legal regulations according the respect of the human rights we should enjoy in a democracy. The freedom of speech to demand fair rights cannot be vetoed to any citizen, not even a “Citizen in Uniform”. Otherwise we stop to be

human beings and start living as caged animals in a democracy.

AUME gratefully acknowledges the support of many associations and unions of the armed forces and police corps from Spain and Europe, which shows that we are strongly united. Therefore, it is possible to get an equal status for our professional work and personal environment, if we, the Spanish and the European associations, march in the same direction, alongside with EUROMIL. ■

MILITARY PERSONNEL ON THE CROSS OF THE MARTYRS



By EFTHIMIOS GKITERSOS, AN.E.A.E.D., GREECE

We live in an era where the obvious is not obvious and the acquisition price of the daily survival is the result of hard race and antagonism.

We are living the absurd in our everyday life: Numbers everywhere, analyses on analyses, financial data and schedules, markets and memoranda, development and promises...

And people? People no longer live. Many of them, military personnel included, greatly lack even the necessary things for survival, all just try and struggle. They are struggling without receiving help from nowhere, without expecting anything from anyone anymore, with the only drive left: the fight to maintain dignity. And against the wish of some people, they continue to dream. They do not want to rip each other in a wrestle where the most resistant will ultimately survive. People want to continue living united.

Stripping the people of the acquired social rights, accompanied by state authoritarianism, is purely a work of Herostratus from our “rescuers”!

In Greece, after the last grand demonstrations of military personnel to enforce their social rights, fourteen officers and non-commissioned officers, who are members of SYSMED (an active military personnel’s union), got punished or were ordered to report to their superior because they had exercised legitimate activities in the framework of their associations’ work, associations that have been legally constituted.



In Spain, although the law recognises military personnel the right to get involved into decision-making processes and establish associations, soldiers face disciplinary actions from the military and

national authorities when exercising this right.

The recent punishments of three members of AUME, following to the imprisonment of J. Bravo, exactly emphasize this problem. “We want to have freedom of expression among the partners, the discussion does not mean abolition of military discipline, as we are being accused,” as the president of AUME, Jorge Bravo, mentioned in a statement.

The ending of the big march in Bolivar Square, in Bogota on 1 August 2013, of the Colombian military and police Veterans who gathered to defend en masse their rights to work, health, better wages and pensions, met the aggressiveness of the special police forces of Colombia (Esmad) – according to the guidelines of the government of Juan Manuel Santos.



In Italy, Portugal but also in Bulgaria, the unions of military personnel are fighting passionately for the democratization of the Armed Forces and for the claiming of their social rights.

The modernization and harmonization of the institutional framework of the Member States of the European Union and beyond, according to their constitutional charter and international laws on human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the field of guaranteeing trade union rights for military personnel, is an obligation “Sine qua non” of each individual law-abiding State. However, the social recognition of national work produced by military personnel, under extremely dangerous circumstances, as well as family’s itinerancy, must be a top priority for Member States of the European Union. ■

Photos: AN.E.A.E.D.

EUROMIL ACTIVITIES

EUROMIL ESTABLISHES CONTACT WITH SERBIAN TRADE UNIONS

By EUROMIL

On 26 August 2013, EUROMIL's President, Emmanuel Jacob, visited Belgrade (Serbia). The purpose of his visit was to meet with Mr. Goran Bursać, President of the military trade union "Air Force Technicians Union in Serbian Armed Forces" (SVTVS).

SVTVS was founded in June 2011 and has been recognized as a trade union by the Serbian Minister of Labor. Notwithstanding its name - "Air Force Technicians Union in Serbian Armed Forces" - members of the different branches and ranks of the Serbian armed forces number among SVTVS. In Serbia, there is no constitutional or legal objection against trade unions in the armed forces. The goal of SVTVS is to become a representative trade union. In order to do so, legislation requires that a trade union must represent and count at least 15 % of the armed forces employees, including both military and civilian workers, amongst their members.

