

***Keynote Presentation for the 2010 Annual Security Review Conference, Working Session II:  
'The Role of the OSCE in Early Warning, Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Crisis  
Management, and Post-conflict Rehabilitation***

**Brigadier-General Giovanni Manione,  
Deputy Director of the European Union's Crisis Management and Planning Directorate**

I am grateful for the opportunity I have been given to speak at the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference on an issue that is of common interest and that lately has become the object of studies and of growing interest within the Union.

A core objective of EU foreign policy is the development of an effective multilateral system with a strong United Nations at the centre, supported by regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. In this context of course the OSCE is a major actor and the European Union attaches great importance to its partnership with the OSCE.

The EU and the OSCE share many objectives and it is only natural that we work closely together to advance the causes of security, human rights and sustainable development. It is a reality that such cooperation is well developed, both at headquarters and in the field, and still growing.

I am speaking to you at a special moment in the development of the European Union. The Lisbon Treaty is now in force and the Union is working as a whole to make the implementation of its provisions a success. This is an historic step which offers the opportunity to strengthen the EU's international impact and strategic vision, through streamlined decision-making and greater policy coherence and consistency. Work is advancing on the creation of the European External Action Service, which will operate under the authority of the High Representative, Ms Catherine Ashton. By bringing together many of the instruments of our global engagement - political, economic, development, crisis management and diplomatic - the European External Action Service will lead to more integrated policy-making and delivery in support of our strategic goals.

This, of course, will enhance our capability to interact with our partners and, as a consequence, also make the EU a better interlocutor for the OSCE in the fields of both crisis management and conflict prevention.

These changes within the EU take place at a moment when there is a growing consensus on the need to apply a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management and peace-building. The same goes for the need to take into account the evident links between security and development.

In the last ten years, the EU has come a long way in developing its crisis management operations within what is now called the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

To date, we have deployed 23 Operations and Missions. In doing so, the EU has paid particular attention to developing a more and more comprehensive approach in all CSDP crisis management operations. To this aim a wide range of crisis management instruments, in addition to political, diplomatic and humanitarian efforts, have been developed: military capabilities, that must be timely available for both robust expeditionary intervention and stabilization operations in the framework of so called "expanded Petersberg tasks"; civilian capabilities, able to contribute to internal stability of a crisis area, both through disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR)/security sector reform (SSR) activities and executive responsibilities, mainly in the area of police, rule of law, and civil administration; and finally, some activities comprised in the large field of mid/long term economic development, capacity building and reconstruction programs, managed now by European Commission, will move under the responsibility of the External Action Service.

But the military and civilian interventions cannot be simply sequenced, with the military paving the way and ensuring security until civilian organizations and local authorities are able to take over this task and make progress in achieving a sustainable stability.

In today's complex crises, military and civilian efforts need to be carefully tailored in size, application and time - with an increased importance on planning at the strategic level in order to harmonise all the actions in theatre. Unfortunately the artificial division between military and civilian actions doesn't reflect the practical situation in the field or the specific requirements needed to carry on an effective crisis management intervention.

Comprehensive approaches have been developed at the domestic and international levels. At the latter, it is mainly the UN, the EU, and NATO that have developed concepts for comprehensive approaches.

But often, both at the conceptual level and in its implementation, the comprehensive approach poses challenges that tend to be underestimated. First of all, there is no single and coherent model. Instead, a multitude of different and partly contradictory concepts on a comprehensive approach have emerged in recent years. While most actors today acknowledge the necessity for better coordination and collective efforts, their approaches diverge significantly regarding priorities, means, and suggested end-states of crisis management. Therefore, it may be appropriate to speak in plural about "comprehensive approaches". Moreover, strategies and models can signify *de facto* a comprehensive approach without explicitly using the term. This points towards terminology variations that risk causing difficulties when attempting to link or compare particular approaches. Commonly defined goals and coordination often exist only in general terms. Instead, diverging objectives and interests give rise to conflicting interaction between actors and tasks.

