

## **CFSP WATCH 2004 – FINLAND – by Jukka-Pekka Strand<sup>1</sup>**

### **1. What are the priorities for your government in CFSP in 2004? What are the key issues for your country in 2004 (after EU enlargement, after the Iraq conflict)?**

Strengthening of the CFSP was a key aim of Finland. However, the country was active in ensuring that the treaty clauses on CFSP, and especially on the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), would not jeopardise the country's policy of military non-alliance.

Finland has long supported the institutional development of the Union's crisis management capability; thus also the new defence agency and the establishment of a civilian-military cell at the EUMS<sup>2</sup>.

Finland has been actively involved in the development of the rapid reaction forces and the EU's military operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina. When EU defence ministers agreed to create 13 "battle groups" by 2007, Finland confirmed its contribution of about 200 troops to a joined battle group with Sweden and Norway. Finland also commits a force protection unit of approximately 130 soldiers to a joint battle group with Germany and the Netherlands.<sup>3</sup> To the Althea operation, the Finnish government has decided to send about 200 soldiers.

### **2. National Perceptions and Positions with regard to CFSP/ESDP Issues in 2004**

Please describe key positions and perceptions in your country with regard to EU foreign policy, taking into account:

#### **a) The perceived success and/or failure of CFSP/ESDP (e.g. taking into account current developments like the Iraq conflict)**

The Finnish government views the success of CFSP/ESDP from a pragmatic viewpoint<sup>4</sup>. One indication of Finland's favourable evaluation of CFSP/ESDP is its active participation in the development of the battle groups.

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<sup>2</sup> Information from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in relation to this enquiry

<sup>3</sup> *Helsingin Sanomat* newspaper, 4 November 2004 and 23 November 2004

<sup>4</sup> Information from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in relation to this enquiry



As to the alliance's operations outside Europe, the Finnish government believes that NATO's global role may be strengthened if it assumes responsibility for stabilisation and reconstruction tasks not only in Afghanistan, but also in Iraq<sup>11</sup>.

**c) The role of the EU in crisis management e.g. in Europe and Africa**

For Finland, the EU should concentrate on the complete cycle of conflict - from conflict prevention and military peacekeeping to civilian reconstruction<sup>12</sup>. Finland appreciates that the EU is assuming more responsibility for crisis management and has itself taken part in the operations. Finland send 23 policemen to the EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia-Herzegovina and 8 policemen to the Proxima police operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)<sup>13</sup>. To the EU's Concordia military operation in FYROM Finland contributed 9 soldiers<sup>14</sup>, but none to the Artemis operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. For the new Althea operation Finland will send a contingent of about 200 troops.

Two red lines exist that cannot be crossed, however. Committing forces to operations has to be approved by each Member State - in Finland's case by the national Parliament - and Finland cannot allow a group of countries to use the EU "trademark" without a mandate from the Union as a whole.<sup>15</sup>

**d) The perceived impact of EU enlargement on CFSP/ESDP (old versus new Europe?)**

The Finnish government has not been convinced that the talk about "old" and "new Europe" is justified<sup>16</sup>. Finland has not encountered major problems with the new member states regarding the development of CFSP/ESDP. In fact, Foreign Minister Tuomioja has said that during the negotiations that led to the redrafting of the clauses of security guarantees in the Draft for the Constitutional Treaty, Finland's insistence on a "milder wording" of the solidarity clause was supported by many a new member

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<sup>11</sup> *ibid.* p.66

<sup>12</sup> Information from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in relation to this enquiry

<sup>13</sup> Kristi Raik and Teemu Palosaari, "It's the Taking Part that Counts: The new member states adapt to EU foreign and security policy" (The Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA): FIIA Report 10/2004) [www.upi-fia.fi](http://www.upi-fia.fi) p.46

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Address by Foreign Minister Tuomioja: "For a Genuinely European Defence" at the Western European Union Parliamentary Assembly, Paris, France, 2 December 2003

<sup>16</sup> See also Kristi Raik and Teemu Palosaari, "It's the Taking Part that Counts: The new member states adapt to EU foreign and security policy" (The Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA): FIIA Report 10/2004) [www.upi-fia.fi](http://www.upi-fia.fi)

state, which were not willing to take on new binding commitments on top of their NATO requirements<sup>17</sup>.

