



NEWS

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Security has a social dimension

THE DAY AFTER!

At the end of May, European citizens were called to go to the voting booth for the European elections. It has been said that the European Parliament (EP) elections have never been so important than in 2014. How shall we look at this now that the elections are over?

First of all, we have to make clear that at the time of writing this editorial, nothing has been decided yet and many things are still under discussion. To elect and count the results is one thing, to make sure that the Commission's and Parliament's leading positions are filled and that these institutions are ready to start working for a new five-year term is another thing.

Let's go through the election return results. Of course one should compare them with the 2009 elections in order to see the changes, but in that case it is important to remember that less seats were available than before. At the last European elections, 751 seats had to be filled in the European Parliament. In 2009, 736 Members of the European Parliament were elected and when Croatia joined the European Union in 2013, a total of 766 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) had a seat in Brussels and Strasbourg. This means that after the elections several countries have less MEPs than before. Germany, for example, went from 99 to 96 seats.

When we look at the results of the European factions, we notice that the European People's Party (EPP) is still on top of the list followed by the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), with respectively 221 and 190 seats in the EP. They are followed by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) with 59 seats, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) with 55 seats, the Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) with

52 seats and several other smaller factions. However, a reshuffle of some national parties in the European factions or the creation of a new group of extreme right wing parties had some consequences.

Without going too much into details and comparison with the results of 2009, it becomes clear that the "traditional" factions lost some of their votes and seats. Moreover, several Eurosceptic and/or anti-EU members will now enter the European Parliament. It is clear that these results should and will be discussed in depth. It is

extremely important for the functioning and future of the European Union to find an answer to this anti-European shuffle.

Meanwhile the "musical chairs" to which we referred to in the editorial of EUROMIL's News March issue has started. Will one of the nominated candidates become the President of the European Commission or will the European Council come up with another name to propose to the European Parliament? Who will become the President of the European Council in replacement of Herman Van Rompuy or the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy succeeding to Catherine Ashton? The only thing we are sure of today is that there will be, as always, a struggle to

find a consensus on the names after the veto of some countries on possible candidates. It feels like nothing changed at all!

Whatever will happen, positions will be filled and meanwhile the EP will start working. Once the members of the different committees are in place and the leading functions are filled, the real work can start. Many challenges lay ahead of us in the field of Security and Defence, such as the discussion on and the approval of a White Paper, a Strategic Concept of the European Union and



Emmanuel Jacob, EUROMIL's President,
Photo: EUROMIL

the planning and deployment of CSDP missions. It is EUROMIL's task to make sure that in this field enough attention is being paid to military personnel and social matters, such as common standards for living and working conditions of soldiers in mission, common training, the best possible equipment, social protection and medical care.

But if EUROMIL and the European Union have one thing in common, it is the perception that our people believe that we must and will find solutions to arrange their problems. This may only lead to frustrations and unanswered questions and demands. Therefore we

need to work together, hand in hand, in the benefit of the European citizens and the European soldiers!

Let's go for it together!



Emmanuel Jacob,
President of EUROMIL

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CHAIRMEN'S COLUMN

BUDGET CUTS THREATEN SAFETY OF DUTCH SOLDIERS IN MALI

By ANNE-MARIE SNELS, CHAIRMAN OF AFMP, THE NETHERLANDS

Since January 2014, the Netherlands participate in the UN mission MINUSMA in Mali. About 450 Dutch soldiers are in charge of educating the local police and gathering tactical information in northern Mali. Since the commissioning of the Dutch encampment Castor near Gao in May 2014, they suffered several rocket attacks nearby this camp.

The tents in which the Dutch soldiers are accommodated provide inadequate protection against such rocket attacks. That is why the Dutch Ministry of Defence (MoD) is currently upscaling the living conditions to containers which are resistant to possible rocket fragments. However, these containers are not available at the moment because they were sold after being used in Afghanistan. Therefore, it will take several months before new containers are manufactured and delivered at Camp Castor. Until then the situation of the Dutch soldiers continues to be unsafe.

