



NEWS

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Security has a social dimension

"WE ALL LIVE UNDER THE SAME SKY, BUT WE DON'T ALL HAVE THE SAME HORIZON"⁽¹⁾

In the past months and weeks, a large number of meetings has been organised and papers discussed in preparation of the European Council of 19-20 December 2013. Since it has been decided that the December 2013 summit would mainly focus on defence matters, almost every organisation linked to security and defence used this momentum to publish a paper or at least a statement as an input in preparation of the discussions and Council's conclusions on the Common Security and Defence Policy. The fact that this issue is rarely discussed on the level of the national leaders of the European Union is, for organisations and institutions from the security and defence sector, an opportunity to try bringing some points of discussion on the table.

Probably one can argue that the influence of the financial crisis on the defence budgets is one of the main reasons to bring this debate on the table of the European national leaders. Of course no one will deny that the crisis has a negative influence on defence budgets! No one can or will deny that decreasing budgets have an influence on the functioning of the European armed forces. But can we only blame the financial crisis for this malaise? One should also not forget that the military spending of several European countries is in decline since almost 20 years. This means that beside the current financial-economic problem there is another basic element that influences the functioning of the European armed forces, namely a political problem.

After the Cold War, several governments reformed their armed forces. Firstly, the need to reform was justified by a change of the geopolitical situation. Although this was a correct reaction, it should be admitted that most of these governments saw at that point the opportunity to reduce their armed forces in numbers and especially to decrease their defence budgets. But despite these budget cuts,

the total defence expenditure of the 26 European Defence Agency (EDA) member states in 2012 (Denmark is not an EDA member state and Croatia only joined the EU in 2013) amounted to 189,6 billion €. This was a reduction of 1,1 billion € compared to 2011. The total defence expenditure decreased by 21 billion € or almost 10 % from 2006 to 2011 and by almost further 3 % between 2011 and 2012.

A second issue that brought most experts to the point of declaring that the state of defence policy is critical in Europe is the loss of will of several European governments to use military force compared to the past. Again, according to EDA, EU member states had over 80.000 soldiers deployed on external operations in 2008. Meanwhile, this number fell to 49.550 in 2012. It can be predicted that these numbers will decrease more once troops will withdraw from Afghanistan in or after 2014.

Besides these two essential elements - decreasing budget and troops - the EU-28 collectively still spent as much on defence as Russia and China combined. The EDA declared that the EU-28 can deploy some 100.000 troops on external operations. However, this is only a quarter of what the US can deploy, although more soldiers are available in the EU-28 than in the US.

And even by knowing that, for example, China's defence expenditure will almost certainly exceed the EU-28 defence expenditure by 2020, Europe still has a solide base of military capabilities and experiences to build on.

The question is in which way the European Council of 19-20 December 2013 can give an answer to the lack of political interest from some EU member states in defence. It seems that everybody knows the problems and even the solutions but not all governments are interested in cooperating. It will be a challenge to push European



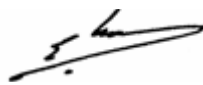
Emmanuel Jacob, EUROMIL's President,
Photo: EUROMIL

governments towards a sense of common European interests and not only their national interests. The development of European military cooperation must be more than a wish to find a solution to spend less on military budgets. Therefore, one of the conclusions of this summit should be that defence issues become a permanent point of debate on the agenda of the EU heads of governments and are not only discussed once every ten year. This is the only way EU governments will take (European) defence policy more seriously!

Let's see in which way for example Germany will push the debate, knowing that the coalition agreement between CDU/CSU and SPD stated that "We strive for an ever closer association of

European armed forces which can evolve into a parliament-controlled European army." Only words or reality?

Emmanuel Jacob,
President of EUROMIL



(1) Konrad Adenauer

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WATCH OUT FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CRISIS!

BY JORGE BRAVO, PRESIDENT OF AUME, SPAIN, AND ANTÓNIO LIMA COELHO, PRESIDENT OF ANS, PORTUGAL

We are living in troubled times that jeopardize the vested rights of the military community.

The military community in Europe has been working for decades in the fields of fundamental rights, working conditions and social welfare. EUROMIL gathers most of European military unions and associations aiming at a common status for soldiers based on the European Convention on Human Rights. This umbrella organisation helps its new members, associations and unions, to reach the standards that the eldest members enjoy since mid-20th century.

Most of our colleagues from North and Central Europe are embodied in their civil societies as ordinary citizens. Their particularity of being soldiers is only considered in crisis or war time, international missions or similar situations. In these countries, MoD authorities and high commanders consider military associations and unions as partners and as a tool to ensure the professional and social stability of the military personnel. This "entente" obviously results in a better collective defence for the country.