**e) The view of the European Security Strategy (ESS) as an instrument for enhancing coherence in the EU's security policy; how does your country view the ESS and which issues are of particular importance?**

Finland fully supports the principle of effective multilateralism. Even if the Union is not and will not become a military great power, it can become an effective force in conflict prevention and crisis management

During the preparation of the document, Finland promoted the idea of comprehensive security<sup>18</sup>. In the Finnish view, crisis management should cover all the stages of crisis escalation, especially the root causes. The EU has the advantage of being able to combine a broad range of security-enhancing instruments for preventing and settling crises: political, humanitarian, development policy and economic instruments as well as military and civilian crisis management measures<sup>19</sup>. As to terminology, Finland favoured the final wording "preventive action" to "pre-emptive action" as it reflects

Describe (briefly) the position of your country in the following key issues:

**a) External Representation: What is the final position of your country on the European foreign minister and the President of the European Council? Is your country in favour of double hatting?**

In Finland's view, the EU foreign minister should not have been made chairman of the Council of Foreign Affairs. In the ICG, Finland in principle supported the establishment of a foreign affairs figurehead, but with a more limited authority. Finland's approach to the post of the president was even more reserved<sup>20</sup>. The post of the president was acceptable only as long as it did not threaten the autonomy of the Commission or the Council of Ministers. Finland agreed only reluctantly to its inclusion in the Draft Constitutional Treaty<sup>21</sup>.

**b) Decision-making: Does your country opt for an extension of qualified majority voting in the field of CFSP? Did your country support the Italian Presidency proposal for qualified majority voting to be applied when a proposal is submitted in CFSP by the Foreign Minister?**

Since the negotiations for the Amsterdam Treaty, Finland has supported the possibility of qualified majority voting in CFSP. However, decisions related to security and defence policy should be made by unanimity<sup>22</sup>. This applies especially to possible future decisions about the deployment of EU battle groups.

As a general principle, Foreign Minister Tuomioja has noted that it is important that decision-making in the CFSP remains in the hands of the Member States represented in the Council<sup>23</sup>.

**c) Crisis management: What is the official position on expanding the Petersberg tasks and making reference to tasks that involve military resources? Which regions does your country consider as particularly promising for EU crisis management (e.g. Africa, Southern Caucasus)?**

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<sup>20</sup> Information from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

<sup>21</sup> Helsingin Sanomat newspaper, 22 June 2004

<sup>22</sup> Speech by Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja titled "Shaping the EU's Future Role in the World", Global Europe 2020 Seminar, Helsinki, Finland: 26 October 2004, available at [www.formin.fi/english](http://www.formin.fi/english)

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*

Finland has viewed the expansion of the Petersberg tasks favourably<sup>24</sup> and supports the development of the Union's crisis m

negotiations in early December 2003, Finland rejected the formulation of mutual security guarantees as suggested by the Italian presidency, and took the initiative in proposing a “softer” wording, supported by the other non-allied Member States: “If a Member State is victim of armed aggression, it may request that the other Member States give it aid and assistance by all the means in their power, military or other, in accordance with art 51 of the UN Charter<sup>28</sup>. In the final version of the draft, adopted in June 2004, the mutual defence clause (Art. I-41.7) included a reservation that it “shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States”. This was acceptable to Finland and the other non-allied countries. However, the obstructive position on European security guarantees that was pursued by the Finnish government in the end of 2003 was criticised in the domestic discussion for harming Finland’s overall leverage in the Union.

The official policy of non-alliance has been attacked from many directions. Especially the National Coalition Party, the leading opposition party, has expressed its dissatisfaction with what they call the government’s ambiguous defence policy.

Also the chairman of the Green Party (in opposition) has argued that Finland would have been the greatest beneficiary of the security guarantees as a non-NATO country and therefore it was irrational to oppose them<sup>29</sup>.

The chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament, Liisa Jaakonsaari, has questioned the arguments behind doubts expressed towards NATO. She has argued that nothing would fundamentally change in Finland’s security and defence policy if it were to join the alliance<sup>30</sup>.

Finland was first cautious towards permanent structured cooperation. Generally speaking, Finland thinks Europe should not establish a self-selecting inner group of countries to develop its security and defence policy. The Finnish government believes that such efforts must involve the Union as a whole and has therefore stressed the possibility for all members to take part in all of the Union’s CFSP activities.

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<sup>28</sup> Letter from the Foreign Ministers of Finland, Ireland, Austria and Sweden to Franco Frattini, the President of the Council of the European Union, CIG 62/03, Brussels, 4 December 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Speech by Osmo Soiniavaara to the B2Tm06 Tcdof the Green Party ,131m06 De

The guiding principle for Finland in the development



In Finland, some commentators have wanted to change the Finnish peacekeeping legislation so that an EU mandate would suffice instead of a UN Security Council authorisation. Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen has argued that Finland should in future be able to participate in crisis management operations which have been mandated only by the EU. Furthermore, he believes that the rules of engagement for Finnish troops should be modified so as to allow more flexible use of force on the ground<sup>33</sup>. President Tarja Halonen is yet to spell out her views on the issue but she has emphasised the role of the UN in authorising crisis management operations. Some opposition parties, such as the Left Alliance, have insisted on treating the UN as the sole source of authorisation<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> Helsingin Sanomat newspaper, 17 November 2004

<sup>34</sup> Public statement issued by the Left Alliance, 18 September 2003