SVTVS will start the application procedure for the observer status within EUROMIL. "The fact that no discussion is needed in Serbia regarding the right of association for military personnel is already a very positive starting point. In several European countries, armed forces personnel still fight for being granted this fundamental right. EUROMIL appreciates that the Serbian Government is in favor of granting this right to its soldiers", Emmanuel Jacob said,

concluding the constructive meeting in Belgrade.

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Photo: SVTVS

EUROMIL SUPPORTS AMTM

By EUROMIL

Antonio Martínez Cánevas, President of a Spanish military association "Asociación de Militares de Tropa y Marinería" (AMTM), was arrested on 30 August 2013. Mr. Cánevas is accused of not having identified himself as a military while he was defending one of its association's members and he is now imprisoned in a military disciplinary center in Ceuta for a period of one month and one day.

According to our sources, it is the fifth time that representatives of military associations are arrested this year in Spain. Following to the detention of Jorge Bravo, President of the EUROMIL Spanish member association "Asociación Unificada de Militares Españoles" (AUME) in April 2013, three other representatives of AUME were arrested, namely José Manuel Esnaola, Cádiz, Teresa Franco, Secretary of Women, and Jose Salazar, Murcia.



Brussels, 2 September 2013

STATEMENT BY EMMANUEL JACOB, PRESIDENT OF EUROMIL, IN SUPPORT OF ANTONIO MARTÍNEZ CÁNEVAS, PRESIDENT OF AMTM

The European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL) is an umbrella organisation composed of 39 military associations and trade unions from 26 countries. It is the main Europe-wide forum for cooperation among professional military associations on issues of common concern. EUROMIL strives to secure and advance the human rights, fundamental freedoms and socio-professional interests of military personnel of all ranks in Europe and promotes the concept of "Citizen in Uniform". As such, a soldier is entitled to the same rights and obligations as any other citizen. EUROMIL particularly calls for recognition of the right of servicemen and -women to form and join trade unions and independent associations and for their inclusion in a regular social dialogue by the authorities. Soldiers are highly skilled employees, who have the legitimate right to promote their social and professional interests - as do other workers.

EUROMIL was informed about the arrest of Antonio Martínez Cánevas, President

of a Spanish military association *Asociación de Militares de Tropa y Marinería* (AMTM), on 30 August 2013. Mr. Cánevas has been imprisoned in a military disciplinary center in Ceuta for a period of one month and one day. He is accused of not having identified himself as a military while he was defending one of its association's members, which is considered a serious offence.

According to our sources, it is the 5th time that representatives of military associations are arrested this year in Spain. Following to the detention of Jorge Bravo, President of the EUROMIL Spanish member association *Asociación Unificada de Militares Españoles* (AUME) in April 2013, three other representatives of AUME were arrested, namely José Manuel Esnaola, Cádiz, Teresa Franco, Secretary of Women, and Jose Salazar, Murcia.

Despite some positive developments in the recognition of servicemen and -women rights in Spain, such as the adoption, in 2011, of the Law on Rights and Duties for the Members of the Armed Forces, establishing the right of association for military personnel remains difficult.

EUROMIL regrets that Spain continues to impose undue restrictions on the right of association for military personnel and strongly condemns the current repressive measures taken against members of military associations.

Military associations are recognized in several countries across Europe as valuable partners for defence administrations. Experience has shown that the right of association has not compromised combat efficiency or military discipline. On the contrary, involving democratic military associations in a permanent social dialogue has de facto improved the moral and loyalty of troops. In times of increased operational pace, military associations and unions can be a powerful ally to raise awareness and to articulate the professional interests and concerns of military personnel. Associations can also enhance the status of the military



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profession in society. Therefore, EUROMIL calls on the Spanish Government and military leaders to immediately stop all further disciplinary and judicial measures against representatives of military associations in Spain, who do nothing else than defending the social and moral interest of soldiers. We strongly believe and are convinced that the way Spanish leaders behave is in contradiction with several international treaties and recommendations - and we recall the most recent one that was unanimously adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, namely the Recommendation 2010(4) on Human Rights of Members of the Armed Forces.