At different European latitudes, military associations have been keeping their efforts, in some cases since more than 20 years, to reach the level of recognition of the "northern" brothers, in spite of the miserly steps achieved till now. They do not feel alone and are fed by the comradeship and



solidarity of these brother associations. Fortunately, other associations have experienced important steps forward to the full recognition as professional organisation, at least at the level of the MoD, which does not mean a widening of the good practice at unit level.

The financial crisis that started in the USA seven years ago has led to the current economic and social crisis that hits, with a special impact, the South of Europe. The governmental policies, active student of the neoliberal doctrine and guidance, directly

hurt the middle classes, both ordinary and public workers, including military personnel.

These days we are seeing how official declarations announce the end of the classical welfare state (king Willem-Alexander *dixit*) and we are afraid that it becomes a mainstream to be followed in the decisional centres and by the opinion makers. We are afraid that one of the first groups of workers to experience the darkest side of a possible brand-new liberal doctrine could just be the military, public servants who never strike and always comply with the orders. One of the most developed countries and an old democracy, The Netherlands, has launched the starting signal of an uncertain and unsure future.

European soldiers, for example the Dutch, Germans, Danish, Swedish, etc. who entirely enjoy their fundamental rights, could see in short-medium term a substantial reduction in wages, allowances and, the most worrying, in vested rights. That is a serious warning for us, professional soldiers of the "second division" of European countries and an admonition of what can be foreseen for our careers and families in the coming years.

We have to find ways to resist!
Let's keep united and watchful! ■



Photos: AUME

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

CONGRESS OF DBwV: NEW BOARD ELECTED

By **SILKE FLEMMING, DBwV, GERMANY**

In November, the 19th Congress of Deutscher Bundeswehrverband (DBwV) took place in Berlin. The Congress is the most important body of DBwV. The 250 delegates, appointed by the Regional Conferences, came from every corner of Germany to decide on the policy of the association for the next four years.

An important issue on the agenda of the Federal Congress were the elections of the Federal Board. One essential change took place at the top, as the Federal Chairman and his two Vice-Chairmen were newly elected. The new Chairman of DBwV is Lieutenant Colonel André Wüstner. Chief Warrant Officer Jürgen Görlich was elected as Vice-Chairman and Captain Andreas Steinmetz as second Vice-Chairman. The new Chairman, 39-year-old Wüstner, was Vice-Chairman of DBwV since 2009 and spokesperson of the "main staff committee for military personnel" at the German Ministry of Defence for the last five years. He replaces Colonel Ulrich Kirsch who did not run for office again.



aim at alleviating the strain of the troops in missions and at home, e.g. to adhere to the regular length of deployments in international operations (four months) or to reduce the frequency of transfers. One motion adopted contained the demand to modify the system of personnel reviews. In terms of payment, the delegates called upon the politicians to take into account in their decisions the particularities of the profession as soldier.

Another issue on the agenda was the commitment of DBwV in the European field. The delegates decided that, in addition to the membership at EUROMIL, the DBwV shall apply for membership at CESI, the European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions. The President of EUROMIL, Emmanuel Jacob, was one of the speakers at the Congress. He stressed the importance of the affiliation of DBwV within EUROMIL and spoke about the commitment of EUROMIL for the rights of military personnel, for which he got a big applause from the delegates. ■

One of the speakers at the Congress of the DBwV was the acting Minister of Defence, Thomas de Maiziere, (the new government has not been formed yet). He confirmed that a "reform of the reform" of the armed forces is not planned by the future governing coalition of SPD and CDU. On enquiry the Minister added that the decisions on the closing of military bases will not be revised either. Apparently, the Minister learned to appreciate the DBwV during his years as MoD: "Even if we had controversies in the past, it is good that DBwV exists", he said.

The delegates had to vote on nearly 600 motions, which were drawn up by the garrison chapters of DBwV. The motions concerned a broad bunch of issues. One decision was crucial to guarantee the future of the association: The Congress approved an increase of membership fees, a decision accompanied by longer discussions. In the future a liability insurance for damages caused at work will be included in the fee for active soldiers.

A great deal of the political demands which were decided on,



Photos: DBwV

ACMP-CGPM: "OUR GENERAL PROGRAM WILL BECOME OUR 'AZIMUTH OF THE FUTURE'"

By FILIP DUQUESNE, ACMP-CGPM, BELGIUM

On 23 November 2013, both active and retired members of the ACMP-CGPM gathered for the five-yearly Congress. The General Program and the new composition of the Board for the period 2014-2018 were approved. This General Program gives ACMP-CGPM a clear direction where to go as a military union.

Since 2009 the **mission, vision** and **values** of the ACMP-CGPM are included in a clear mission statement. But as a professional union for military personnel we need a substantive agenda. Hence, we have written down our main mission for the next five years in a General Program 2014-2018.

The development of the General Programme was based on inputs from many of our delegates and members who responded to our call in our monthly magazine. These ideas were then formulated into a series of proposals that allowed various working groups to make a draft. After a long internal discussion, we managed to identify more than 100 union requirements, which were finally categorized into four chapters.