Unfortunately, therewith the earlier prediction of the AFMP becomes reality. Over the last years, the Dutch MoD has made tremendous budget cuts which led to a severe loss of means and manpower. Currently only 0,87% of the Dutch Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is spent on the Dutch armed forces, while the NATO-minimum is set at 2%. This does not only affect the Dutch international credibility but also the working conditions of military personnel. The AFMP has warned the MoD many times against the consequences of these mindless cuts. Cutbacks can only be carried out safely when they are accompanied by a decrease of political ambitions. However, the Dutch MoD maintains the same political goals as before at the expense of the working conditions and safety of the Dutch soldiers. In the past this already led to problems in Iraq and Afghanistan and now the same issues occur in Mali.

In Mali, discussions started with the poor clothing quality, then, there were problems with the medivac helicopters and now the

safety of the housing is an issue.

The AFMP understands that security risks are involved in every mission. However, it is the responsibility of the MoD to take every precaution to minimise all risks for military personnel. The encampment should have been completed and safe before the majority of the troops arrived. We find it dreadful that soldiers now have to settle in an unsafe situation and we sincerely hope that there will be no casualties due to this matter.

In the meantime a new possible risk has occurred. American studies seem to show that the metal containing fine dust in Mali can cause various acute and chronic illnesses such as allergic reactions, asthma, pneumoconiosis, and cardiovascular diseases. The AFMP has requested an immediate investigation and at this moment samples taken in Mali are being examined by a research institute in the Netherlands. ■



Photos: AFMP and EUROMIL

POSITION OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF ROMANIA - "SOLDIERS: CITIZENS IN UNIFORM"

By ADRIAN CONSTANTIN, CHAIRMAN OF MOR, ROMANIA

The Military Order of Romania (MOR) is a private foundation and its main activity concerns the status of military personnel.

According to the values defended by MOR military status is not a distinct issue, but a component of social security. Therefore, granting rights to soldiers is a very complex issue that has to be assessed as a whole, because even during his mission

a soldier is part of society.

The status of soldiers can be reformed, according to the expectations of MOR and EUROMIL, by convincing the responsible members of the national and European parliaments to introduce proposals of legislative changes.

In order to fulfill this objective,



MOR is granting support to appropriate candidates during national and European elections, who ultimately become militants for the Order's initiatives.

MOR was involved in the recent European Parliament elections, not by only supporting, but also by granting the title of "member of honour in commander grade" to Mr. Ioan Mircea Pascu, Vice-President of the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs and of the Delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and Mr. Alexandru Athanasiu, member of the European Committee for Social Rights of the Council of Europe.

By becoming members of MOR and indirectly supporters of EUROMIL, these two persons, who hold important positions within the European Parliament and the Council of Europe will be more than lobby-based relations.

As a conclusion, the main focus of MOR is the right to social security, from which military status is a component.

MOR's values include the promotion and care of national values.

As a core value of the Order, national wellness is based on academic wisdom.

MOR proposes by daily actions that Romanian academics disseminate ideas and opinions via culture and education and government takes social and political actions.

For this purpose, the Council of Commanders of the Order exists and is composed of members of honour who are Presidents of the most important academies, the Romanian Representative to the European Council – the European Committee for Social Rights, the National bank Governor, the President of the Court of Auditors, ex-presidents of Romania after 1989, the director of Center of Social Research of Romania Academy, and others.



Photo: MOR

These persons are not only communicating about the visions of MOR regarding the rights of soldiers, but also regarding other problems of social interest, where soldiers are considered as "Citizens in Uniform".

My believe is that no EUROMIL member association including MOR, represents all military personnel in the security system of its respective country).

By close and permanent contacts with many military associations, MOR is inspiring them through its militants, who share the spirit, principles and philosophy of EUROMIL.

