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1. PROGRAM

Wednesday 26th

- at 13h00 Arrival in Brussels, accommodation at Hotel Plesky, free time
- at 18h00-19h30 Meeting at the European Parliament with the Advisor of MEP Matti Wuori, Ms. Hennariikka Nieminen
- at 20h30 Unofficial dinner with ca. 10 international trainees from NATO-secretariat

Thursday 27th

- at 9h30 Meeting with Finnish MoD's representative, Ms Mari Eteläpää
Permanent representation of FIN to the EU (EUE/Rue de Trèves 100)
- at 10h00 Meeting with Finnish deputy military representative, captain Henrik Nystén at EUE
- at 11h00 Meeting with commander Mikko Santavuori at EU Military Staff
(EUMS/Avenue de Cortenbergh 150)
Meeting with Major Vesa Virtanen at EU Military Committee
(EUMC/Avenue de Cortenbergh 150)
- at 14h00 Meeting with Advisor Juha Savolainen and MoD representative Juha Harjula at Finnish Representation to NATO
- at 20h00 Unofficial dinner with Slovenian Youth Atlantic Treaty Organisation (YATA) representatives in Brussels

Friday 28th

- at 8h30 Belgia Euro-Atlantic Association's (AEAB) 3rd Interuniversity Conference at Egmont Palace, Brussels
- at 9h00 Welcome address by amb. Prosper Thuysbaert, president of AEAB
Address by a representative of Belgian Foreign Minister's Cabinet
Address by amb. Marc Otte, Head of Task Force ESDP, EU
Address by Belgian Ambassador to NATO
- at 10h45 Working Groups
1. The scope of the future transatlantic agenda
2. Crisis management and defence – division of labour or equal partners
3. US-EU: partners for global security
- at 13h00 Lunch
- at 14h30 Working Groups continue
- at 17h00 Plenary session with presentation by three rapporteurs
- at 17h30 Address by Belgian MoD official and by Working group leaders
- at 18h15 Closing remarks by president of AEAB
- at 18h30 Reception
- at 20.00 Unofficial dinner with Slovenian YATA representatives and two AEAB representatives

Saturday 29th

- At 12h00 Arrival in Turku

2. VISITS TO EUROPEAN AND EURO-ATLANTIC INSTITUTIONS

The visits provided me with the best part of my excursion. The complexity of the EU bureaucracy is overwhelming, and the inflow of information from multiple sources seems very challenging to control. My goal on the visits was to deepen my knowledge on how the institution visited works, what kind of impact it has on the European/Euro-Atlantic security and defence policy, and how well a small state - as Finland - can effect the decision making within the institution.

The following summary does not do justice for my discussions in EUE/NAE/EUMS/EUMC, it is hard to summarise all the topics discussed. Much of the information was not new, but maybe presented from a different angle. Also, the focus of this report is on the Conference, and, thus, most attention is provided to it.

My first visit was to the **European Parliament (EP)**, where I had the chance to have a long discussion with MEP Matti Wuori's assistant, Hennariikka Nieminen.

Mainly, my previous impression of the EP as having only marginal influence to CFSP/ESDP issues, strengthened. The EP discusses all relevant policy issues concerning the EU, but on CFSP issues it gives mainly moral legitimacy for decisions made by the Council.

MEP, French Philippe Morillon (PPE/ED) has recently made a memo on ESDP, that has strong emphasis on strengthening the European capabilities. His memo is debated at the moment.

On my day of visit, the EP was briefed on Iraqi crisis. The EP made already in January a statement condemning possible action in Iraq without a UN Security council mandate. They are working at this moment on the new one.

NATO cooperation has presented itself as a NATO Parliamentary assembly's and EP's Foreign Affairs Committee's joint meeting. A more interesting development is, that the information gathering by MEP's on ESDP issues has become more difficult, since NATO documents have a higher security standard and cannot be openly distributed to MEP's.

In conclusion, the EP is an institution that has mainly moral value on the second pillar issues, and the EP role is not likely to increase after the Convention. Still, sometimes the EP can use its instruments of influence vigorously. When it comes to the influence of small states, it is relatively small, since the EP is under heavy lobbying activity, where "the winners" are huge corporations and transnational actors – often representing the interests of bigger countries and their industries.

Other observations and personal conclusions on the study trip: On the question of Iraq situation's influence to ESDP, it was low, since the EU has no common policy on the subject. One got the feeling that its time for reconstruction of relations between EU member states and the transatlantic link.

I could not be without having the sense of unnecessary duplication while hearing about the rapid development of EU capabilities. The borrowing of NATO operational HQ for operation planning didn't seem to work without frictions, and the larger EU members have already promised to develop national based operation HQ's for future operations.

ESDP had also taken the first steps at looking inward, since discussions on possible cooperation on civilian WMD protection measures within the EU area have started. Before the ESDP has only been

oriented at managing Petersberg tasks out of the EU area. My basic impression is that a lot is achieved on paper, but there is still a long way to go before getting practical achievements for example on logistical shortcomings and C3I – something that the US has and the EU has not.