The four chapters include: military deployment and preparation for this operational deployment, resources in terms of budget, staff, equipment and infrastructure to be made available, measures to maintain or improve the general welfare of the military, and, finally, the military staff regulations.

Through the adoption of these texts at the Congress on 23 November 2013, we can now, without trepidation, determine that the General Program is an important support for our members. The substantive agenda becomes our 'azimuth of the future' and can be consulted on our website at acmp-cgpm.be (only in Dutch & French).

All these union requirements have to contribute obviously to the general welfare and better working conditions of military personnel. Precisely at this moment and more than ever new initiatives for the personnel are required. The fact that our Defence has more and more difficulties keeping young people in service, while those who have many years on their record, are looking to leave the active service, illustrates that some measures should be taken to lead to an improvement of the situation in the armed forces.

New Board

After a long internal electoral procedure, a new team of six responsible leaders was proposed to the Congress. They will ensure the daily management of our organisation.

Yves Huwart is one of the six members of this new Board and he will fulfil the function of Secretary-General as of 1 January 2014. He will be assisted by five deputies, namely Gunter Conard, Nico Leeuws, Steve Maertens, Armand Riem and Philippe Sion. Along with all other permanent delegates and local representatives of the ACMP-CGPM, they will endeavour to perform their work.

Filip Duquesne, elected auditor and Presidium member of EUROMIL, will pursue his function, as requested by the new Board.

A farewell to JPH

On the occasion of the Congress, we said goodbye to our current Secretary-General, Jean-Pierre Hulin.

Soon, Jean-Pierre will be able to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. Above all, we will remember JP as someone who was active for 20 years within the Board of our organisation. Throughout this period, he has shown unconditional commitment to the military community.

Conclusion

As featured in the epilogue of our renewed



General Programme, our organisation will try to execute as many of the listed tasks as possible. In the coming months, we will publicize our General Program. In addition, we will take the necessary steps to put these points and subjects as often as possible on the agenda of all those who bear responsibility within the Belgian Defence.



Photo: ACMP-CGPM

THE 8TH CONGRESS OF ZVSR EVALUATED THE ASSOCIATION'S ACTIVITIES OF THE LAST 4 YEARS

By JAN PAULECH, ZVSR, SLOVAKIA



The association of soldiers of the Slovak Republic (ZVSR) held its 8th Congress on 28 November 2013 in Trenčín, together with delegates from its 30 clubs.

The President of ZVSR, Mr. Michal Bohunický, stated that the implementation of the cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Defence and ZVSR contributed to the creation of mutually beneficial cooperation between the ZVSR – a civic association- the Slovakian Ministry of Defence, the General Staff of the armed forces, the forces' Commander and the garrisons and military formations. He also praised the increased authority of ZVSR and the activities of its clubs, mainly in advocating for the social rights of its members. He expressed satisfaction with the successfully developing international cooperation within EUROMIL and particularly in the context of V-4 military

associations. However, he also pointed out the very slow integration of professional soldiers and other retirees into the activities of ZVSR and its clubs.

One of the guest speakers, Mgr. Richard Rybníček, Mayor of Trenčín, called ZVSR and its experienced members to take more influence in drafting legislation related to the Slovakian armed forces and to increase its engagement in the civil society.

The attending representative of the Command of land forces expressed his greetings to the participants on behalf of the Commander of the land forces.

Attending representatives of partner organisations, namely the Association of Retired Police Officers, the Club of Women of the Slovakian armed forces, the Slovak Air Association of Milan Rastislav Stefanik, the Club of the Slovakian paratroopers and UN Veterans inter alia called for greater unity in addressing common social interests.

After discussion, the delegates of the 8th Congress of ZVSR adopted changes in basic ZVSR documents. The title of "Honorary President of ZVSR" was given to Mr. Bohunický. The delegates also approved a Declaration by which they request the President of the Slovak Republic, the Chairman of the National Council and other state officials to react on the media campaign questioning the constitutional rights of armed forces retirees in relation to its old age pensions.

Delegates elected the new members of the Central Board, which subsequently elected a new President of ZVSR. The newly elected President of ZVSR is Col. (Ret.) Tomáš Švec, who has a rich military career. He, among others, held the position of spokesperson for the Chief of Staff of the Army of the Slovak Republic and later was as member of the management of the Slovak Association of the Antifascists Fighters. The new President reminded the delegates that the main task of the ZVSR is the enforcement of social, labor, legal, professional, economic, cultural and sporting interests of its members. ■



Photos: ZVSR



MILITARY ASSOCIATIONS AT GUNPOINT

By **PANOS MERTIKAS, ETAL, GREECE**

The professional soldiers of all ranks in the Mediterranean countries especially in Greece, are in a critical situation as the current policies of our governments result in severe restrictions and cuts in defense budgets, wages, pensions, social benefits and social rights.