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

THE DISCIPLINARY DECEIT IN THE SPANISH ARMED FORCES

By **MARIANO CASADO, AUME, SPAIN**

Without any doubt, the new law on disciplinary regime of the armed forces that is currently under review in the defense committee of the Spanish parliament is going to lead to more problems than it has been pretending to solve. Yet, it is still too early to make a comprehensive analysis of the bill as it does not seem to have a positive outcome, neither from a point of view of its effectiveness nor from the side of the fundamental rights and civil liberties of Spanish military personnel.

A crucial issue is the political decision, driven by the two largest groups, to keep

the arrest as a punishment of reference in all types of offences, namely minor, serious and very serious. This decision indicates that some positions are still anchored in the past, driven by those who have not yet "metabolised" that the exercise of command, discipline, hierarchy, subordination and unity, are instrumental values, which have to evolve as society evolves and cannot be defined in the way it was made in the past and in relation to non-professional armed forces.

Apparently, and according to what the compromise amendments supported by

the majority of the parliamentary groups reflect, the maintenance of detention in case of minor faults is based on the agreement of limiting its use in two ways. Firstly, by linking its imposition to acts or omissions that would be in breach of the legal discipline, i.e. in case of non-compliance with the orders of service. Secondly, by clarifying a motivation, as some called for in previous works. The problem is that, in the end, neither of these two limits seems to have been respected. Concepts, such as "hierarchy", "subordination", "unity", "effectiveness of the service", were added



on to the “legal discipline”, which is not defined. These notions are reintroduced surreptitiously to include the failure to meet the essential rules of behavior of the military among the reasons that justify the use of detention for serving a sentence for misconduct of minor character. In other words, detention may be imposed on all kinds of minor offences. The margin that the law in each case is trying to protect or interpret has been breached.-

This denotes, in addition to a very poor legislative process, a genuine fraud. The justification for the amendments is to limit the imposition of arrests, to limit their use, so that only assumptions of faults affecting

the discipline in his concept of compliance with an order of service and clearer motivation might be sanctioned. However, the text of paragraph 3 of article 22 of the bill stipulates “The sanction of detention foreseen for minor offences will be possibly imposed when the essential discipline or rules that define the behaviour of the members of the armed forces are affected.” Therefore it “goes through other avenues”, which might only satisfy those that have not yet embraced the idea that we are “Citizens in Uniform”, integrated in professional armed forces.

The same occurs with the “clearer motivation”, that is linked to the obvious

fact the decision to make use of the detention in relation to a minor offence, one has to be motivated. ■



Photos: AUME

GREEK ACTIVE MILITARY ASSOCIATIONS ARE GETTING STRONGER

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

On 6 April 2014, the *Pan-Hellenic Federation of Armed Forces Unions (P.F.A.F.U.)* held its 1st National Conference. The event was attended and welcomed by delegations of political parties, representatives of local and regional governments, Unions of Retired Officers, NCOs, and many active and retired colleagues.

P.F.A.F.U. is a legally registered federation of associations, in accordance with the Decision No. 453/2013 of the district court of Athens. Until now it is composed of 10 Unions of active military personnel.

The Congress elected the first Board of Directors, which consists of 15 members and 8 alternates. Its President is Lt. Col. Anestis Tsoukarakis. 5 persons were elected to form the Executive Secretariat, while the Auditing Commission has been formed by 3 permanent members and 3 alternates.

In his speech, among others, the President of P.F.A.F.U. gave a historical overview of the evolution of the Federation since its creation in 2004.

He said the establishment of military associative activities is a Constitutional right. It complies with the European Social Charter, the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The *Areios Pagos*, the supreme civil and criminal court of Greece, adopted the Decision No. 3/2012 which gave the green light for military corporative activities in Greece.

Among the statutory functions of

the Federation are “study, protection, improvement and promotion of institutional, economic, social, insurance and general interests and rights of the Greek military personnel, and if and to the extent provided by law, the participation of representatives of the Federation to the recommendation councils and committees in the Armed Forces, (...) Among the means to achieve the above goals are highlighted the negotiation and responsibility for solving the problems of the members of each jurisdiction, the process and submission of proposals to the physical hierarchical and political leadership of the armed forces, political parties, social and other bodies on matters relating to the interests of their members, setting up advisory committees for collaborative editing”, etc.

