



NEWS

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Security has a social dimension

EUROMIL PASSED THE MARK OF 40 MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

The EUROMIL family is growing rapidly. At the last Presidium in October 2011 EUROMIL passed the mark of 40 member associations, now counting 42 in 27 countries, thus being stronger than ever when entering 2012, the year of its 40-year anniversary celebration. *AKUSH*, representing soldiers in Albania, became a full member (see article in this issue) after only one year of observer status, and *SVS*, a tremendously dynamic new Slovenian military trade union, will convey the concerns of Slovenian soldiers to the European level (see article written by its President, Gvido Novak). Furthermore, a Lithuanian military association, the "Soldiers Rights Defence Center" (*KTGC*), joined EUROMIL (see also the article on the 104th Presidium Meeting in this issue).

In Spain, as the delegates at the Presidium learnt, a breakthrough was finally achieved. The new organic law on rights and duties allows military associations to nominate representatives to the Council of Personnel at the MOD, thus opening the way for *AUME* and *AMARTE* to discuss the military personnel's main concerns at the highest level. Moreover, an "Observatory for the military life" attached to the Spanish Parliament was created. This progress, a huge step forward, was significantly facilitated by coordinated and efficient lobbying both at national and European level. How often EUROMIL contacted MPs and MEPs, including those attending the NATO PA, in the past years? Yet the situation in this respect remains bleak in a whole variety of European countries, a fact which was highlighted on the occasion of a Public Hearing – initiated by EUROMIL – in the SEDE Committee of the European Parliament on 29 November 2011. Confronting best practices in Europe (Vice-President B. Gertz, DBwV) with worst cases, this Public Hearing in Brussels on "The Right of Association within the EU Armed Forces" shed light on an unbearable situation – voiced, in particular by Emilio Ammiraglia, President of *ASSODIPRO*, in a fervent speech – although, a couple of weeks later, good news spread like wildfire through the European military community: Vincenzo Bonaccorso finally acquitted before the Italian Court Martial in Verona! (see details in the Chairman's column), – another success due to national and international lobby work. At the same time, soldiers throughout Europe express their discontent in public

protests, so for instance in Slovenia and Portugal as you can read in the corresponding articles.

The history of EUROMIL's Dutch member association, as outlined by K. Stauthamer in this issue, tracing 100 years of military unionism, demonstrates that not everything was always "paradise" in the Netherlands but, as experience shows, only strong and well-connected military associations are able to develop a solid partnership with the military authorities.

At the international level, EUROMIL contributed, inter alia, actively to the Panel "Protection of the soldier" at the 10th Congress on European Security and Defence (aka Berlin Security Conference)

on 8-9 November emphasizing the social dimension when it comes to protection (see report in this issue). CSDP as well as multinationality were also high on the agenda in Berlin. The concept of seeking savings through Pooling & Sharing should be, however, more than a mere buzzword at international conferences and in "Brussels, the Gentle Monster" (H. M. Enzensberger). As the Lisek Report (see EUROMIL's website) points out and MEP K. Lisek concludes, it is all about optimising defence expenditures: "We must identify as quickly as possible the most promising and strategic projects, i.e.

logistic support, medical assistance, strategic transport, maritime supervision, intelligence protection against the use of biological and chemical arms. The idea of pooling and sharing of functions and resources is a must today. It will help us to reduce our costs in a constructive way without harming our security." Why not waking up two "sleeping beauties", PESCO and SAFE, in this context and finally stop the "culture of demilitarisation" in Europe (Robert Gates on 23 February 2010)? Vivat, crescat, floreat our EUROMIL family in 2012 and in aeternum!



EUROMIL
Secretary General
Gerhard Ahlbrecht

Gerhard Ahlbrecht

EDITORIAL

EUROMIL passed the mark of 40 member associations 1

THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Vincenzo Bonaccorso is finally acquitted
By Vincenzo Bonaccorso, Chairman of PASTRENGO, Italy 3

AKUSH celebrates becoming EUROMIL full member
By Dr. Kujtim Çako, President of AKUSH, Albania 4

Public protest of the Syndicate of Soldiers of Slovenia
By Gvido Novak, President of SVS, Slovenia 5

Portuguese military associations support soldier's public demonstration in Lisbon
By Manuel Cracel, President of AOFA, Portugal 6

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

Largest military demonstration ever in Portugal
By Paulo Contreiras, ANS, Portugal 7

100 years of military unionism in the Netherlands (part one)
By Koos Stauthamer, AFMP/FNV and Jerry Hart, Global Security Risk Analyst and a former lecturer at the University of Leicester's Scarman Centre, the Netherlands 8, 9

The Geopolitics of Energy, Data and Forecasts in a Period of Destabilization of the East Mediterranean Political Subsystem
By Theodoros Efthimiou, CAROA, Cyprus 10

Forum Mediterranean Military Association (FMMA)
By Panos Mertikas, AN.E.A.E.D., Greece 11

EUROMIL ACTIVITIES

Public Hearing on the Right of Association within the EU Armed Forces
By EUROMIL 12

The 104th EUROMIL Presidium Meeting
By EUROMIL 13, 14

The 10th Congress on European Security and Defence in Berlin
By EUROMIL 15, 16

EUROMIL welcomes students from LMU Munich
By EUROMIL 16

GUEST COLUMN

Use of privately owned vehicles
By Frank Burkhardt, Eurocorps 17

EUROMIL Calendar 2012 17

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THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

VINCENZO BONACCORSO IS FINALLY ACQUITTED

BY VINCENZO BONACCORSO, CHAIRMAN OF PASTRENGO, ITALY

Last year, exactly on 2 December 2010, military and Carabinieri members of the "Association of Carabinieri in Service Pastrengo", a EUROMIL observer, supported by policemen and –women, demonstrated in Rome, for their fundamental rights and freedoms, in front of the Ministry of Defence and the Headquarters of the Carabinieri's Corps (for more information on this public demonstration, please read the EUROMIL News Issue 16, March 2011, page 9).