Our government officials wrongly see our democratic elected associations as opponents and not as partners.

It is strange that soldiers of our countries, highly-skilled personnel working under difficult and dangerous circumstances, enabling stability and security for their fellow citizens and giving their blood if needed, don't have the right to defend themselves as the other citizens of their countries.

We have to convince our politicians that military associations do not have any negative influence on military discipline.

On the contrary, always living in

the barracks representative of military associations can easier perceive the arising problems and solve them.

The same applies to the readiness of the armed forces in order to make them better serve their countries.

Soldiers, as an instrument of the security and defence policy will be able to give their best if they know that their families and dependents at home are being properly taken care of and protected.

At this point I would like to mention the recommendation of the member states of the Council of Europe adopted by the Committee of Ministers CM/Rec[2010]4 on 24 February 2010 on the Human rights of members of the armed forces, promoting common rules for military personnel.

Looking forward with confidence in this uncertain time, the only certainty is the need for more dialogue between associations, military leaders and politicians of our



region, hoping that a better understanding of each other might contribute to overcome many of the existing problems.

Taking into account the current situation which is full of challenges, particularly due to the economic crisis that hits our region, the Northern European Countries should start putting back the South in the Map of the European Union.

As Winston Churchill rightly remarked "However beautiful your strategy is, you need to check its results once in a while" and I think that the North is thinking in the wrong way for our region.

■

THE MANAGEMENT OF HKKF ON STUDY TOUR IN BRUSSELS

By **TINE NØRHOLTZ, HKKF, DENMARK**

The board of directors and secretariat of the Danish Union of Enlisted Privates and Corporals in the Danish Army (HKKF) held meetings with, among others, NATO and the EU institutions during a study tour on 25-27 November 2013 in Brussels. The tour also included a visit to EUROMIL.

The three-day tour started with a meeting at NATO's headquarters with Knud Bartels, former Danish Chief of Defence and Chairman of the NATO Military Committee. This was followed by a visit to EUROMIL's headquarters, which includes the Danish union as one of its active members.

In the European Parliament, the group met three Danish MEPs, namely Bendt Bendtsen (Conservative Party), Britta Thomsen (Social Democrats) and Søren Søndergaard (People's Movement).

At the European Commission, the visit focused on the role and power-sharing of the EU institutions and involved meetings with Anders Ladefoged, from Connie Hedegaard's Cabinet and Lars Engsted, from the EU General Directorate for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion. The group also met with Colonel Wagn Kofoed Christensen, who represents the EU Military Staff, EUMS.

Finally, the group visited the Brussels' office of the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions, where consultant Rune Siglev told them about the confederation's work in relation to the EU institutions and the European trade union movement.

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Photos: EUROMIL

EUROMIL ACTIVITIES

108TH PRESIDIUM MEETING AND EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS

By EUROMIL

EUROMIL held its 108th Presidium Meeting and Extraordinary Congress on 18-19 October 2013 in Brussels.

Over 70 delegates from across Europe gathered for the 108th session of EUROMIL's bi-annual assembly.

The President of EUROMIL, Emmanuel Jacob, opened the meeting by welcoming the delegates in Brussels, the new hometown of EUROMIL. He recalled the Presidium that EUROMIL moved into its new premises (Rue John Waterloo Wilson 78, 1000 Brussels) and presented the agenda of the meeting. Finally, the important role of EUROMIL and its international collaboration was underlined, as well as why defence matters.

On Friday afternoon, an Extraordinary Congress was convened to finalise the transfer of EUROMIL from Germany to Belgium. The Congress also elected new members of the Board, namely Fidel Gómez Rosa (AUME, Spain) and Johan Öhlén (SAMO, Sweden).



The debate is no longer focused on the question whether women should be serving in the armed forces, but whether women should be allowed to serve in equal combat roles in the armed forces. Alexandra Johari discussed gender mainstreaming in the armed forces, bringing in a political and European expertise. She presented a resolution adopted on 2 February 2012 by the European Parliament on "Women's situation in war" that was tabled by Norica Nicolai and the main findings of a hearing on the same topic, which took place on 14 June 2011. Working on gender perspectives in the armed forces, Jesus Ignacio Gil Ruiz described the role of women in the armed forces of several countries and shared some thoughtful comments with the audience. Katrine Damgaard Nielsen, a former Danish servicewoman who also served in the ISAF in Afghanistan, shared her experience of being a female soldier in the field. Her duty was partly office work and partly gunner in an armored car. Maribel Ojeda is an active servicewoman and a member of EUROMIL Spanish member association, AUME, which has a Secretariat for Women. She made a presentation on gender perspectives and access of women to combat roles in the Spanish armed forces. The presentations of the panelists were followed by a Q&A session. It



Presidium Members also had the opportunity to meet among regional groups as EUROMIL's Charter foresees the possibility of establishing regional partnerships within EUROMIL.