Then he stressed that “to achieve the creation of P.F.A.F.U. a huge amount of will, perseverance, patience and faith were needed. But participation, the perception of the public opinion, and continuous effort were present as well. These values existed and we still believe in them today. With the creation of P.F.A.F.U., the situation in the country, including for military personnel should not be feared. Earnings just have to be gained and nothing else. In time, we will prove it in practice and by the legitimate actions of our association, as we did until now.”

The next day, the coordinator of the event, journalist P. Karvounopoulos, wrote in the “On Alert” website that “Military personnel all over Europe have, for many years, operated successfully and without

any impact on the military discipline and efficiency of their troops while having established military associations, which exclusively deal with labour issues. In Greece, we still exorcise it and hide our heads in the sand. Logic cannot explain why the authorities still believe that military activation and organisations can be stopped by prohibition and fright. Especially after the storm of the crisis that swept everything in the armed forces out.”

In a brief address to the Congress, President of AN.E.A.E.D., V. Farkonas, stressed the need for ongoing and productive collaboration between the two associations on an autonomous, equal, sincere and honest basis.

Closing the speech, P.F.A.F.U. President, Mr. Tsoukarakis, said: “We have now a strong voice and we will discuss, in Greece and abroad, all that deprived us for so many years. We will fight these with strength, intensity and in the tone of finality.” ■

For further information on P.F.A.F.U., please visit www.poes.gr



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

EUROMIL HOLD ITS 109TH PRESIDIUM MEETING IN LISBON

By EUROMIL

The 109th Presidium Meeting of EUROMIL took place on 24-25 April 2014 in Lisbon. 80 delegates from 20 countries gathered for this spring session of EUROMIL's bi-annual assembly, which coincided with the 40th anniversary of the "Portuguese Revolution of 25 April", also known as the "Carnation Revolution".



a speech. He recalled that the MFA (*Movimento das Forças Armadas* – Movement of the Armed Forces) brought democracy to the Portuguese people 40 years ago by putting an end to dictatorship and to 13 years of colonial war. He reflected on the notion of "military condition", discussing values, ethics, interests and profits, and called for a real dialogue between the citizens and the political and military leaderships.



Representatives of the three EUROMIL Portuguese member associations that hosted the meeting, namely ANS, AOFA and AP, welcomed the international presence of the Presidium as a demonstration of solidarity with the Portuguese people and military personnel in particular. Antonio Mota, Secretary General of AOFA, underlined that armed forces personnel are, by oath, the guarantors of the laws and Constitution of the Portuguese Republic and, subsequently, of justice and democracy. Antonio Lima Coelho, President of ANS, added: "We have the right to participate. We have the right to be listened to. We have the right to be the voice of our members. (...) We want to fulfill the principles and the values that those men defended 40 years ago [and that are] written in our Constitution. (...) Let's defend democracy". The welcoming ceremony was concluded with a presentation on Portugal by AP and the presence of a choir, which sang *Grandola Vila Morena*, associated with the Carnation Revolution.

The President of EUROMIL, Emmanuel Jacob, opened the meeting by welcoming delegates in Lisbon and recalling the particular situation Portuguese military personnel faced several years ago. Thanks to, among others, the support of EUROMIL, this situation improved. Nevertheless, despite some important breakthroughs, Portuguese military personnel, as well as colleagues from other European countries, continue to face difficulties linked to decreasing budget and troops in the armed forces. European member states should therefore strengthen military cooperation and further develop the CSDP in cooperation with NATO. Besides, they should certainly not exclude the "human factor" from their discussion on defence! Finally, a minute of silence was observed to honor colleagues who lost their lives, including Valerian Nesterov (ITUS, Russia).

