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COVER NOTE

From: European External Action Service (EEAS)
To: Political and Security Committee
Delegations
Subject: CSDP Transition Strategies – recent lessons

Delegations will find attached the EEAS document with reference 01454/14.

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EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



**Crisis Management and Planning
Directorate - CMPD**

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CSDP Transition Strategies – recent lessons

Transition from/to CSDP missions/operations is that phase of a plan that facilitates or bridges the drawdown, or build-up, of one crisis management instrument to the engagement of longer term lines of activity with the aim of sustaining progress achieved

1. This paper is a contribution to the CSDP road map, and although it is by nature quite broad it is targeted at direct improvements for transition strategies from/to CSDP missions/operations. The paper is also considered timely as attempts are made to "operationalise" the EU's Comprehensive Approach¹, noting that CSDP is very unlikely to be the end of any EU engagement.

2. The Comprehensive Approach, as set out in Council Conclusions adopted on 12 May,² stresses the need for earlier and more coordinated planning for a smooth transition from one form of EU engagement to another, in particular regarding transition from short- or medium term activity to longer-term development cooperation, and from CSDP missions and operations to other forms of EU engagement, to ensure that the achievements of EU action can be sustained. The Council stated that ongoing work on transition strategies should be taken forward as a matter of priority. The CSDP Lessons Report highlighted that one of the key lessons was the need for a more comprehensive approach. PSC discussion on the Lessons Report highlighted (inter alia) the importance of planning and transition issues in this context. This note will build on these discussions, as well as the Food For Thought paper released by the EEAS on 31 Oct 13³. By conducting a stock-take of recent experiences with CSDP missions/operations⁴ it proposes improvements in current planning methodology, and provides detail for additional options to facilitate transition. The note examines EU processes and for clarity it does not touch upon coordination with third parties; this would, of course, be required for all examples of transition.

¹ Council conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach, 12 May 14

² Council conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach, 12 May 14; building on the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, *The EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises*, JOIN (2013) 30 final, dated 11 Dec 13

³ Exit Strategies, EEAS Food for Thought paper, PSC MD119/13, dated 31 Oct 13

⁴ EUPOL and EUSEC RDC, EULEX Kosovo, EUPOL Afghanistan, EUMM Georgia, EUTM Mali, EUCAP Sahel, EUJUST LEX Iraq, EUFOR CAR, and EUAVSEC South Sudan

Strategic Vision

"At its essence, strategy is an intellectual construct linking where you want to be tomorrow in a substantive, concrete manner" Gordon R Sullivan and Michael V Harper

3. The requirement to use strategy to underpin a Comprehensive Approach is well established. As stated in the Council Conclusions on the Comprehensive Approach *"the EU's policies and priorities should follow from common strategic objectives and a clear common vision of what the EU collectively wants to achieve in its external relations or in a particular conflict or crisis situation"*. The Conclusions note the value of regional and thematic strategies and the Joint Framework Documents in this respect. The joined-up use of all EU external policies, instruments and mechanisms, with full respect of the specificities and institutional competencies, driving towards a shared vision for a country or region, is one of the greatest strengths of the EU. The analysis of the political, security, economic and developmental situation of the country, thereby anticipating a course of action and understanding potential external action mechanisms and instruments, will be instrumental in placing any potential CSDP activity in a broader context. This can be achieved through a variety of products, including for example an existing Regional Strategy or a Joint Framework Document, however the Political Framework for Crisis Approach (PFCA) is designed to be a useful tool to establish the strategy required in the event of a crisis.

4. With this understanding, the PFCA offers the opportunity of an early, and concrete, dialogue with the relevant institutions and services thereby setting a firm basis for positioning all mechanisms and instruments – including potential CSDP action – within the suite of likely response options.

"The notion of strategy implies an organised authority capable of sustained action along the lines of policy" Paul H Nitze

5. It is worth reflecting on the current EU construct. The Lisbon Treaty provided substantial changes to improve consistency between different areas of EU external action, but there are still a large range of actors and instruments, including the EEAS, Member States (and their bilateral activity), and the Commission. Thus, there is a cross-over of responsibility in external action, and this complexity of actors requires effective coordination if action is to be as effective as possible.

6. In addition, the failure to fully understand and link in to Member States bilateral activity has led to missed opportunities to exploit synergies in transition. This should be fully exploited from the planning, conduct and review stages of the process, and is an area that could be improved.

7. It is also worth noting that the Comprehensive Approach foresees an increased role of the EU Delegation in bringing together the EU instruments (including from Member States) "on the ground".

Security and Development nexus

"The EU will remain engaged in fragile states, which present particular challenges requiring an integrated response, linking development cooperation, humanitarian relief, conflict prevention as well as peace and state building. In these situations, there is a need to ensure a well-coordinated international response that includes the use of greater flexibility. There must also be a coordinated and coherent approach when engaging the range of instruments available to the EU and its Member States. The work on the security, fragility and development nexus must be taken forward"⁵.