On that occasion, the Chief Inspector Vincenzo Bonaccorso, Chairman of Pastrengo, wrote a letter to his Commander in Chief, General Leonardo Gallitelli asking for the rights of Carabinieri to form and join military professional associations or trade unions, the protection and enforcement of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Italian armed forces personnel, and finally underlining the problem of suicide, highly reported as far as the institution of Carabinieri's Corps is concerned (50 since the beginning of 2010). Italy remains the European country with the highest rate of suicide of military personnel in the whole Europe.

Due to the fact that in Italy a crime cannot only be pursued by the competent Civil Courts, but also by the Court Martial, the high hierarchy of the Carabinieri Corps decided to bring Vincenzo Bonaccorso, Chairman of Pastrengo, to trial for "seditious activity" (art. 182 of the code of criminal military procedure) and "insubordination against his Commander in Chief" (art. 189 of the code of criminal military procedure) in front of the Criminal Court Martial of Verona. In this way the Chief Inspector Vincenzo Bonaccorso, was exposed to the risk of spending 10 years in a military jail, only for having organised a public demonstration attended by military and police personnel, as well having sent a letter to his General.

IL MARESCIALLO VINCENZO BONACCORSO, ACCUSATO DI "ATTIVITÀ SEDIZIOSA AGGRAVATE E INSUBORDINAZIONE CON INGIURIA AGGRAVATA", È STATO ASSOLTO DAL TRIBUNALE MILITARE DI VERONA.

He was confronted to justice on 1 December 2011 in Verona in a close court. At the same time, in front of the Court Martial, a peaceful demonstration of Carabinieri staff and policemen took place. During the event, a banner having the caption that the Carabinieri staff wants a trade union was raised. There were also a lot of journalists and a local television reporter present.

The magistrate in charge of preliminary investigations, Anna Marconcini, after one hour discussion, decided that the activity of Pastrengo Chairman was legal because he just fought against the Italian injustice, manifesting itself against the denial of the right for the armed forces personnel to form and join military professional associations. The Carabinieri staff has the right to organise a public demonstration if they want and the letter written to the Commander in Chief, General Leonardo Gallitelli, cannot be considered as



With the advocate Giorgio Carta,
photo: Vincenzo Bonaccorso

insubordination, but only as an effort to open a dialogue with the high hierarchy of the Carabinieri Corps. Vincenzo Bonaccorso won his case and he can continue to promote human rights and to fight for finally obtaining the right to join a trade union as Carabiniere.

AKUSH CELEBRATES BECOMING EUROMIL FULL MEMBER

By DR. KUJTIM ÇAKO, PRESIDENT OF AKUSH, ALBANIA



On 18 of November 2011, the General Chief of Staff, Major General Xhemal Gjunkshi, took part in the ceremony organised by the National Alliance of Albanian Military Associations (AKUSH), on the occasion of its accession to EUROMIL as a full member.

Dr. Kujtim Çako, President of AKUSH, delivered a speech, in which he thanked MajGen Gjunkshi for his presence and presented his association structure and functions.

He emphasised the fact, that AKUSH became a full member of EUROMIL, the only organisation promoting the fundamental rights and fundamental freedoms of active and retired military personnel, their families and dependents. Additionally, Albania was described as a country defending the rights of military personnel. AKUSH was defined as a national, legal, democratic, pluralistic, non-governmental, non-political and non-profit organisation, which noble mission is to unite all military categories, namely reservists, early pensioners, elderly pensioners, veterans and active military personnel, as well as to make their voice heard in order to protect the social and professional interests of military personnel.

After that, MajGen Gjunkshi greeted the ceremony's participants and thanked AKUSH chair and all its members for their invitation, at the same time wishing them successes in defending the rights and freedoms of former military personnel. He explained that as the General Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania he accepted with pleasure their invitation to greet them in this simple ceremony regarding the form, but thoughtful as regards its content, not only for the association's members, but for all the active personnel and generations of Albanian servicemen. He stated that AKUSH could be proud of having achieved one of its very important objectives, becoming a full member of one of the most prestigious

forums, where the strategy of protecting the freedom and the rights of military personnel is discussed and developed. He said he was aware that achieving this goal was not simple. On the contrary, it was made possible thanks to the work of AKUSH, its seriousness and continuous commitment. However, he noted that becoming a EUROMIL member is half



**General Chief of Staff,
Major General Xhemal
Gjunkshi,
photos: AKUSH**

of AKUSH's job. The other half is to be active in promoting the rights and freedoms of military personnel within national institutions as well as in complying with EUROMIL framework. Finally, he declared that he guarantees the leaders of AKUSH and all the military personnel, as well as all participants of the event that the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff will continue to support the Albanian Military personnel in fulfilling the fundamental rights and freedoms that are sanctioned by law.