António Joaquim de Almeida de Moura, a Portuguese Retired Navy Captain who participated in the revolution in 1974, delivered



Besides internal affairs, the Presidium discussed the “Implementation of the Working Time Directive in the armed forces” in the framework of a Workshop. Emmanuel Jacob (President, EUROMIL) presented the Working Time Directive (WTD), including its purpose, scope, rulings of the European Court of Justice, and its current revision. The particular situation of military personnel was highlighted, as well as the official position of EUROMIL on the matter published on 3 June 2010 (available on the EUROMIL Website).

believe should be taken up by EUROMIL when following-up on the Council of Europe’s “Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on human rights of members of the armed forces”. These includes the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association, the right to freedom of expression, the right to a fair trial, the right to dignity, health protection and security at work, as well as training on human rights and international humanitarian law.

The Presidium concluded its meeting on Friday noon.



Augusto Coelho Praça (CGTP-IN), presented the situation in Portugal, where the WTD has not been properly transposed in the public sector and where armed forces are simply excluded from any working time regulation.

Silke Flemming (DBwV) presented the situation for military personnel in Germany, which was recently conferred in a report from KPMG. There is currently no specific implementation of the WTD or national regulation on working time for military personnel in Germany, but this is about to change. The Federal Administrative Court ruled in December 2011 that the WTD is applicable to military personnel. The KPMG report adds that military personnel cannot be generally excluded from the scope of application of the Directive and the WTD is directly applicable for military personnel because it was not implemented in national law. (For more information, please contact EUROMIL or DBwV).



Following to a presentation on the “25 April Revolution”, Presidium Members joined Portuguese military associations in the streets of Lisbon as a symbol of solidarity towards their Portuguese colleagues.

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Finally, Mikael Kenttälä (SAMO) explained the Presidium Members the Swedish model of implementation of the WTD for military personnel, a combination between military service and respect of human beings. (For further details, please contact SAMO).

Presidium Members also had the opportunity to meet among regional groups (the Charter of EUROMIL foresees the possibility of establishing regional partnerships within EUROMIL). Among others, the regional groups identified topics and priorities that they

Photos: EUROMIL

The 110th Presidium Meeting will take place on 17-18 October 2014 in Rome, Italy.

7TH FRP MEETING IN VIENNA

By EUROMIL

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) held its 7th annual Fundamental Rights Platform (FRP) meeting on 10-11 April 2014 in Vienna. The focus of this year's meeting was "Future fundamental rights priorities in the area of freedom, security and justice - The contribution of civil society".

Around 200 representatives from civil society organisations across Europe gathered together "to discuss what and how civil society could contribute to making fundamental rights a reality for everyone". Read the Conference Summary at fra.europa.eu.

For the third consecutive year, EUROMIL, represented by its Policy Manager C. Henrion, participated in the meeting to raise the voice of European "Citizens in Uniform".

During the whole event, participants were invited to actively contribute to the discussion. Their input and proposals will shape the outcome of the meeting, which will be recorded in a report and transmitted to the Council of the EU in the weeks to come.

In her welcoming speech, Maija Sakslin, Chairperson of the FRA's Management Board, emphasised the importance of civil society contribution in times of different crisis. "These range from dealing with the after effects of the economic crisis to the rise of extremism. Such crises pose a serious challenge to fundamental rights at a time when indeed they are most needed. That's why the work of civil society and meeting here today is so valuable", she said.



In his keynote speech, Morten Kjaerum, FRA's Director, highlighted the importance of this year's meeting to shape the future for fundamental rights. "We are in a stage right now in Europe where there is a changing of the guard. I am, of course, referring to next month's elections at the European Parliament, followed in the autumn by a new European Commission. On top of that we will also see a new set of strategic priorities in the Justice and Home Affairs area, an area which is a concern in one way or another to all of us. And all this happens hopefully against the backdrop of the preparations for the EU's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights", he noted. "So, is this a time for despair or hope? For me, it is a lot of both. In any case, it is a call for action – for all of us. And it is again proof that it is crucial that everyone across the human rights landscape acts together in synergy and complementarity to achieve our common goal: namely a life of dignity for everyone in the EU," he added. M. Kjaerum also suggested ideas on how to better safeguard fundamental rights before concluding with an old African proverb saying "If you want to go fast, go alone - If you want to go far, go together".