Reviewing the national reports issued by EUROMIL member associations, it appears that working time, pension systems and in general the negative effects of defence budget cuts are issues that particularly concern most military associations.

Besides internal affairs, the Presidium addressed two important topics in the framework of workshops, namely "Access of Women to Combat Roles" and "Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)4".

The first workshop addressed the issue of women in combat roles by comparing national situations at European level. Speakers included Alexandra Johari, Assistant of Norica Nicolai (ALDE, Romania), MEP, Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence of the European Parliament; Lt. Col. Jesus Ignacio Gil Ruiz, Chief of the Office on Gender Perspectives, NATO, International Military Staff; Katrine Damgaard Nielsen, Denmark; and Maribel Ojeda, AUME, Spain.



was concluded that everyone who meets the necessary requirements should have access to the same position as any other soldier regardless of his/her sex.

The second workshop focused on the Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states on “human rights of members of the armed forces”. Daniele Cangemi, Head of Division, Human Rights Law and Policy of the Council of Europe (CoE), presented the results of the review of the implementation of the recommendation, two years after its adoption. Unfortunately, some countries did not take part in the assessment of the implementation of the recommendation and, in general, the lack of dissemination of the recommendation is deplored. Nevertheless, the participation of EUROMIL in formulating and its strong support in publicizing the recommendation was emphasized. The subsequent discussion aimed at identifying a possible way forward.

The Presidium concluded its session on Saturday noon. CH



Photos: EUROMIL

5TH ICOAF

By EUROMIL

The 5th International Conference of Ombuds Institutions for the Armed Forces (ICOAF) was organized in Oslo, Norway, on 20 – 22 October 2013. It was jointly hosted by the Norwegian Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). EUROMIL's President, Emmanuel Jacob, participated as an observer in this interesting event.

The 5th ICOAF focused on the role of Ombuds Institutions for the armed forces when dealing with complaints related to veteran and gender issues, as well as continued capacity building to better serve both new and existing Ombuds institutions. With participants from over thirty states from all continents, there was a productive exchange about strengthening their institutions.

In the field of veterans, the conference recognized the sacrifices that veterans made for their country and the international society. However, through different presentations and debates, it became clear that states use a variety of definitions, regulatory frameworks and policies towards veterans. In general they also establish special policies and services for their veterans.

When debating the gender issue in the armed forces, it was acknowledged that the

role of women in the armed forces is crucial from the point of view of respect for human rights. The conference recognized that men and women likewise have unique capacities to positively contribute to security and operational effectiveness in the various roles performed by modern armed forces. Even if military personnel enjoy full equality before the law, they are still exposed to gender related discriminatory policies, practices and structures within the armed forces.

In both cases -veteran and gender- Ombuds institutions play an important role. Concerning veteran affairs, Ombuds institutions can receive complaints from veterans or their families and investigate in an independent way before giving recommendations to the government, armed forces or parliament. They can also play an important role in awareness raising campaigns among public officials and civil



society.

In the field of gender, Ombuds institutions can adopt a code of conduct, policies and procedures to promote gender equality. They can also appoint a gender advisor or focal point within its institution and ensure that its staff receives gender training. It is important that they actively encourage complaints by service personnel on gender-related issues, such as sexual and homophobic harassment, bullying and violence or sexual discrimination.

Much appreciated by EUROMIL was the statement of Dr. Susan Atkins, the UK Service Complaints Commissioner: “Members of the armed forces are citizens in uniform ...”. It is always nice to hear that others share our values!

The 6th International Conference of Ombuds Institutions for the Armed Forces is planned in 2014 in France. EJ

Photos: EUROMIL & Ombudsmannen for Forsvaret



NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY IN DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

By EUROMIL

The opening session

The 59th annual session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly was organised in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from 11 to 14 October 2013.

The NATO PA brought about 340 parliamentarians together from the 28 NATO member countries from North America and Europe as well as delegates from partner countries and observers to discuss and adopt reports and recommendations on current transatlantic security matters. EUROMIL was one of the few observers participating in the meeting.

The opening ceremony and first plenary sitting took place on Friday 11 October 2013. The Assembly was addressed by the President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Hugh Bayley; the President of the Republic of Croatia, Ivo Josipovic; the President of the Croatian Parliament, Josip Leko and NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

The President of the Assembly, Hugh Bayley, reminded the participants that Croatia recently became the 28th member state of the European Union. On behalf of the Assembly, he congratulated Croatia on this achievement which marks the end of a path towards

lasting reconciliation and integration within a union of common values and shared prosperity. "Other countries in the region – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo – are also well on their way down that same path. But our shared vision, our hope and aspiration for a Europe whole, free and at peace, will not be complete until all of them re-join the European and – for those who so aspire – the Euro-Atlantic family. I know they can count on Croatia as a staunch advocate of NATO's open door

and EU enlargement. You may rest assured that the NATO PA will also continue to support both NATO and EU enlargement, as it has done consistently for the past 15 years" Hugh Bayley stated.