**Dr. Kujtim Çako, President of AKUSH,
photo: AKUSH**

PUBLIC PROTEST OF THE SYNDICATE OF SOLDIERS OF SLOVENIA

BY GVIDO NOVAK, PRESIDENT OF SVS, SLOVENIA

On 17 November, the Syndicate of Soldiers of Slovenia organised a public protest in Ljubljana, in front of the Ministry of Defence. During the protest rally, SVS together with the Confederation of New Syndicates of Slovenia-Independence (KNSS), supported by the European Organisation of Military Associations, EUROMIL, presented the following demands to the Minister of Defence, Dr. Ljubica Jelušič:

1. Treating the members of the Slovenian armed forces as citizens of the Republic of Slovenia and as Europeans;
2. Controlling the legality and restoration of the internal legislation and individual acts which are given to the members of SVS, as well as guarding the internal legislation for all Slovenian armed forces members;
3. Interrupting social silence and improving communication between the Ministry of Defence, the representatives of the Slovenian armed forces' authorities and the SVS and KNSS;
4. Resolving a collective contract for the members of the Slovenian armed forces and restoring the beneficial working period regarding a pension period of 15 months after having worked for a year;

5. Admitting systemisations by mandatory procedures and deduction of legal contracts and annexes with redistribution according to regulations;

6. Admitting the status of members of the Slovenian armed forces to the civilian personnels of the armed forces, granting them salaries and arrangement of a status for high non-commissioned officers due to the double crossing induced to their salaries in 2008;

7. Equal wages for all members of the Slovenian armed forces giving the same amount of work and extra pay for compensating overtime,

Demands are also unionistic TASKS, on which SVS and KNSS will insist until final fulfilment!

A protest rally of the members of the Slovenian armed forces was organised for the first time in the history of the Republic of Slovenia. We, in the Syndicate of Soldiers of Slovenia evaluate the protest rally as a very successful, especially because of the statement made by EUROMIL's President, Emmanuel Jacob, to the evening, daily news, in which he said that the protest was reasonable because the rights of workers in the Slovenian armed forces are violated. For the first time, a support was publicly provided from the Confederation of New Syndicates of Slovenia – Independence, especially from its President Drago Lombar. The Syndicate of Soldiers of Slovenia makes part of the Confederation since July 2011. The announcement of the protest and all the events

linked to it, were treated by the Ministry of Defence as illegal and therefore inadmissible. After the protest there were no declared sanctions against the organisations from the Syndicate of Soldiers of Slovenia. The public condemnation of the organiser of the protest was just a tactic to prevent it, but it turned out to be ineffective and seemed as insulting. In the Syndicate of Soldiers of Slovenia we believe that the Slovenian public opinion is aware that the Ministry only used the method for intimidation, which was unsuccessful. Slovenians also know that rights in the army are violated.

The protest rally was a subject of discussion in Slovenia during the whole week.

As EUROMIL's President stated, this event was a good start for further activities.

The public protest, Gvido Novak, President of SVS, photos: SVS



Photos: SVS

PORTUGUESE MILITARY ASSOCIATIONS SUPPORT SOLDIERS' PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION IN LISBON

BY MANUEL CRACEL, PRESIDENT OF AOFA, PORTUGAL

On 12 November 2011, more than 10,000 soldiers marched silently between the Rossio and Praça do Comércio in Lisbon, protesting against austerity measures that violate the status and social conditions of Portuguese armed forces.

Active soldiers, those in the reserve and retired, men and women, accompanied by their relatives, expressed their disagreement towards the austerity measures and the lack of equality, showing solidarity with their fellow citizens.

Even for those, who do not approve such a military public manifestation, the event was very important in terms of national panorama. In fact, the Portuguese television and radio broadcasted the event "live", likewise the newspapers paid a lot of attention to what was going on throughout the day.

Furthermore, the magnitude of attendance and the participation of young soldiers made the demonstration important

expressing the reasons of discontent that led them to participate in the demonstration.

In most cases, the rationale behind the attendance of young soldiers, was to demonstrate unequivocally that the financial cuts shall concern all ranks of soldiers and not only the lower ranks.

The presence of colonial war veterans' delegations and of the Retired and Reserve Military Association (ASMIR), was symbolic because they supported the military associations, showing their solidarity and trust.

The event was covered by the media and the reasons behind choosing the demonstration as an option were explained. However too little or no attention was given to institutionally relevant issues and important changes.

The Presidents of ANS, AOFA and AP also delivered their statements on that occasion.

It is important to highlight that AOFA's President stated in his speech

that military personnel refuses to see themselves deprived of the dignity that they deserve and do not accept their demands undermine the capability of the armed forces and worsen the conditions of the association.

In the end, a motion was unanimously approved, which defines the actions to be closely monitored by the Portuguese military associations, foresees a participation in the parliamentary final vote on the State budget for 2012 and the organisation of a gathering at the official residence of the President, in order to influence the enactment of the budget.

Attention was given to the news on the Portuguese demonstration in several countries like the United States, Spain, England and Germany.



Photos: AOFA and ANS



and was reinforced by the exemplary behavior of participants' dignity.

The relevance of the event was proved by words of the political veteran, Mario Soares, stating that such a military manifestation should impress and lead to a reflection.

Important, too, were the statements of some Admirals and Generals publicly



MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

LARGEST MILITARY DEMONSTRATION EVER IN PORTUGAL

By PAULO CONTREIRAS, ANS, PORTUGAL

On 12 November 2011, in Lisbon, Portugal, a street rally was organised by the three Portuguese military associations, ANS, AOFA and AP, respectively associations of sergeants, officers and soldiers . (1)

This event meant to gather active and retired personnel, together with their family members, who are daily affected by the poor living conditions, more and more often imposed on them. The meeting point was set up at Rossio Square, and then began a silent (2) march passing Terreiro do Paço also known as Black Horse Square, ending right in front of the Ministry of Finances building.

Beyond all expectations, over ten thousand people participated. The young and the elderly, men and women, active and retired, veterans, families, everyone imbued with resilient spirit, actively enforcing their rights while strictly respecting the Law.

The reasons for this protest were all the economic measures imposed on the Portuguese citizens in general and on the public administration employees, including military personnel. In the name of a pseudo-economic recovery, all taxes are raised and tax deductions diminished. Essential commodities like electric energy, face brutal price raises, monthly salaries are cut and in 2011, the 13th wage (3) was reduced by around 30%. What is interesting is that this amount of 30% is still taxed, as if it was effectively received, adding an additional 17, 5% cut (around 100 extra Euros).