In this context the EU elaborated its concepts of Civil Military Coordination and Comprehensive Approach. The EU strives, through using the wide range of instruments at its disposal (political, diplomatic, humanitarian, economic, military and civilian), and through close international cooperation, to have a coherent and holistic approach. This approach appears to be the only effective tool to achieve maximum impact and exert maximum political leverage in a given crisis. Of course that doesn't mean we have already achieved the optimal level of internal and external coordination but I do think we are on the right way and the results begin to be encouraging.

Allow me now to mention an example of the above described approach that involves both the EU and the OSCE.

Following the August 2008 war in Georgia (GEO), EUMM Georgia was deployed on 1 October 2008 on the basis of the EU mediated Six-Point Agreement (12 August 2008) and subsequent implementation measures (8 September 2008). The overall EU objective is to contribute to the long term stability of GEO and the surrounding region. In the short term, the EU objective was the stabilisation of the situation with a reduced risk of a resumption of hostilities, in full compliance with the abovementioned agreements. The Mission tasks are, therefore, stabilisation, normalisation, confidence-building and making a contribution to informing European policy and future EU engagement.

The rapid deployment of EUMM Georgia established the preconditions for the withdrawal of the Russian Armed Forces and, subsequently, the stabilisation of the situation in monitoring the administrative boundary lines (ABL's) between GEO and the breakaway regions South Ossetia (SO) and Abkhazia (ABK). A little more than one year after the war a decrease of significant security incidents was recorded. Nevertheless, the situation on the ground remains fragile and unpredictable. In parallel to the deployment of the EUMM, the EU appointed the EUSR for the Crisis in Georgia. Since 2006 the EUSR for the South Caucasus (responsible for Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan) contributes to the development of a comprehensive EU policy for the South Caucasus. The structure includes the EU Border Support Team, which has been developing a border management strategy and implementation plan for Georgia and is building the capacity of Georgian border guards.

On the other hand, after the disbandment of the UNOMIG and OSCE missions in 2009, there is no monitoring presence in ABK and SO anymore, and the EUMM is the only international monitoring

presence on the ground and it operates along the administrative boundary lines. Therefore, with a view to the main objective to stabilise the Region, EU / EUMM has to remain active and stay involved in confidence building measures and conflict resolution efforts. In July 2009 the Council extended the mandate of the EUMM Georgia for another year until 14 September 2010, with a focus on contributing towards the overall EU efforts towards a lasting conflict solution in Georgia, and especially through the monitoring of the implementation of the ceasefire agreements of 12 August and 8 September 2008.

On the political field, the Geneva talks are currently the only forum in which all parties are represented. In Geneva IX (28/29 January 2010) all participants agreed that there was a need for strong security guarantees. However, the positions on a non-use of force agreement were contradictory. Nevertheless, the Geneva talks are proving to be the sole channel through which political dialogue can be assured. The dialogue in Geneva has to prevent a consolidation of the status quo, preventing the freezing of the conflict through dialogue and confidence building.

This leads me to considering that further cooperation between our organisations aimed at real conflict resolution in Georgia is not only possible but, I would say, essential. During recent EU-OSCE talks the possibility to conduct a joint "lessons learned" exercise was explored and this should lead to the development of a new common strategy in the region.

In addition to the necessity to improve the international capacity to undertake crisis management operations in a timely and comprehensive manner, within the EU we do think that more and more attention should be paid to finding ways to prevent crises occurring in the first place.

The enormous cost in resources and in human suffering caused by violent conflicts calls for major efforts in preventing conflicts. This is, above all, a moral and political imperative, but it also makes economic sense. Preventing conflicts (especially violent ones) from erupting could allow resources to be channelled to more worthwhile needs. It also ensures that gains made through economic development are not irreparably lost.