Photos: FRA 2014

The speeches were followed by a presentation from Max Schrems, an Austrian PhD student and founder of the data protection NGO "Europe vs. Facebook, who presented his views regarding the contribution of civil society to fundamental rights. Then a panel, composed of Kosmas Boskovits, Chair of the Greek Presidency of the Council of the EU Working Party on Fundamental Rights, Citizens Rights and Free Movement of Persons (FREMP), Rosemary Byrne, Associate Professor of International and Human Rights Law, Trinity College Dublin and Chairperson of the FRA Scientific Committee, Natacha Kazatchkine, Senior Executive Officer, Amnesty International and Salla Saastamoinen, Director for Equality at the European Commission, discussed key issues in the area of freedom, security and justice in the EU and cooperation between different actors working in the field of human rights.

In the afternoon of the first day, participants in 12 working groups discussed how civil society could contribute to making fundamental rights a reality in the area of freedom, security and justice in the EU. Each group addressed a specific question by discussing challenges, successes and next steps.

On the second day, civil society organisations hosted 21 sessions of "The floor is yours", workshops to exchange ideas and promising practices on how civil society is or should be involved in making fundamental rights a reality.

A new Advisory Panel was elected for the next two years to support FRA's Director in the organisation and coordination of the FRP.

The meeting was closed by the FRA Director, who evoked some elements that particularly emerged from the discussions, such as the issue of implementation, i.e. turning the substance of laws into reality, the problem of funding for civil society organisations and the question of cooperation between different human rights players. "This meeting has once again proven to me that civil society is a key actor of change and we will continue to support you as much as we can. So persistence, ambition as well as patience in this big co-creation which can hopefully lead to some innovative practices of pushing us all forward to a higher level of human rights protection", he concluded.

For further information, please visit the FRP event pages on the website of the FRA.

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NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY IN VILNIUS

By EUROMIL

The opening session

The 2014 spring session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (PA) took place in Vilnius (Lithuania) from 30 May to 1 June 2014.

The NATO PA brought over than 300 parliamentarians from the 28 NATO member countries together, as well as delegates from partner countries and observers to discuss reports, recommendations and declarations. EUROMIL was one of the few observers present at the meeting.

The plenary sitting took place on Friday, 30 May 2014. The assembly was addressed by the President of the NATO PA, Hugh Bayley, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Algirdas Butkevicius, spokesperson of the Seimas of Lithuania, Loreta Grauzinienė, Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, Andriy Parubiy, and NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

The assembly's President, Hugh Bayley, opened the session stating that *"we meet at a critical time"* referring to the Russian intervention in Ukraine. He said that for twenty-five years, NATO has hold out the hand of friendship to Russia in the belief that a strategic partnership with Russia could yield enormous benefits for their citizens and ours. The potential benefits of a NATO-Russia partnership by burying the legacy of the Cold War, and the sterile concept of a zero-sum game between NATO and Russia have been put beyond our reach, for now at least, by Russia's decision to violate the national sovereignty of its neighbour, Ukraine. *"Our trust in partnership has been betrayed"* Hugh Bayley added.

He informed the participants that the assembly standing committee decided, with a heavy heart, at its meeting in Latvia, in April, to withdraw the Russian parliament's associate membership of the Assembly. *"Our Assembly's relationship with the two Houses of the Russian parliament was pushed to abreaking point not by the*

Russian government's actions but by the parliament's decisions, by huge majorities in both Houses, to give President Putin authority to use military force in Ukraine. We cannot continue business as usual with Parliamentarians from a NATO partner country, Russia, when they vote to use military force against another NATO partner, Ukraine."