The Portuguese military personnel have always been on the front line when it comes to economic efforts. Careers have been "frozen" for years, along with salaries. However, although millions of Euros were saved as salaries, health benefits, etc., the country does not show any signal of economic recovery. Quite the opposite, the creation of more than 1500 public institutions since 2005, the salaries of public companies' managers reaching over two hundred thousand Euros a month (per person) and the fact that the Portuguese State spends millions of Euros in order to supposedly help private Banks recovering the same Banks responsible for the criminal insolvency caused by financial speculation, makes it impossible to achieve any positive results.

Furthermore, the Government in power offers these highly paid jobs to their political friends, making a powerful "secret group" which controls the media, the high courts, and other significant sectors of the Portuguese society.

We, the Portuguese military men and women, made an oath on the occasion of joining the armed forces. We swore to obey and enforce the Portuguese Constitution, the Laws of the Republic, and to protect the Portuguese people.

We, the Portuguese military personnel, will not participate in any repression activities against our people, if and when social uprising begins.

We, the Portuguese personnel, do not believe that any economic

measures that Portugal might benefit from need to be harmful to the Portuguese.

Above all, we will not experience being scapegoats for the authorities that implement solutions only for a few, chosen friends, buying them luxury cars for private use, paying them astronomical wages, as well as providing them retirement pensions from public funds.

Furthermore, ANS scheduled an event, on the occasion of which we appealed to all active personnel of the armed forces to reflect and debate on all the problems that concern us. This event was scheduled on 24 November, also the day of the general strike organised by both Portuguese Union centrals.

The three military associations, ANS, AOFA and AP also scheduled, for 30 November, to assist the Parliament final voting on the 2012 State Budget, which contains many of the economic measures that threaten to further decrease our financial capabilities to

worrying levels. Later on the same day, an assembly keeping a vigil in front of the Portuguese President's (also the Supreme Commander of the armed forces) official residence will gather in order, to appeal to the President not to enact the 2012 State budget.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank for all the messages of support received from several EUROMIL friends during these hard times. It is very positive to feel that we are truly not fighting alone.



Photos: AOFA and ANS

(1).Portuguese Defense Law (Law nr. 3/2001) mandates that the Professional Armed Forces associations shall be divided by categories, hence three were formed.

(2).Law nr. 4/2001 states that active military personnel are allowed to participate in public demonstrations, if they don't use uniform, weapons or national symbols and as long as the demonstrations are not organised by trade unions or political parties.

(3).13th annual wage was introduced to compensate for the 4 unpaid weeks during a year, when monthly salaries were implemented (4x12=48 weeks and a year has 52 weeks). Portuguese minimum wage is 485 Euros, while one liter of gas costs 1,5-1,6 Euros.

100 YEARS OF MILITARY UNIONISM IN THE NETHERLANDS (PART ONE)

BY KOOS STAUTHAMER, AFMP/FNV AND JERRY HART, GLOBAL SECURITY RISK ANALYST AND A FORMER LECTURER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER'S SCARMAN CENTRE

In the article published in the EUROMIL News Issue 15, December 2010, "Back from Uruzgan to a new Dutch Cabinet ... and now? ", we informed you about the bad political climate ahead of the Dutch military forces.

Now, one year later we are in the middle of the roll out of the plans to reduce the total workforce by more than 12.000 jobs. The coalition agreement mentioned budget cuts which will also have their effect on operational capabilities, such as the loss of operational units, naval patrol vessels, and the number of fighter aircrafts. We will also lose military bases throughout the Netherlands.

As said before, many Dutch soldiers and civil servants are still uncertain about the future of the Dutch Ministry of Defence, and – perhaps more significantly – the future of their (military) careers. Yet, what is the role of the military unions and associations during this immense operation to build a new Dutch Defence organisation?

The Algemene Federatie van Militair Personeel (AFMP/FNV) has been involved in this process for more than a century, via diverse discussion platforms to negotiate and deliberate primary terms of employment (salaries, pensions and social security) for their members.

This article, the first of a series devoted to this topic, outlines the early beginning of military unions in the Netherlands, presenting the predecessor of the AFMP/FNV: Ons Belang ("Our Interest") directly speaking in many cases with the political and military leadership of the MoD.

In the following articles, we will focus on the development of the AFMP/FNV and we will explain, why it was so important to join the FNV and start a cooperation with other unions and not necessarily military ones. The AFMP/FNV is a member of EUROMIL since the organisation was founded in 1972 by nine associations from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy.



photo: AFMP/FNV

Koos Stauthamer is a Board member of AFMP/FNV in the Netherlands and a Major in the Dutch Army. Jerry Hart is a Global Security Risk Analyst for a large multi-national corporation and a former lecturer in security management at the University of Leicester's Scarman Centre (now Department of Criminology) where Major Stauthamer was one of his students. They continued to collaborate after Stauthamer's graduation, working on various projects with a focus on the security and welfare of military and other security personnel.

History of Dutch military associations

The history of Dutch associations for military personnel in the Netherlands dates back to 1898 when the first association for Non-Commissioned-Officers (NCOs) of the Army was founded.

The main rationale for creating such an association was the fact that in those days there were almost no social security measures for the NCOs. While on active duty, medical care for both the NCOs and their family was very poor and only a small pension was provided after retirement. In the following years other associations followed and by 1910 there were already six of them. Although politicians and military authorities questioned their existence at the time, they never questioned the right of association.

There was no official way of consulting with the government and all the associations could do, was to request an audience with the Minister of Defence or speak with members of the Parliament. Yet, thanks to their dedication and persistence the associations successfully lobbied for better regulations on pensions, medical care, etc.