In his turn, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said that joining the European Union was an important step in the steady integration of South-East Europe within the Euro-Atlantic area. "The Belgrade-Pristina agreement on normalisation represents another significant step. Implementation of that agreement must continue. And NATO, KFOR, have a key role in that implementation" he continued.

Rasmussen repeated that the financial crisis has placed great strains upon our economies which led to defence cuts in many of our countries. The crisis also raised questions about the need for defence. NATO has looked into this question. The organisation discussed defence with representatives of civil society and drew upon the results of public opinion polls or conducted interviews with policymakers and parliamentarians. The goal was to get a broad picture of how the public looks at defence and the value they

place upon it. The main question was "how much does our defence really matter?" Rasmussen explained that the results are now in and that the answer is clear: "defence does still matter, but we all need to do a much better job at explaining why."

Defence matters for the protection of our values, Rasmussen argued. He continued his argumentation saying that we must shift the argument from the cost of defence to the cost of no defence. We must shift the argument from what we put in to what we get back because it is not easy for the public to understand what we might lose if we do not invest in defence.

At the end of his speech, Rasmussen addressed the parliamentarians stating that they have a special responsibility. "You have to take the difficult decisions about defence budgets, and about whether or not to send your armed forces into harm's way on operations. But you also have the responsibility to explain to your taxpayers why defence matters. You must frame the arguments and lead the debates. You must explain not just the true costs of defence, but also the real benefits of defence. Security is precious. And freedom is priceless. But neither comes for free. We have to be able,

and willing, to defend both. That's why defence matters."

Some elements from the meeting draw the attention. Firstly it was noteworthy that there was no delegation of the United States present at the meeting of the Assembly. Of course the reason has to be found in the budget discussions that are still going on in the US parliament and had nothing to do with the US commitment within NATO. But at certain points their absence, and therefore the few reactions of the Russian delegation, was noted.

Secondly, it is worthwhile mentioning that on several occasions questions were raised on the European Union December summit on defence. Throughout the discussions it became clear that everybody is looking towards this summit with a lot of expectations. The summit was repeatedly described as a 'key moment'!

The Defence and Security Committee

On Saturday and Sunday the members of the Assembly met in five Committees, namely 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 and NATO. As usual, EUROMIL's President, Emmanuel Jacob, participated as an observer in the Defence and Security Committee.

After having been welcomed by the Chairperson, the Canadian Joseph A. Day, the Committee meeting started with a panel on Smart Defence. The Ministers of Defence of Croatia, Ante Kotromanovic, and Slovenia, Roman Jakic, presented the way their countries



are dealing with Smart Defence. The Croatian MoD said that the crisis had the advantage of making politicians and military leaders “think out of the box”. In his turn the Slovenian MoD stated that “multinational initiatives” were, among others, the answer to the crisis. Discussing the fact that the US already warned the Europeans several times that they should not always count on the American support, it was noted that European nations should invest themselves more in their defence. Both MoDs agreed that it will become a big challenge and even a struggle to survive without this support.

After the panel discussion, the Chief of the Croatian Armed Forces General Staff, General Drago Lovric, gave an overview on the evaluation facing the 21st century security challenges. He explained that it is the ambition of the Croatian Armed Forces to keep the current defence budget on the same level in the next three years. According to him, one of the success factors is the regional collaboration on several issues such as air policing. More information on the Croatian Armed Forces was added on Sunday by Navy Commander, Rear Admiral Robert Hranj.

A very interesting presentation was given by the Deputy Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Lieutenant General Mark O. Schissler. He gave a comprehensive overview of the ongoing NATO operations. He also looked towards the future and the challenges that lay ahead of NATO.

The French parliamentarian, Xavier Pintat, reported on the draft report of the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities on Smart Defence and Pooling and Sharing. He concluded that there are essentially five conditions for the success of Smart Defence and Pooling and Sharing:

- they must not be used as an excuse to reduce defence expenditure;
- they must remain an initiative led by and for countries;
- we must continue to ensure complementarity between both in order to avoid duplication;
- greater focus must be placed on development of future capabilities;
- the place of European defence industries must be preserved.

A point of discussion between the Committee members was the 2% of GDP for defence expenditures. While some members expressed the idea that it would probably be better to look more on the outcome of defence initiatives, others were of the opinion that the GDP norm was the best way for comparing. However, they agreed that it could lead to misinterpretations in case different

elements were being compared.