In his turn, NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, said that since the end of the Cold War, NATO has worked hard to establish a genuine security partnership with Russia. *"But in recent months"* Rasmussen continued, *"Russia has shown it is ready to redraw borders. By force if necessary. It is ready to recreate dividing lines in Europe. And it is ready to destabilize sovereign nations in pursuit of*



Photo: NATO PA

its geopolitical goals."

Rasmussen made it clear that this crisis has shown that defence and defence spending matters! Since 2008, Russian's defence spending has grown by 10 % in real terms per year, which means a total increase of well over 50 %. Over the same period, European allies defence spending has been cut by almost 10 % in real terms. *"To keep our defence strong, we need to start reversing this trend. We need to spend more on defence. And we need to spend better on defence"* Rasmussen repeated his message. He added, however, that we do not only have to address the quantity but also the quality of our defence spending. *"This is not just about what we invest, but also about how we invest."*



Last but not least, Rasmussen focused in his last speech before the Parliamentary Assembly on the importance of the September Wales Summit. This Summit will, Rasmussen said, be a unique opportunity to reaffirm the link between the two continents. In this field he referred to the "Declaration on Transatlantic Relations" that was discussed and adopted by the NATO PA at the Vilnius meeting, which he considers a great contribution towards NATO's declaration on Transatlantic Relations for the Wales Summit.

Declarations

During the Plenary Sitting, three declarations were adopted.

First on the agenda was the "Declaration on NATO enlargement". With this declaration, the assembly recalls that the year 2014 marks the 15th anniversary of NATO membership for the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, the 10th anniversary for Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia,

Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and the 5th anniversary for Albania and Croatia. Therefore, the assembly urges the governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic alliance to reaffirm their strong political commitment to the "open door policy" and the Euro Atlantic perspective for the countries aspiring to NATO membership (Georgia, Montenegro, FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Looking at the recent military actions against Ukraine by the forces of the Russian Federation, a "Declaration on Supporting Ukraine" needed to be discussed and adopted. The declaration did not only address governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic alliance, the European Union, and the newly elected President, government and

Parliament of Ukraine, but also the Russian Federation. The assembly calls among others the Russians to immediately end its unacceptable interference in Ukraine's domestic affairs and to engage in a direct and genuine dialogue with the newly elected President and government of Ukraine to find a peaceful solution to the conflict and allow Crimea to return under Ukraine's control and jurisdiction.

As already referred to by NATO Secretary General, a "Declaration on Transatlantic Relations" was adopted. The assembly declared that "*the ultimate expression of the transatlantic bond is the steadfast commitment to collective defence under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. The transatlantic bond, however, predates and transcends NATO. It is rooted in Europe and North America's*

historic alliance for a Europe free and at peace, and in our shared commitment to promoting an international order which guarantees the freedom, inalienable rights and economic opportunity of all people. Building on these two fundamental pillars, Europe and North America must redefine a modernised and strengthened transatlantic partnership, which will continue to serve as the fundamental bedrock of NATO for the future. Now is the time to define our common future." With this Declaration focusing on eleven elements, the Assembly wants to share their vision in preparation of the September Wales Summit.

The committee meetings

On Saturday and Sunday, the members of the assembly met in five committees: "Political, Defence and Security", "Science and Technology", "Civil Dimension of

Security" and "Economics and Security". Each committee discussed its draft reports and resolutions and was addressed by prominent speakers from government, academia, NGOs or NATO. As usual, EUROMIL's President, Emmanuel Jacob, participated as an observer at the "Political and Defence and Security Committee".

During the spring session, the members of the committees discussed the draft reports. The rapporteurs took their comments and opinions into consideration before submitting the final drafts. EUROMIL will come back on these reports after their adoption at the NATO PA's annual session, which will take place in the Hague (the Netherlands) in November 2014.

More information on the NATO PA as well as the draft reports and declarations can be found online at: www.nato-pa.int EJ

2ND 2014 EUROMIL TRAINING SESSION

By EUROMIL

Participants in the 2014 - 2015 EUROMIL Training Session for "young and weaker associations" from Central/Eastern Europe met for the second time in Brussels on 6-7 June 2014.