It was only in 1931 with Parliament's passing of the Military Public Servants Act, that a formal structure for consultation was established. In those days "consultation" meant that the Minister would only hear what the associations had to say and would then make his decision afterwards, a situation that was not entirely satisfactory. Moreover, the fact that the number of associations had grown to more than 10 enabled the Minister to "divide and rule". Also, further divisions arose because there were two different committees: one for officers and one for NCOs.

to come up with an acceptable substitute for the right of collective actions and it finally happened in 1985 when the Advice- and Arbitration Committee (AAC) was installed.

That made it possible for the associations to seek the advice of the AAC whenever the deliberations with the Government had not led to an acceptable outcome. The associations used this option only a few times, mainly because seeking the advice of a third party showed the weakness of the two parties concerned.

On the other hand, it also allowed the association to put pressure on the Government by "threatening" it to resort to the AAC. As the AAC operated publicly and would therefore expose poor governance, it quite often made the Government submit to associations' demands. Arbitration was only possible when the Government agreed to it and so far they have never done so. The main reason for that is that Government's activities are subject to the parliament's right to approve the budget.

(To be continued in the next EUROMIL News Issue 20, March 2012)



1950s Minister starts two-way talks with associations

After World War II the situation improved. In the mid-1950s, the Minister became obliged to start two-way consultation with the associations, as well as to discuss any proposed change in regulations. Although it sounded very good and was indeed a big step forward, it was often the cause of near-interminable discussions, with the Minister ultimately imposing his original proposal.

However, in 1976 the two committees were joined in one deliberation-platform for all military personnel. The deliberation-platform for all public servants was made the leading platform for negotiations and deliberations for primary terms of employment (salaries, pensions and social security) for all public servants. This deliberation-platform was manned by four Bureaus of Civil Servants. This way, the working conditions for approximately 800.000 public servants, including military personnel, were set. It is for that reason that the associations for military personnel sought connection with and finally joined one of these four Bureaus.

When the Dutch Parliament ratified the European Social Charter in 1980, it made an exemption on article 6, sub-paragraph 4, for all public servants. That article set down the right to collective actions (including strikes). The Parliament ordered the Dutch Government



THE GEOPOLITICS OF ENERGY, DATA AND FORECASTS IN A PERIOD OF DESTABILISATION OF THE EAST MEDITERRANEAN POLITICAL SUBSYSTEM

THEODOROS EFTHIMIOU, CAROA, CYPRUS

According to official figures, the EU dependence on external sources of energy will increase by 70% by 2020.

In this respect, the new energy poles, namely Black Sea region, Transcaucasia and Central Asia, and new energy technologies play a catalytic role in the implementation of the programme of “Good-Neighborliness”.

The Eastern Mediterranean has been defined by centuries as one of the most strategic regions of the planet. It constitutes a special geopolitical area that includes countries of production and transfer of oil and gas from the Caspian sea to the coasts of East Africa.

However, in the past 15 years, there has been a creeping but visible revival of the Middle Eastern problems around the Eastern Mediterranean. What does a geopolitical analysis of this issue reveal?

is to check also the future exodus outflow of oil and gas from Mosul and Kirkuk, to the Eastern Mediterranean and through Goumourtalik (Turkey) and in the future through Haifa (Israel).

In any case, the Republic of Cyprus, despite its problems and the continued undermining, experienced from Turkey and its “friends”, has managed to strengthen its position as an EU full member, gain international credibility and reputation in times of rife crisis, wars and instability in the metropolitan area of the East Mediterranean.

The doctrine of “asymmetric threats” and the promotion of “preventive wars” with informal alliances led in the past 15 years to a negative evolution, neglecting the security of peoples and countries. The EU’s addiction to have a strong political and economic system, together with the USA and their allies’ efforts to control the sources of oil and gas in the area of the East Mediterranean, constitute obstacles to the prospect of a truly independent and effective process of peace and solidarity in a multicultural world with strong, democratic and modernised governments, in a world of solidarity, co-existence and good neighborliness.



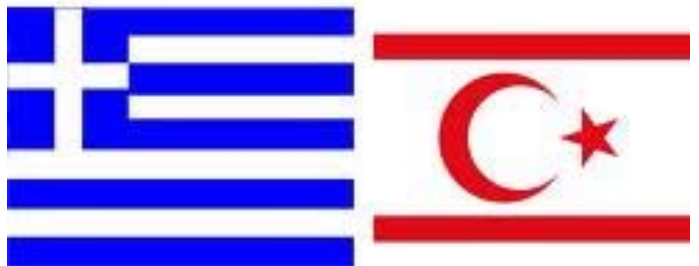
Theodoros Efthimiou,
photo: CAROA

The answer is that the geopolitical approach of the Eastern Mediterranean subsystem features at least four main and chronic problems:

- 1) The Israeli-Palestinian division;
- 2) The Kurdish problem;
- 3) The issue of the continental shelf of the Aegean;
- 4) The occupation of Cyprus by Turkey.

In particular, the strategy of Turkey in Cyprus would mean that it is based on the exploitation of both geopolitical advantages conferred to Ankara after the invasion and occupation of Cyprus and the ongoing military superiority of Turkey. Undoubtedly, Turkey anticipates achieving the geopolitical objectives that exceed the strategic space in which Cyprus is. This allows the convergence of Turkey interests at a geostrategic level with the interests of the United States and Israel.

One would think however, that the strategic interest of Ankara



FORUM MEDITERRANEAN MILITARY ASSOCIATION(FMMA)

BY PANOS MERTIKAS, AN.E.A.E.D., GREECE

The idea of creating the Forum Mediterranean Military Association (FMMA) was initiated in the period between 2004 and 2008 by EUROMIL Board Members coming from countries of the Mediterranean region.