Closing the first day of the Committee meetings, the general rapporteur, Sven Mikser, from Estonia, reported on the draft general report on Afghanistan 2014 and beyond. Mikser concluded that three themes should guide NATO and its partner nations in their negotiation on the future relationship with Afghanistan: reinvestment, partnership and consolidation. Alliance members should not see the post-2014 agreements with Afghanistan as something that can bring room in their budgets, but as an opportunity to reinvest in the future of Afghanistan they assisted over in the last decade. The debate on Afghanistan continued on Sunday with a debate on a draft resolution “Afghanistan, a renewed security, political and economic roadmap for 2014 and beyond” that has been unanimously adopted by the Committee members and on Monday by the plenary meeting.

More information can be found online at nato-pa.int

EJ



Photos: EUROMIL and NATO PA

BERLIN SECURITY CONFERENCE 2013

By EUROMIL

The Berlin Security Conference 2013 / the 12th Congress on European Security and Defence took place on 26 and 27 November 2013 in Berlin. The title of this year's Berlin Security Conference was “Post-Afghanistan – new requirements and opportunities for politics, military and industry”.

The Berlin Security Conference (BSC) is an initiative of the *Behörden Spiegel*. The congress was established in 2001 and under the title “Congress on European Defence”. As security and defence aspects are closely

related, the congress began to broaden its focus and to deal with both subjects. For this reason it was renamed in 2008 as “Congress on European Security and Defence”.

In his opening speech Robert Walter MP, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and President of the European Security and Defence Association (ESDA) said: “I hope we can agree on is that Afghanistan in 2013 is different from Afghanistan in 2001. We can only be encouraged by the progress

we are witnessing in the country in terms of economic activity, access to education and healthcare. While our work is not over, there have been significant improvements on which we must continue to build.”

Of course the BSC also focused on the upcoming EU summit on defence. Speakers and panellists looked at what the future holds for the Common Defence and Security Policy (CDSP), bringing together different elements of the debate with a key focus on the EU Industry Strategy and the new

challenges for Europe beyond Afghanistan – with a special focus on Africa and the Middle East.

Just like it did in the past years, EUROMIL participated at one of the panels during the conference. This year's theme was **“The Human Factor in Crisis Management – a comprehensive approach”**.

As a panellist, EUROMIL's President, Emmanuel Jacob, stated that “it is important to recognise that the soldier is no longer a “fighter” in the traditional sense, but rather a mediator and conveyor of certain, often humanitarian, values 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 workers with the 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 human, fundamental and democratic rights. Rights some of these soldiers do not enjoy themselves. (...)

Soldiers should, and will, go where ordered! But the appropriate training and equipment must be in place to ensure that potential casualties are minimised. While service conditions, obviously, entail certain threats, lives of soldiers should not be put

unavoidably at risk, or without a clear and legitimate military purpose. This implies the need for sound strategies, proper equipment, well-equipped medical facilities as well as social protection. (...)

In 10 points, divided into phases before, during and after deployment, EUROMIL seeks to raise awareness of the request of soldiers, advocating among other points for legal security for soldiers by reality checked mandates, caveats and rules of engagement; extensive training as joint forces including comprehensive education on languages, 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.” *EJ*



Photo: Behoerden Spiegel/Dombrowsky

EMI AND THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

By EUROMIL

The European Movement (EMI) is an international organisation open to all political, economical, social and cultural trends in civil society. Its objective is to “contribute to the establishment of a united, federal Europe founded on the principles of peace, democracy, liberty, solidarity, and respect for basic human rights. It seeks to provide a structure to encourage and facilitate the active participation of citizens and civil society organisations in the development of a united Europe”. Its 42 National Councils and 32 associated Member Organisations work towards bringing together representatives from European associations, political parties, enterprises, trade unions and individual lobbyists. EUROMIL is one of the associated Member Organisations of EMI.

On Friday 29 November 2013, the European Movement International organised its Member Council in The Hague. EMI has set out new policy demands on sustainable development, combatting euroscepticism and ensuring the European elections 2014 are held under the competences granted by the Lisbon Treaty. The economic crisis has created problems for European integration. EMI supports the creation of a new plan for sustainable

development and employment which should focus on a EU special programme of public investments for the production and financing of European public goods (renewable energy, research and innovation, infrastructural networks, ecological agriculture, protection of the environment and cultural heritage, etc.) and a special European Solidarity Fund to create new jobs.

EMI's Member Council also discussed and approved a recommendation on the upcoming European Council on the future of the CSDP. EUROMIL's President, Emmanuel Jacob, participated at this debate in The Hague. EMI is convinced that only deeper integration in the field of defence and security policy will allow the EU to maintain its military capabilities, strengthen its global position and permanently ensure its security. Important provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, which allow for closer cooperation in the field of security and defence, have not been used yet.