The programme of this two-day in-house training focused on strategic planning and lobbying. On Friday afternoon, I. Costantini, Education Officer at the *European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)*, provided the participants with some principles and tools they could use back home to conduct analyses and set up their respective associations' strategy for the next years. The outcome of these evaluations will also be used to determine their additional needs in education. On Saturday morning, R. Macrae, *Gplus Europe*, taught the group on national lobbying principles with the aim of enabling participants to engage constructively with national authorities, build support with stakeholders and implement their national lobbying strategies. The President, Vice-President and Treasurer of EUROMIL, namely E. Jacob, F. Vinther and T. de Zeeuw were present to assist the group.

The 2014 - 2015 Training Session aims at building strong military associations at national level and transforming them into trade unions - at least on the organisational level in case of a legal issue. The target group is composed of delegates from seven



Photo: EUROMIL

EUROMIL member associations, namely AKUSH (Albania), HOSZ (Hungary), KTGC (Lithuania), LSA (Latvia), SOB (FYROM), SVS (Slovenia) and ZV-SR (Slovakia). The next meeting is foreseen on 7-8 November 2014. CH

CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH ECOSOC

By EUROMIL

Last year, EUROMIL submitted an application for Consultative Status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). On 14 May 2014, the organisation was formally informed that the ECOSOC, at its Coordination and Management Session of April 2014, adopted the recommendation of the Committee on NGOs to grant EUROMIL Special consultative status.

Around 3,900 NGOs presently enjoy consultative status with

ECOSOC, which provides them access not only to the Economic and Social Council, but also to its many subsidiary bodies, the various human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, ad-hoc processes on small arms, as well as special events organized by the President of the General Assembly. There are three types of consultative status: General, Special and Roster. Most new accreditations are in the Special category. (CSONet.org) CH

EUROMIL & ODIHR ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL

By EUROMIL

A report of the roundtable meeting on “The Role of Military Associations in Protecting Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel in Southern Europe”, organised by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and EUROMIL on 19 November 2013 in Madrid, is published on the OSCE website.

“A number of recommendations came out of the meeting:

A. States should allow all members of the armed forces to join a professional association representing their interests.

B. Any restrictions on freedom of association should be: prescribed by law, necessary in democratic society, proportionate, and non-discriminatory.

C. Restrictions that apply to the exercise of the right to freedom of association should be regularly reviewed and lifted if there

is no longer a valid justification for their application.

D. Military associations should be consulted by the political and military leadership on issues concerning the conditions of service for members of the armed forces and be engaged in a regulated social dialogue with the authorities.

E. No disciplinary action should be taken against members of the armed forces in connection with their participation in activities of lawfully established military associations.”

To read the full report, please visit www.osce.org/odihr/117800

This year, EUROMIL and ODIHR will organise a meeting on “The Role of Military Associations in Protecting Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel in Central and Eastern Europe” on 10 September 2014 in

Budapest.

The meeting aims to provide a platform for sharing experiences and views regarding the realisation of the right to association and related rights for armed forces personnel in Central and Eastern Europe. Representatives from national authorities and members of military associations from selected countries will take part in the meeting. (Participation is by invitation only). *CH*



Photo: EUROMIL



European Organisation of Military Associations

EUROMIL Calendar 2014

9 September 2014	Board Meeting	Budapest, Hungary
10 September 2014	ODIHR/EUROMIL event	Budapest, Hungary
16 October 2014	Board Meeting	Rome, Italy
17-18 October 2014	Presidium Meeting	Rome, Italy
26-28 October 2014	6th ICOAF	Geneva, Switzerland
7-8 November 2014	Training Session	Brussels, Belgium
21-24 November 2014	NATO PA	The Hague, the Netherlands
1 December 2014	Board Meeting	Berlin, Germany
2-3 December 2014	Berlin Security Conference	Berlin, Germany



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