It is well known that some years ago the Visegrad group was founded and is, since then, successfully operating under the umbrella of EUROMIL. The Visegrad group consist of member associations from Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic.

The founding act of FMMA was signed in Madrid on 13 March 2010 by representatives of EUROMIL associations from Spain, Portugal, Italy and Cyprus.

During the 101st Presidium Meeting in Berlin, on 19-20 March 2010, the associations ETAL from Greece and GHDS from Malta became members of FMMA.

Today the FMMA consists of nine EUROMIL member associations, from six Mediterranean countries.

N-COACA from Cyprus became member of FMMA during the 102nd PM in Brussels on 29 October 2010.

New opportunities appeared due to the economic crisis. I believe that FMMA members' cooperation regarding the prospects of the region, providing new and fresh ideas to strengthen our mutual benefits and protecting our social interests is a must.

We maintain a rigid position towards matters concerning the respects of human rights and democratic freedoms.

As it is stated in the manifesto of FMMA of October 2010, the Military Professional Associations do not undermine the Armed Forces. On the contrary, always closer to the barracks, they easier perceive the arising problems and by trying to solve them, contribute to the improvement of the Armed Forces' conditions in order to make them better serve their countries.

I believe that if mainly the military leadership realises the

importance of our movement, at this stage we can become influential players supporting stability and prosperity in our region, especially during these extraordinary times.



Panos Mertikas,
photo: AN.E.A.E.D.



PUBLIC HEARING ON THE RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION WITHIN THE EU ARMED FORCES ON THE INITIATIVE OF EUROMIL

By EUROMIL



Emilio Ammiraglia, Fabrizio Menegoli, Giuseppe Seviroli,
photo: EUROMIL

On Tuesday, 29 November 2011, the Subcommittee on Security and Defence of the European Parliament organised a public hearing on the right of association within the armed forces in Europe. Considering the wide range of legal status and rights of military personnel across EU Member States, the hearing aimed at presenting a comparative and comprehensive picture of the different aspects implicated in the right of association when applied to military personnel in Europe.

Three presentations were delivered in a single-panel by Mr. Emmanuel Jacob, President of EUROMIL, Mr. Bernhard Gertz, Honorary Chairman of the German association DBwV, and Mr. Emilio Ammiraglia, President of the Italian association ASSODIPRO. The international legal base for the respect of the right of association was highlighted, as well as the need for harmonisation at the European level. EUROMIL's concern is to achieve a general recognition of the right of association for military personnel all over Europe, in order to have a just representation and defence of the social conditions of our servicemen and –women. Mr. Jacob emphasised the evolution of soldiers' role from fighters to mediators. Consequently, soldiers should be granted the rights that they defend overseas. Soldiers are citizens in uniform and should have the right to associate themselves and discuss issues of common concern. The right of association for military personnel does not undermine military authority or disrupt the chain of command and there is no loss of military efficiency or discipline in countries which have granted full association rights for their soldiers. On the contrary, military associations and trade unions have an important role to play as partners for defence administrations. What title these associations should have is not important. The inhomogeneity of situation amongst Member States was illustrated by the German model, considered as best practice and presented by Mr. Gertz, and the Italian example, regarded as a bad case study and portrayed by Mr. Ammiraglia. While German authorities recognise the DBwV as a valuable partner, Italian servicemen and –women's right to form and join trade-



unions and professional associations continues to be disrespected. In the subsequent discussions, several Members of the European Parliament reiterated their support for granting soldiers the right of association.



President Emmanuel Jacob and Vice-President Bernhard Gertz,
photo: EUROMIL

The hearing contributed to raise public awareness of the problems in certain European countries and will possibly lead to follow-up proposals by the European Parliament. A first resolution on the right for members of the armed forces to form associations was adopted by the European Parliament in 1984 and was recalled by several reports on fundamental rights in the EU. *CH*

« ...OGGI SI TRATTA DI CAPIRE SE L'INTEGRAZIONE EUROPEA DELINEATA DAL TRATTATO DI LISBONA E DALLA CARTA DEI DIRITTI FONDAMENTALI DELL'UNIONE EUROPEA È UNA ASPIRAZIONE CAPACE DI RIMUOVERE ARRETRATEZZE, PREGIUDIZI E STECCATI IDEOLOGICI OPPURE SE ESSA DEBBA ANCORA ARRESTARE IL PASSO RISPETTO AI PARTICOLARI INTERESSI DEGLI STATI MEMBRI. »

NATO-EU COOPERATION, VETERAN POLICIES AND EUROPEAN LOBBYING DISCUSSED DURING THE 104TH PRESIDIUM MEETING

By EUROMIL

EUROMIL organised its bi-annual general assembly, the 104th Presidium Meeting, in Brussels on 28 and 29 October 2011. The Presidium brought together delegates of EUROMIL member associations for the exchange of experience and best practice.

Emmanuel Jacob, President of EUROMIL opened the meeting once again underlining the fact that an economic and financial crisis has already started and could be even worse and that military personnel has already been affected by budget cuts and military community cannot escape from austerity measures. The President emphasised the necessity of working together. In order to cope with the severe measures, military associations shall both confront their national parliaments as well as look for international solutions since in the long perspective defence cuts risk undermining security.

Official guests, Lieutenant General Jürgen Bornemann, General Director International Military Staff NATO Military Committee, Brigadier General Gabor Horvath, Director Concepts and Capabilities, European Union Military Staff and Professor Dr. Luc De Vos, Head Department of Conflict Studies, Royal Higher Institute for Defence, delivered their speeches.

Lieutenant General Bornemann presented a general overview of NATO's agenda, its framework, ongoing operations and NATO's transitional situation. He underscored that smart defence meaning better use of limited resources such as role sharing and specialisation is crucial especially in the times of economic crisis which can also be an opportunity to increase cooperation with the EU.