EMI calls upon the EU heads of state and government at the European Council on 19-20 December 2013 in Brussels:

- to develop a strategic approach which sets out Europe's common security interests and strategic priorities in a “White paper

on defence”;

- to strengthen the European defence industry;
- to make better use of the Comprehensive Approach;
- to commit to the development of civilian and military capabilities as to close the gap between the CSFP and CSDP objectives and the available capabilities;
- to stimulate civilian and military synergies;
- to ensure the rights of military personnel serving in EU missions and pursue deeper cooperation and harmonization in this field, like joint training and the development of common standards regarding living and working conditions; - to identify concrete ways to increase cooperation with NATO and decide on a solid follow-up including regular meetings of a Council of Defence Ministers and a progress monitoring mechanism, like a roadmap.

Detailed information on these recommendations together with all relevant documents, such as EUROMIL's position paper, can be found online at: europeanmovement.eu *EJ*



Photo: EMI

EUROMIL & ODIHR: THE ROLE OF MILITARY ASSOCIATIONS IN PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS OF ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

By EUROMIL

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL) convened a roundtable meeting on “The role of Military Associations in Protecting Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel in Southern Europe” on 19 November 2013 in Madrid.

The meeting, which brought together representatives from military associations, national authorities, inter-governmental organisations, NGOs and academia from beyond the region, aimed at providing a platform for sharing experiences and views regarding the realisation of the right of association and related rights for armed forces personnel in Southern Europe.

The participants in the meeting discussed issues and current developments regarding the respect of the rights and freedoms of military personnel, including the right of association. Indeed, military personnel in Southern Europe face common and specific problems that need to be tackled simultaneously. These start from the imposition of undue restrictions on the right of association and the lack of dialogue between the political and military authorities and representatives of military personnel. In some of these countries, although the conditions to an effective representation of armed forces personnel are enshrined in national laws, the authorities seem to fear military associations and do not adequately implement the legislation. Representatives of military associations participating in the meeting called for trust from the authorities and emphasised that soldiers are only “Citizens in Uniform”, i.e. human beings who want to be treated as any other citizen. Recommendations as well as potential ways forward were discussed and will certainly come back on the EUROMIL agenda. *CH*



Photos: EUROMIL

EUROMIL STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

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

EUROMIL is concerned about the situation in Ukraine which drastically changed in the past weeks. Through peaceful demonstrations and actions the Ukrainian people wants to raise its voice and express its wish for a new dialogue between Ukraine and the European Union.

EUROMIL is aware that Ukrainian military personnel are not allowed to participate in (political) demonstrations. However, we are also informed that they support the European choice of the people of Ukraine.

EUROMIL calls on all parties not to use force to demonstrate their opinion or as a reaction to these public demonstrations. EUROMIL especially calls on the Ukrainian government not to use its armed forces against unarmed demonstrators and fellow citizens but to start a dialogue with all the parties involved and bring in a peaceful way an end to this crisis.

EUROMIL demands that the human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, of the Ukraine people are fully respected by the Government.

Brussels, 12 December 2013

EUROMIL STATEMENT ON PENSIONS

“Full-time professional members of the armed forces should be entitled to an adequate retirement pension ...” (*Art 65 of the Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on ‘Human rights of members of the armed forces’*)

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During EUROMIL’s Presidium Meetings and throughout the national reports delivered six-monthly by our member associations, our particular attention has been drawn on the ubiquitous and profound changes in the field of (military) pensions. EUROMIL understands that the financial and economic crisis pushed governments to take some initiatives to keep the state budget healthy or at least survive the toughest period. But EUROMIL always was and still is convinced that retired soldiers should continue to be treated in a way to keep their living conditions on the same level as during their active serving period. It is unacceptable to reduce pensions suchlike that retired soldiers and the members of their families have to abandon their most basic needs such as health care, other basic care or the participation in social activities. The right to an adequate retirement pension is one of the elements of the Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on ‘Human rights of members of the armed forces’ and as such accepted by all member states of the Council of Europe.

Since several years, EUROMIL has been remarking that soldiers pay twice for this crisis. We share the efforts that every citizen is making, but we pass for a second time at the pay desk as members of the armed forces. More than any other, our institution ‘the defence forces’ and our military profession are influenced by this crisis. And once again, this has a negative influence on retired soldiers, because several European pension systems base the calculation of their retirement pension on the payment scheme of active serving soldiers.

Pension system is one of the basic elements of a military career that should be discussed between the Government and representatives of military personnel. Pension systems are inextricably linked with the active career and should therefore be treated with due attention and commitment.

Brussels, 12 December 2013



***The President, the Board
and the Staff of EUROMIL
Wish You a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!***



European Organisation of Military Associations

EUROMIL Calendar 2014

12 February 2014	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
27 March 2014	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
23 April 2014	Board Meeting	Lisbon, Portugal
24-25 April 2014	Presidium Meeting	Lisbon, Portugal
19 June 2014	Board Meeting	Brussels, Belgium



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