8. Common experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya – going far-beyond EU action - highlight the challenges of bring together different actors in the planning process, particularly in situations which are highly political⁶. As detailed in the Food for Thought paper on Exit Strategies⁷, synchronisation of CSDP planning with the programming of development and other cooperation instruments is difficult, given that they usually, pursue different primary objectives⁸ and are subject to different approval mechanisms. This also relates to both EU institutions and EU Member State development processes. Timing and early engagement/agreement of all relevant actors is key for any option to transition from/to CSDP activity.

⁵ Council conclusions 'Increasing the Impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change', 14 May 12

⁶ An example is the US military spending on road infrastructure in Helmand province, Afghanistan, which required a very large legacy of maintenance far beyond the capability of the development community and host country

⁷ Exit Strategies, EEAS Food for Thought paper, PSC MD119/13, dated 31 Oct 13

⁸ Although ultimately, and in line with the principles underlying the Comprehensive Approach, all these immediate objectives should contribute to a coherent whole "EU objective"

9. While other EU instruments may not need to "take over" the task carried out by a CSDP mission or operation in the classical sense of "transition", CSDP activity can very well be an enabler for future work under other instruments. Similarly, CSDP tasks can benefit and help reinforce already ongoing activities managed under other EU instruments. Niger is a good example where the Commission funded national programme of CT-Sahel has recently ceased; there are reflections on whether the CSDP mission EUCAP Sahel could partially close this gap. Adaptability must be both ways in order to achieve a "win-win" situation.

10. When time permit, joint analysis and common strategy setting, as called for in the Joint Communication, are enablers for more integrated planning, and will help articulate the objectives that can be pursued under different instruments in a mutually reinforcing way.

11. Transition from CFSP/CSDP to support from Development or other EU cooperation instrument also requires a fundamental change in mind-set, notably as we will be moving from a primarily foreign, security policy objective (e.g. crisis management) towards a developmental or other EU cooperation objective (e.g. long-term institution building). It must be clear that one EU instrument cannot "replace" another, each instrument has its own clearly defined purpose, but an instrument could be used to sustain elements of success achieved by another. However, in particular, the transition from a military CSDP operation to non-military instruments can be especially problematic. The recognition that political control, strategic direction, and the decision-making process must also transition from CSDP to another internal EU-lead so that there is no 'impingement' on CFSP competences, or vice versa, as mandated by Article 40 TEU.

12. Transition strategies have to consider, in addition:

- the full, inclusive and transparent participation of all actors (EU institutions and Member States) on the ground and also in Brussels, with particular emphasis on the need for a strong role for the EU delegation;
- the existence of coordination mechanisms aligned on the strategic vision and objectives;
- the ownership of the partner country, underpinned by the political and policy dialogue;
- output, performance and impact indicators and the necessary processes to measure the progress on mandate delivery, in order to better guide the transition.

13. Last but not least, transition must be understood as a two sided process, and not a "translation" or linear succession of CSDP to other instrument. The process of the Strategic Review is a key step when adjustments may need to be made to allow better synergies and coordination with other instruments.

Options for Transition from CSDP

14. a. **No transition is required or possible.** There are circumstances, especially related to confidence building, where there is no requirement or possibility to transition to other means. Current examples could include EUMM Georgia and EUBAM Rafah. For EUMM Georgia the monitoring of a ceasefire agreement is specifically a CSDP task (Art 43(1)). For EUBAM Rafah; if the mission is unable to monitor the border crossing point at Rafah (as agreed in AMA 2005) due to broader political constraints then it is likely that no other instrument would be able to do that. However this may not mean a sudden drawdown or closure; adaption of the mission in its final stages could be considered.

b. **Transition to host country.** The ideal, and desired, transition where possible. This is currently being considered for EUTM Mali, where the host country is foreseen to be able to conduct the majority of tasks that are being undertaken by the mission. This is also partly foreseen for EUSEC and EUPOL RDC. As there may be concerns that the host country is not ready to sustain the progress made by the CSDP mission, impact assessments and evaluations should support this option DEVCO's experience with aid effectiveness principles (including the New Deal for working in fragile and conflict affected states) and how national capacity can be supported and built in order to support such a transition can be very useful in this option.

c. **Transition to a third party** (UN, AU, etc). Where CSDP activity is designed as a "bridging" capability and partners are prepared or preparing to sustain the CSDP role. An example is EUFOR Tchad/RCA and more recently Central African Republic where it is envisaged that the operation will transition to the UN. Transition to the UN (UNIOGBIS) was explored for the EUSSR Guinea-Bissau mission.

d. **Transition to MS bilateral activity or to another EU instrument.** Transition to MS bilateral activity was an avenue explored for the transition of EUAVSEC South Sudan and EUPOL and EUSEC RDC, but it has not yet achieved any concrete results. It remains a critical area for

development, including with Third parties. Transition to another EU instrument has historically the most common transition strategy, and examples include BiH, Iraq, and DRC. There are a range of options available, principally development programmes, but this could also include other forms of CFSP support under the possible use of Article 28 (including through Member States funding), dedicated teams within the EUSR office, and/or strengthening either the local Delegation or EUSR with relevant expertise. Agreement has to be reached with the other EU instrument that they will take on the transition activity, and a clear coherent strategy from the outset can be instrumental in this. Understanding, and agreement, of likely CFSP timelines and objectives must be provided, noting that this may impinge on Member States desire to have very broad objectives and short, politically driven, timelines. The failure of transition in EUAVSEC South Sudan has provided a clear lesson in this regard.