On behalf of the military personnel in Europe, EUROMIL hopes that the Government of Spain will do everything in its power to support the present request and ensure that all Spanish military personnel will be treated as "Citizens in Uniform" in the future.

Emmanuel Jacob,
President of EUROMIL



JOINT EURO COP AND EUROMIL STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN COLOMBIA

By EUROMIL

Last July, retired members of the Colombian police and armed forces marched from Baranquilla to Bogota to ask for an improvement of their salaries and benefits. This path of 1286 km was followed by a demonstration in the Columbian Capital. On this occasion, EuroCOP and EUROMIL published a joint statement on the conflict between the Government of Colombia and retired members of the armed forces and the police.



Joint Statement of EuroCOP and EUROMIL on the conflict between the Government of Colombia and retired members of the armed forces and the police

EuroCOP, the European Confederation of Police, and EUROMIL, the European Organisation of Military Associations, have been informed about the ongoing labour conflict between the Government of Colombia and retired members of the armed forces and the police. For the second time, these former servicemen and policemen started a thirty-day march to the Capital, Bogota, to request an improvement of their salaries and benefits. The march started on 1 July 2013 in the city of Barranquilla and is expected to end on 1 August 2013 in the Capital, where a demonstration will follow on the *Plaza de Bolivar*. The demonstrators ask the Government to pay its outstanding debts to the police and armed forces.

With this common statement, EuroCOP and EUROMIL ask the Colombian Government to find an agreement with their former employees. Employees who, while in active service, served their country and its citizens, putting their own health and live in danger. Governments owe respect to their servants and must treat them with respect and dignity, even when they are no longer in active service.

EuroCOP and EUROMIL also call on the European Union to investigate this case. We were informed that the Colombian Defence Minister, Juan Carlos Pinzón Bueno, visited Brussels on 24-25 June 2013 and had a meeting with the Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS), Helga Schmid. Minister Pinzón expressed interest in strengthening cooperation in the field of CSDP, including by considering the opportunity and the modalities of Colombia's participation in EU missions. Deputy Secretary General Helga Schmid said "the EU would consider assistance in the area of military penal jurisdiction as requested by the Colombian side."

Moreover, EuroCOP and EUROMIL were informed that Helga Schmid expressed EU full support to the Colombian Government in its search for a negotiated solution to Colombia's internal armed conflict. This full support can only be applauded.

"Minister Pinzón also met with the EU's Political and Security Committee, and with other senior EEAS officials, for discussions on the deepening of EU-Colombia dialogue and co-operation on areas of common interest" and therefore EuroCOP and EUROMIL are of the opinion that the European Union should urge its Colombian partner to ensure that its citizens are correctly treated and their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including in the field of trade union rights, are guaranteed.

Anna Nellberg,
President of EuroCOP

Emmanuel Jacob,
President of EUROMIL



LOTS OF DISCUSSIONS ON EUROPEAN DEFENCE!

By EUROMIL

In December 2013, defence will be on the agenda of the European Council for the first time since 2005.

A discussion on European Defence turns very often into criticism with the argument that it doesn't exist or work at all. During a radio broadcast on 7 September 2013 on BFM Business, MEP Arnaud Danjean, President of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence of the European Parliament, explained that we should relativise the situation. The European Security and Defence formally exists since fourteen years, Danjean explained. Even if there were previous discussions in the framework of the European Defence Community (EDC), the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) was launched at the Cologne European Council in June 1999.

Of course we are all of the opinion that there is not enough CSDP and that it is not efficient and surely not concrete in its actions. According to Danjean, the reasons are to be found in the keyword: "heterogeneous". European countries do not have the same interests, traditions and statutes for their soldiers. In addition, EU countries are different when we compare their alliance with NATO; some of them are NATO members while others are neutral. Looking at their national armies, we can see that some cover almost everything in this field and have a wide range of weapon systems, while others are almost deprived of their armed forces. Considering all these elements, we must admit that a common answer is very difficult.