The interesting question of possible outcomes of the Luxembourg, Belgium, France and Germany meeting to boost the ESDP was answered with scepticism. Nothing can be achieved without the UK.

I won't even try to give an in depth report here on the current status of all ESDP developments. ECAP is advancing, and so is the first EU "lilliput" operation in Macedonia.

Even if Finland has high representation in the EUMC, its influence might not be as strong, since Finland is not a member of NATO. This doesn't result from the decision making structure, where unanimity is required, but from the possible shortage of information suffered by the non-NATO states.

The EUMS is only a strategic level body, and, compared to NATO, lacks much behind in assets.

NATO seems to be in a halt because of the Iraq crisis. There are three possible options for the alliance in the future: go on as before, become a toolbox, or, be devalued to just a network of bases for the US. The negotiations on TAE agreements showed that the US did not want to restrict the transit of troops in CEE countries, which implies that the last option has been also wanted to keep open. The often in Finnish NATO-debate phrased problem of influence did come across. There are some beliefs that Finnish interests might be jeopardised if Russians can influence decisions and we cannot (this goes to possible crisis management operations).

3. THE 3RD INTERUNIVERSITY CONFERENCE

The conference begun with some disappointments when it was announced that the Belgian Foreign minister, Mr Michel and the US NATO ambassador, Mr. Burns could not attend. The problem of absence repeated itself at the end of the conference when the Belgian defence minister, Mr. Flehaut did not appear. In addition, the promised "internationality" (the first time that invitations had been sent to foreign universities and Atlantic associations) did not occur. 95% of the ca 300 participants came from Belgian universities and were mostly locals.

Never-the-less, the conference was interesting, since the replacements for top level speakers were very professional and interesting, and the participants from the College de l'Europe (Brügge) kept the discussion in the working groups going and made good presentations.

The Belgian Euro-Atlantic Association is in the internet at <http://users.skynet.be/aabbav.ata/>. A publication is to be made on the Conference, which should become accessible in the internet.

I pardon the lack of names for some speakers, but they were not presented that clearly, and the replacements' names were nowhere in writing.

1. The address by the cabinet chief of the Minister of Foreign affairs:

Transatlantic relations facing big problems => time for cool and rational analysis

The background: Is war on terrorism the right response for 911, which was the clearest example of an asymmetric assault? Usually, in Europe seen that terrorism cannot be fought by war. The qualification of the response as war has set the psychological environment to that of fear and anxiety. If occurred in Europe, the attacks would have been interpreted as a major political crisis, not war.

The US has a different view from the European one on international rule. This can be seen also in the European tradition of written constitution where in the US law is used as an instrument, not a goal in itself (pragmatic approach). The US has a similar view on international organisations as instruments that are worked with when they work.

The third big difference between the US and Europeans is the former's way of seeing things more in black and white when the Europeans see a more diffuse world.

In short contradictions:

- US world is that of competition, European that of cooperation
- US lives in a hostile world, Europe in a more relax one
- US uses power, Europe uses political dialogue
- different views on law and power = affectivity vs. legitimacy in action

How did we get there? After WW2, US relied on power, which generated more power, which generates opportunity. The EU has no European security and defence policy, nor common foreign and security policy. There is no influence without power, as the US has taught. The EU cannot tackle its present problems, and thus, it usually directs its look into the future.

European strength would be needed to rebalance the transatlantic relation.

2. Address by Amb. Marc Otte, Head of Task Force ESDP, EU

There is too much time used to talk about each other rather than to each other. The transatlantic problems spring from the 15th century, and the end of the Cold War has just underlined the differences. Still, the transatlantic link is to be preserved because of:

1. Same values of democracy, human rights etc. shared
2. Europeans are the only true military partner for the US
3. Vast economic interconnections

The same threats are perceived, but different responses are suggested. Parameters for a renewed link are: comprehensive approach, inclusiveness, cooperation and rules. In fact, the opinion polls show that the Europeans and Americans agree largely on how to build the international rule!

EU and NATO are to be maintained, for they are reliable, cost efficient and have the same core alliance.

US has to accept the value of soft power.

The problem with ESDP is, that we live in a new world, and the ESDP was built for a post Kosovo world. It needs to find new forms of action.

Also NATO needs to be strengthened and transformed.

3. Address by Belgian Ambassador to NATO

NATO is by definition the best place for transatlantic dialogue. NATO is currently trying to find its new role after its first role as the CW organisation and the second one in crisis management. In the Prague summit the transformation was seen as "new members, new partners and new capabilities". It is good to bear in mind that after NATO's creation no wars between its members have occurred. Some present problems of the organisation are

1. Some of its members have gone from defending democracy to imposing democracy
2. NATO should act within the UN charter and treaties.
3. Is NATO entitled to act out of territory?
 - only the Washington treaty was ratified by national parliaments
 - Summit declarations have only been accepted by governments
4. A difference in threat perception
 - the trauma of 911 not lived as strongly in Europe
5. Does the alliance mean a political decision of solidarity or the coalition of the willing?