European integration and EU enlargement have been a major contribution to conflict prevention in Europe over the past half century. The Union has successfully contributed to spreading democracy, prosperity, security and stability across most of the European continent. During the 1990s the values underlying this peace project were transformed into the core of the EU's external policy under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

In adopting the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, the Gothenburg European Council of 2001 marked a new policy departure for the EU to make conflict prevention a central objective of its external relations. Not only was conflict prevention to be mainstreamed at the policy level and in agreements concluded with external countries (such as, for example, the Cotonou agreement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP countries)), but conflict prevention was also made operational and integrated into all external policies and activities, including the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), development cooperation and international trade. The EU's approach to conflict prevention is characterised by a cooperative approach to facilitate peaceful solutions to disputes and implies addressing the root-causes of conflicts, drawing on all instruments at the EU's disposal, both community and intergovernmental. The European Union is the world's foremost donor of development and humanitarian aid, accounting for 55 % of the total. Development cooperation automatically affects conflict situations, either by exacerbating them or by reducing them. It is therefore essential that development co-operation tackles the root causes of conflict directly, thereby accentuating its ability to be used as a tool to reduce conflict.

The reduction of poverty is the key goal of development cooperation. Poverty is often a prime source and outcome of conflict. Development and conflict prevention, through the reduction of poverty, are thus intrinsically linked.

Conflict prevention is a central and integrated part of the EU's efforts to promote peace and security. But, as we all know, we are also confronted with conflicts which have already broken out or have even turned into protracted conflicts, and in any event are beyond the stage of prevention. I am afraid that this will also be the case in the future, despite all our efforts in the area of long-term

conflict prevention. This is why the international community needs to be equipped with effective instruments in the areas of conflict resolution and, often in parallel, crisis management.

As far as conflict resolution goes, the tool of first response should be third-party mediation, which can also serve as a relatively quick and direct link between early warning and early action.

We consider mediation to be an effective and cost-efficient instrument for conflict prevention and resolution. It is a potentially relevant feature of peacemaking at all stages of inter- and intra-state conflicts: before they escalate into armed conflict, after the outbreak of violence, and during the implementation of peace agreements.

Compared with the human and economic costs of violent conflict and the financial costs of peacekeeping and crisis management operations, building our mediation capacity and expertise is an inexpensive venture. Yet the benefits can be huge.

The EU has recently started to strengthen its mediation and dialogue capacities and is committed to developing a more systematic and coordinated approach to its involvement in mediation processes.

We do so in close cooperation with the United Nations and its Mediation Support Unit in the Department of Political Affairs. We support, and see great potential for, the strengthening of conflict prevention and resolution capabilities of other actors, such as the OSCE, and are committed to working together closely with them.

Mediation processes are often identified with outstanding personalities who play a key and visible role. Mediation is, however, a team effort which requires substantial expertise, knowledge, technical capacity, engagement at different levels over time as well as co-operation with other actors in order to be effective and to improve its chances of success.

Strengthening mediation capacity, therefore, also requires strengthening mediation support capacity.

This involves providing mediators with adequate political, technical, administrative and financial support; assessment of lessons learned and identification of best practices; and, providing training and capacity building opportunities for mediators, their teams and, possibly, the conflict parties.

While mediation is a tested instrument in support of non-violent and sustainable conflict resolution, it is, of course, not a panacea. There will always be cases in which it will not work, because the conflict parties reject negotiations or are unwilling to forge a settlement. In such instances, we need to be able to apply crisis management instruments which allow us to halt conflict escalation, provide a stabilising presence for political, economic and development activities or support post-conflict reconstruction and state-building efforts.

In conclusion, the EU is enhancing its capabilities to operate in the whole spectrum of actions, with a particular emphasis on conflict prevention, so as to prevent and, if necessary, to manage and resolve conflicts by applying all the resources available within the Union.

In this process the creation of the External Action Service is of paramount importance, since it will enhance the ability of the Union to apply in a coordinated way all the necessary resources.

This real comprehensive approach cannot, of course, be completely effective without close cooperation with other relevant international and regional actors which are traditionally our partners in this endeavour. The OSCE is, of course, one of the most suitable partners and we are very much looking forward to strengthening our cooperation.