



**OCT/2007**  
**96<sup>th</sup> Presidium Meeting, Paris - France**

**National Report of ANS(Portugal)**

**1 → Current main concerns of soldiers in our country:**

**1.1. Operations:**

According with some press, the portuguese government is considering, i.e. is to ponder the participacion of a portuguese contingent in a UN/UE force to be sent to Chade and Central African Republic, due to Darfur crisis.

**1.2. Active duty concerns / Career issues:**

A reestructuration of the Portuguese Armed Forces is being prepared since some years ago by successive working groups. The result of these working groups is still to be known, leading to a great deal of uncertainty among troops concerning their future.

Active duty servicemen are lacking of progressing in their careers, remaining long years in the same ranks. This issue is particularly noticed in the sargeants and caporals careers.

The rules for the young contractee servicemen were just changed without their aknowledgement and in contrary to the promisses made when they were called to service and join the forces, creating a feeling of mistrust towards the government. This may lead to difficulties in the recruitment system in the near future.

**1.3. Social concerns:**

Portuguese servicemen and their dependents are facing drastic changes in retirement systems, as well as in their social and health care assistance services and systems.

Meanwhile, due to finantial restrictions, the progression in the wages is “frozen” by the government since more than two years ago. The social

conditions, the purchasing power of servicemen and their dependents are decreasing.

Retired personnel are facing severe difficulties due to changes in the health and social assistance system, because the lack of implementation of the pension rules and laws, causing that the portuguese state is owing them hundreds of thousands of euros, and because most of the implemented changes are applied to the retired personnel, when it was supposed that they would be out of the drastic changes, since they were retired under different rules and laws. (The national budget for 2008 was presented at the parliament last week and it is not clear that the government introduced some ways to pay the debt to the military family).

## **2 → Our associations' main current concerns:**

### **2.1.**

In spite of the existing national laws approved at the national parliament more than six years ago, recognizing the right of associations for military, and the different recommendations from several european bodies, in Portugal military professional associations are not being involved in a truthfull social dialogue with the governments and the military leadership, in matters concerning the social and professional aspects of their careers.

On the other hand, the lack of accomplishment of several laws and regulations concerning the military, by the current and previous governments, created a situation where the portuguese state raised a crescent debt over one thousand million euros to the military family.

The board members of the associations who are just calling the attention so the law can be respected and reinforced, are facing disciplinary procedures, endangering their careers and their future. Their military records and their military and professional behavior are outstanding. They are being punished by political reasons.

### **2.2.**

The disciplinary procedures refered in the previous point, aim to install the fear and demotivation among the supporting members of the associations, trying to silence the uncomfortable voices that claim for law and rights.

In addition, the fact of not reinforcing the existing laws, not recognizing the rights of association board members, not implementing the european directives and recomendations is bringging more difficulties to the regular work of the board members. Thus, it is more difficult to meet with the members, to recruit new members.

Finally, not having a very well defined board member statute, brings more difficulties in order to combine the daily work in the military installations and the necessary work as board members at the association office or in the field, among the members.

### **3 → Other issue of importance:**

As you all know, Euromil is giving full support to the struggle that portuguese military associations are facing.

At this time Portugal holds the presidency of the European Union.

We believe that it is possible to put some more pressure on governments who are not respecting the rights of citizens in uniform. Future actions should be taken under the umbrella of Euromil and in a very well coordinated manner.

To close this report, we would like to remind the Euromil members that nothing should be taken as granted. Nothing lasts forever.

The ones who fought in the past to achieve their rights, and did it, must defend them all the time. The risk of loosing rights it is always present.

Today most of the Euromil members may be more involved in discussing matters in a higher level. However, one can ever forget that to achieve this point it was important to fight for basic rights such as the right to exist as an association with their rights full recognized.

It will be very difficult to achieve a stronger Euromil while the members are fighting in so different worlds and so different realities. Stronger members should support the ones with more difficulties, by means of “Partnerships”, according with Euromil Charter.

Lisboa, October 2007

ANS Board