4. Workshop 1. The scope of the future transatlantic agenda

There were four presentations on the following subjects:

1. What future for NATO
2. The contribution of NATO and EU new member states to crisis management
3. The role of values in EU-US relations
4. The influence of ESDP on NATO

In the following 1. and 3. are summarised, since the two remaining were not that fruitful.

1. The first presentation was at its best in summarising current challenges in the transatlantic alliance:

The current challenges can be dealt in three main categories: current drift in transatlantic relations, "big bang" enlargement and capabilities gap.

On the first category the current trends (partly on Kagan's "Power and Weakness" –lines) were discussed.

On the second, problems were identified: Are the accession states ready for membership? Once accepted, they cannot be obliged to continue their military reform. From the Hungarian and Czech experience the reform can considerably slow down. Can effective military operations be conducted when the consensus of 26 members is required? Thus, could the NATO degenerate from a "top-notch military alliance to a talking shop?"

On the third, three areas were pointed out: the budget gap, the technology gap and the capabilities gap. This can (has already) cause the US temptation to go it alone and the Europeans to have less and less influence on the US.

3. Values are presented in transatlantic discourse on two different levels: Societal divergence and democratic values. These are used in opposing ways. The former to mark difference between US and Europe and the latter to mark similarity.

Societal divergence is seen in the American: approach to death penalty, gun laws, religion, belief in heaven and hell, the state model (as opposed to the European welfare state). It is interesting to note that opinion polls show more convergence of American and European peoples' values than the commentators on societal divergence usually suggest.

Common democratic principles emanate from the same thinkers influencing both European and American revolutions. In the 200 years of American democracy there has grown an idea of the American exceptionalism - a manifest destiny to lead by example or some other way. Europeans and Americans have different interpretations: US see their choice of global action acceptable, when Europeans add solidarity and pooling of resources into the mix and see states in the international scene interconnected.

Here comments were raised: an American commentator said that the presentation oversimplified a lot. The chairman added that usually common values are not the main glue in international relations – common threats, common needs and common interests come first.

The military advisor of the working group intervened at one point of general discussion with a good remark: When one discusses division of labour, the term needs to be carefully defined. There is already a division of labour for example in logistical and C3I capabilities between US and Europe in NATO. A different thing is division of labour in "Who cooks dinner and who washes the dishes".

5. Address by Belgian MoD official and remarks by Working group leaders

The MoD representative addressed the need for a European strategic concept. There is already convergence in European threat perception (no threat of large scale attack, possible spill-over from peripheral conflicts, etc). Global objectives should be set (growing globalisation, global public goods, etc). An integrated approach (soft/hard security measures) needs to be made, and all unnecessary securitization has to be avoided.

Professor Mahncke from the 1st working group stated that if Europe liked to play a role, it would have to do more! Political unity is a prerequisite for enhanced capabilities. Today, the problem is that complex structures are made - and covered in rhetoric. Another approach is needed.

Another commentator stated that there is no common solution for the EU and NATO.

Four complementary options exist:

1. On with the convention and a European declaration for independence
2. How to link the EU initiatives with other partners?
3. Need for groups that go ahead for a new momentum for European integration (the BE/LU/GE/FR meeting in enhanced EU defence policy cooperation open for all! Not a closed one)
4. How to reorganise the transatlantic relationship? Maybe NATO to be replaced? Shall the NATO structures be Europeanized? More commands for Europeans?

Kagan's latest work was quoted many times during the seminar, and it was referred to as poor intellectual study by this commentator.

4. CONCLUSION

It feels like we are living now in a transition period. The Euro-Atlantic cooperation is facing serious challenges that could severely damage EU and NATO – Iraq, enlargement, capabilities gap etc. Though, these challenges could also strengthen the institutions.

The current ESDP is still a paper tiger desperately in need of US/NATO resources. Now could be the momentum for Europeans to go for enforcement of their capabilities, but the prospects for that are still gloomy.

A very interesting note in the Conference was that there is a big lack on European intellectual contribution to the development of NATO. Is NATO already forgotten by European scholars?

In the debate Kagan comes across all the time. His "Power and Weakness" –articles influence is ever so large in the transatlantic debate.

In addition, differences and similarities between US and Europe values and views are fiercely sought by both Europeanists and Atlanticists. The best glue to transatlantic relations is lacking – a common threat (I cannot agree that the US and Europeans would perceive the threat of international terrorism in the same way) with a unified way of tackling with it.

I could not detect anti-Americanism. There were some questions for example on why the Baltic states didn't settle with European guarantees, but the answer was eminent: they seek hard security, and Europeans cannot provide that at the moment. On the other hand, there was a certain feel of a critical environment towards American present foreign policy.

Everyone sees the need to reinvigorate the relationship. Strengthening of European capabilities is the answer – still so distant in the future.