15. In practise, there are a number ways to facilitate transition, and in reality CSDP transition strategies will often include elements of more than one of these options.

a. **A mix of short-term extension and progressive reduction of CSDP activity.** If the CSDP mission is close to transition but there remains a concern about closing the mission fully, there is an option to significantly draw-down the mission in country and retain a small cell to assess/monitor the situation and surge capacity into country if required. The funding for this would come from the CSDP budget as the mission would either not close, or be reconstituted as a small CSDP monitoring mission.

b. **Short-term bridging capability.** If, as is currently the case with DRC, the planning assumption for transition changes due to events on the ground, then Article 28 could be considered to guarantee sustainment whilst development programmes are finalised and put into place. The practical difficulty of ensuring that the transition starts while development activity may not be fully planned is recognised, and using Article 28 (in this case as both short-term and clearly focussed) could prove useful if the political decision to close the mission has been taken.

Strengthening Planning Methodology

16. Some steps can be taken now, and indeed some have been used for considerations on Ukraine, to improve our collective planning methodology:

- A coherent strategy, such as a PFCA, agreed through a consultative process between Commission, EEAS, and Member States, will enhance understanding and collaboration between different EU actors. Overarching EU strategy documents, such as Joint Framework Documents or regional strategies, can greatly assist in providing a common vision for EU action. Shared conflict analysis⁹ helps enhance such understanding and collaboration;

- Collaborative planning at this stage between EEAS and relevant Commission services is instrumental as it may provide better understanding of the (collective) tasks to be achieved. To make this fully effective an agreement of the EU's objectives and instruments should be in place in the PFCA, so that CSDP planners and DEVCO/FPI/ELARG programmers already have senior-level agreement of likely tasking and could start parallel planning. In concrete terms this would result in the following:
 - for CSDP: a planning process that attempts to relate the CSDP effort to what is already planned and / or ongoing by EU or other partners. This should also allow "tighter" and clearly focussed objectives for CSDP;
 - for EU actors managing other instruments: to agree as part of the CSDP planning process how they may adjust implementation of ongoing work in view of the CSDP action and what are timelines for possible adjustment of their future planning to the new situation created by the CSDP effort. This could relate to new activities in parallel to the CSDP action still ongoing (to support or complement or take advantage of it) and activities foreseen after closure of the mission / operation. Such timelines can then be incorporated in CSDP planning and review processes.

- Collaborative planning should continue at the CMC stage in particular between CMPD, the EEAS Geographical desks, and Commission (DEVCO, FPI, ELARG) as it may provide better understanding of what, how and when CSDP will deliver, and more realistic mandate durations required for CSDP activity, if we seek to transition to development means. Planners/programmers will also require an understanding of Member States bilateral activity (active and planned) to make this coherent. This will also be key during operational planning by the Civil or Military Operation Commanders;

⁹ The EEAS and DEVCO have developed and agreed a common approach to conflict analysis that is increasingly being applied in practice: Guidance note on Conflict Analysis in support of EU external action

- At the Strategic Review stage, and as we get closer to understanding when CSDP objectives are likely to be achieved, then a Transition Road Map prepared in coordination with all relevant actors can be a useful tool for joint planning and programming. A dedicated task Force might usefully be established to that purpose. This is being utilised for DRC and EULEX Kosovo and it is already showing great utility;
- Collaborative planning between Member States and EEAS/Commission can be challenging. There is no single body or mechanism that is constructed to fully support the comprehensive approach. In developing the Comprehensive Approach, five different Council working bodies¹⁰ provided advice on a single document. This process was necessary to establish the overarching common principles, but in terms of implementation consideration should be given on how to streamline this process in the future. It will be important for CSDP to draw on other processes, such as Joint Programming or Early Warning System assessments, which can help inform and facilitate joint planning of CSDP transition;
- In order to inform, and strengthen, the Brussels process, consideration needs to be given on how best to coordinate in-country. The EU Head of Delegation has a key role in assessing and reporting on coordinated EU action, and acting as coordinating function in providing a single "whole of EU" message to the host country.

17. In order to make improvements to transition strategies we should re-consider our approach to planning, programming, the sharing of information, collaboration and process. This may require a significant shift in the mind-set of those responsible within Member States, the Commission and the EEAS, but it could realise significant progress in delivering a fully comprehensive methodology.

18. We would welcome PSC views on how to take this forward, including as we develop the Action Plan on the Comprehensive Approach.

¹⁰ CODEV, EUMC, CIVCOM, PMG, and COHAFA