Brigadier General Gabor Horvath delivered his presentation on the EU Military Staff and the role of the military in the Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU. He explained EU Crisis Management, described CSDP in the Lisbon Treaty, presented EEAS and EUMS structures, EUMS responsibilities and personnel, ESDP military operations and civilian missions as well as EU military capability development goals.

Professor Dr. De Vos commented on the current geopolitical situation in the world from an academic point of view. He expressed the necessity of a transatlantic cooperation and an effective foreign policy. He stated that in order not to become irrelevant NATO should have good working relations with the EU.

Flemming Vinther, Chairman of HKKF, addressed his presentation on Veteran Policy in Denmark. One of the flagship projects in Denmark is the establishment of a new veteran center which will be closer to all those in need. Vinther pointed out that veterans' care is not only the responsibility of the armed forces but also of the national, regional and local authorities. He emphasised the importance of recognition and support, active involvement of unions as well as effective communication with veterans as preconditions of successful policy towards veterans. Vinther listed nineteen initiatives which shall improve Danish veterans' situation. Among others, establishing a knowledge centre, providing enhanced treatment for the psychical injured veterans, improving access to psychologists and social workers as well as giving one single access to web-based information and issuing veterans' card as a proof of identity, were presented.



Lieutenant General Jürgen Bornemann, General Director International Military Staff NATO Military Committee, and Brigadier General Gabor Horvath, Director Concepts and Capabilities, European Union Military Staff, photo: EUROMIL



photo: EUROMIL



**Professor Dr. Luc De Vos, Head Department of Conflict Studies, Royal Higher Institute for Defence,
photo: EUROMIL**



**President Emmanuel Jacob,
photo: EUROMIL**

Then, five national veteran policies were introduced and compared by experts from EUROMIL member associations from Belgium, Cyprus, Portugal, the Netherlands and United Kingdom during a workshop moderated by Ton de Zeeuw, Chairman of MARVER/FNV. Filip Duquesne, ACMP-CGPM, presented Belgian veteran policy, Papadimitris Dimitris, CAOAA, presented the veteran policy in Cyprus, Heitor Sequira Alves, AOFA, introduced the veteran policy of Portugal, Adrian Weale, BAFF, portrayed the British veteran policy and Wim van den Burg, Chairman of AFMP/FNV, described the Dutch veteran policy. The conclusion was made that lots of differences exist between countries in terms of for example veteran's definition, existing legislation or standard agreements regarding recognition of veterans and that some members are far from the achievements of others. Therefore, the harmonisation of various policies in Europe seems to be very difficult.

In his presentation on European Lobbying, Bernhard Gertz, EUROMIL Vice-President, explained what factors are necessary for successful lobbying in the European theatre. Gertz's important point was how to improve EUROMIL's ability to influence the European decision-making process. Vice-President Gertz emphasised future EUROMIL lobbying tasks and listed important European actors. In his concluding remarks he stated that EUROMIL could influence EU social legislation if it functioned as an early warning system for its members, inspiring them to coordinated lobby efforts in their countries and transporting the results of national lobbying to the European theatre. In order to succeed, EUROMIL has to improve its lobby capacity and the member associations have to work in close co-operation at both the EU and national levels. During the following discussion, the President and Vice-President mentioned that the presentation will be followed-up in the near future. EUROMIL's lobbying strategy will be discussed by the Board, and responses presented at the next Presidium Meeting.

Questions were raised about possibilities to influence EU legislations and EUROMIL's power to support its member associations.

EUROMIL welcomed two new members, the Slovenian SVS (the Syndicate of Soldiers of Slovenia), and the Lithuanian KTGC (the Lithuanian Social Institution Soldiers Rights Defence Center) bringing the membership of EUROMIL to 42 national associations and unions.

Portuguese Associação de Praças (AP) and National Alliance of Albanian Military (AKUSH) became full members of EUROMIL.

THE POLISH MEMBER OF THE BOARD, ANATOL TICHONIUK, INFORMED THAT HE WILL LEAVE HIS FUNCTION, AS HE WILL START A NEW JOB. PRESIDENT, EMMANUEL JACOB, THANKED MR. TICHONIUK FOR HIS LONG COOPERATION WITH EUROMIL.



**Anatol Tichoniuk,
photo: EUROMIL**



**Thank you and goodbye,
photo: EUROMIL**

EUROMIL PARTICIPATED IN 10TH CONGRESS ON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE (BERLIN SECURITY CONFERENCE)

By EUROMIL

EUROMIL attended the 10th Congress on European Security and Defence in Berlin on 8-9 November 2011. During this international, yearly event of two days, the Common Security and Defence policy in Europe, as well as Transatlantic Cooperation were discussed. Over 850 participants were registered.

This year four important forums were organized with debates focused on the future of the CSDP, the new challenges for European Security and Defence (how to respond in NATO and in the EU), Multinationality (Seeking Savings through Pooling and Sharing) and the Comprehensive Approach in Afghanistan.

Numerous high level decision makers and experts including political, military, business and civil society leaders and representatives of a wide range of research institutes as well as distinguished members of national parliaments, the European Parliament, the former European Security and Defence Assembly / WEU Assembly, the European institutions and NATO attended the conference. Among others, Arnaud Danjean MEP, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence of the European Parliament, Dr. Werner Hoyer, Minister of State, Federal Foreign Office, Prof. Dr. Hans-Gert Pöttering MEP, Chairman of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and former President of the European Parliament, Robert Walter MP, 2008-2011 President of the former ESDA/WEU Assembly, Dr. Karl von Wogau, Secretary General of the European Security Foundation (ESF) and Honorary Member of the European Parliament.