However, the discussion on European Defence and the future of national armed forces is more often on the table than ever before. One cannot deny that the cuts in defence budgets due to the economic and financial crisis are the basic element in this debate. Already after the fall of the iron

curtain most of the European countries started restructuring their armed forces by reducing their budgets which had a direct influence on their number of soldiers and the necessary investments to keep their defence forces operational.

NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, has recently called, once again, on European countries to step up cooperation on defence. Rasmussen argued in favor of moves towards borderless EU defence market and intensified integration on military matters. There is a clear need for Europe to intensify its efforts in capability development and to invest more



Photo: EUROMIL

in security. "It is important for Europe and it is important for the transatlantic alliance because a strong Europe is also a strong Alliance" Rasmussen repeated at the recent monthly press briefing.

But also at European level this call for further collaboration is getting stronger. On 3 September 2013, MEPs of the EPP group presented a policy paper calling for a stronger Union defence policy. They called the EU leaders to commit themselves to define the EU's security interests,

prioritise its strategic objectives and link these with operational deployments. Deepening the defence cooperation will help slash procurement costs and allow the EU to react faster to international crises, the MEPs argued. Some weeks before, on 26 July 2013, the Foreign Ministers of France and Germany wrote in a statement that the EU needs to assume increased responsibility for international peace and security.

Nevertheless, several national or regional proposals on Defence Forces are currently being discussed. Spain, Portugal and Italy have jointly proposed to pool resources for defence spending as an answer to economic difficulties. Recently, the Latvian President said that the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) could one day merge their respective armed forces. However, this idea was criticized by the Estonian MoD who reacted that the current setup, with the three separated militaries cooperating and forming temporary joint units for international tasks, is optimal. But the fact that these debates are going on is the best proof that there is a real need on more and better cooperation.

Deepening the collaboration between armed forces on issues such as personnel, trainings and investments is no longer "nice to do" but becomes a "must"!

In preparation of the European Summit scheduled for December 2013, which shall involve a discussion on defence matters, this debate will be high on the agenda all over Europe as well as in NATO. It would be a missed opportunity if this summit would not lead to concrete initiatives.

EJ

TOWARDS A STRONGER UNION DEFENCE POLICY

By EUROMIL

On 3 September 2013, EUROMIL participated in the presentation, organised by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), of the position paper “Towards a stronger Union defence policy” prepared by MEPs from the EPP group working on foreign and security affairs, with the support of national MPs.

The document was drafted by Arnaud Danjean, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE), Krzysztof Lisek, SEDE Vice-Chairman and Michael Gahler, EPP SEDE-Coordinator. It is an important parliamentary contribution to the European Council in December 2013 which will deal with security and defence issues.

The paper which recommends “...the heads of state and government to seize this unique opportunity to give the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) a fresh impetus” calls, among others, for a review of national defence capabilities and the identification of the capabilities needed for the protection of EU’s interests; a better link between civilian and military capabilities and personnel in CSDP missions; the activation of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO); the setup of EU strategic civilian and military headquarters with separate chain of commands; an EU White Book on Security and Defence, defining EU’s security interests, prioritizing its strategic objectives and linking these with the operational deployments; a solid European Defence Technological and Industrial Basis (EDTIB) and a well-

functioning European Defence Equipment Market (EDEM).

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Photo: KAS



European Organisation of Military Associations

EUROMIL Calendar 2013

11-14 October 2013	NATO Parliamentary Assembly	Dubrovnik, Croatia
17 October 2013	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
18-19 October 2013	Presidium Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
20-22 October 2013	5th ICOAF	Oslo, Norway
19 November 2013	ODIHR/EUROMIL event	Madrid, Spain
26-27 November 2013	Berlin Security Conference	Berlin, Germany
12 December 2013	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium



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