EUROMIL was present as panellist in the workshop IV "Protection of Crisis Management Forces - a Permanent Challenge for Improvement" in person of its President Emmanuel Jacob. During the panel, chaired by Hartmut Bühl, Editor in Chief, The European Security and Defence Union, several representatives of industry talked about operational requirements, special role of protection, international cooperation and research, as well as development and procurement activities.

President Jacob addressed human factor and social aspect of crisis management protection forces. He underlined the fact that the soldier is no longer a "fighter" in the traditional sense, but rather a mediator and conveyor of certain, often humanitarian, value and notions – a "social diplomatic war – fighter". Besides training in traditional fighting skills, modern soldiers receive training and education to function in their specialisation, as mediator and even social and development aid works with highest moral integrity and sensibility. European soldiers are risking their health and live in the service of the nation and the international community for the preservation and restoration of fundamental and democratic rights in foreign countries. In Libya for example, military personnel protect people who are/were fighting for their human, fundamental and democratic rights. Economic and social rights some of these soldiers do not enjoy themselves.

EUROMIL's President emphasised that the appropriate training and equipment must be in place to ensure that potential casualties are minimised. He added that, while service conditions entail certain threats, the lives of soldiers should not be put unavoidably at risk, or without a clear and legitimate military purpose. According to the President, sound strategies, proper equipment, well-equipped medical facilities, as well as social protection are crucial.

Furthermore, President Jacob presented in ten points EUROMIL's recommendations, divided into three phases, before, during and after deployment, constituting the uncensored view of European soldiers.

EUROMIL advocates among other legal security for the soldiers by reality checked mandates, caveats and rules of engagement; extensive training as joint forces including comprehensive education on language,



**President Emmanuel Jacob participating in the panel,
photo: EUROMIL**

national and international law as well as cultural awareness; better protection by reliable and high quality equipment and last but not least best possible and free medical and psychological care.

In his final remarks, President Jacob concluded, that in the times of financial and economic crisis resulting in defence budget cuts, collaboration in terms of protection is very important.

During the questions and answers session, EUROMIL's President replied to one of the industry representatives, saying that currently no statistics nor real survey with the end user's feedback about basic soldiers' needs exist so that industry could make use of it. Mr. Jacob added that EUROMIL's knowledge is based on feelings and that the organisation will possibly address this issue to its member associations soon. At the end of the workshop IV, the conclusion was made that industry must take into account the users-soldiers' requirements, that not all countries have European military culture and that sometimes public opinion there would not accept any increase in military budget even for better equipment and that protection of the military staff will always have to be adopted to a concrete mission.

A large exhibition with national and international companies representing German, European and US industries was complementing the conference and providing an excellent opportunity for networking.

At EUROMIL's booth, President Emmanuel Jacob, Vice-President Bernhard Gertz, as well as Secretary General, Dr. Gerhard Ahlbrecht, welcomed several important, international stakeholders to whom they could introduce EUROMIL's objectives and goals. It was an excellent opportunity for direct contacts and discussions on security and defence matters.

On 10 November 2011, on the occasion of an event organised by industry and entitled "Blücher Information Day, Roadmap to Future Mission-Oriented Protection of Crisis Management Forces", EUROMIL's President made another presentation on the role of the soldier, social and legal aspects as well as professional conditions.



At EUROMIL's booth,
photos: EUROMIL



At EUROMIL's booth,
photos: EUROMIL

EUROMIL WELCOMED STUDENTS FROM LMU MUNICH

By EUROMIL

In the framework of an excursion to Brussels, a group of Political Science students from LMU Munich (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München) visited EUROMIL on 18 November 2011. Their stay in the capital of the European Union aimed at giving a good overview of how the European Parliament and the European Commission work as well as getting familiar with NATO's activities. They also visited several European stakeholders and lobby agencies.

As EUROMIL guests, the students were welcomed by the Vice-President, Bernhard Gertz and the Secretary General, Dr. Gerhard Ahlbrecht, who presented them EUROMIL as an organisation.

Dr. Gerhard Ahlbrecht made a presentation on EUROMIL's activities, history and main challenges.

The meeting was a great opportunity for the students to understand the current problems soldiers are facing in Europe as well as to participate in a discussion with the Vice-President and the Secretary General.

AO



Photo: EUROMIL

USE OF PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES

BY FRANK BURKHARDT, EUROCORPS

The soldiers who are members of the Eurocorps enjoyed in the past the status in accordance with the NATO Status of Forces Agreement (NATO SOFA). Consequently the soldiers registered their vehicles with temporary registrations. No difficulties were reported.

On 26 February 2009 the Treaty on the European Corps and the Status of its Headquarters (Treaty of Strasbourg) entered into force. As a consequence thereof the French authorities requested that all members of the HQ had to hand in their number plates with temporary registrations and to change them into a regular French registration.



A considerable number of soldiers have a legal domicile in France as well as in their home countries. For those soldiers a legal trap occurs, when they travel. The reason is the following: A motor vehicle is subject to taxation in the country in which his or her owner has his or her legal domicile. As the vehicles of these

soldiers are taxed in France only they commit either a tax violation in their home countries or, if they register their vehicles in their home countries, they commit a tax violation in France.

This situation is not totally unknown in the different countries. Therefore exemptions have been made for students and for company cars.

Although this problem for the soldiers and their family members is known by the respective governments since several years, they have failed to find a timely solution to it.

EUROMIL Calendar 2012

19	January	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
23	March	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
26	April	Board Meeting	Limerick, Ireland
27-28	April	Presidium Meeting	Limerick, Ireland
29	June	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
10-11	September	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
25	October	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
26-27	October	Congress	Brussels, Belgium

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW
YEAR 2012**



WISHES EUROMIL





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