



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 14 December 2016  
(OR. en)

11624/14  
EXT 1

CSDP/PSDC 416

**PARTIAL DECLASSIFICATION**

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of document: 11624/14 RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED  
dated: 7 July 2014  
new status: Public

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Subject: EU Battlegroup Concept

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Delegations will find attached the partially declassified version of the above-mentioned document.



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 7 July 2014**

**11624/14**

**RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED**

**CSDP/PSDC 416**

**COVER NOTE**

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from: European External Action Service (EEAS)  
to: General Secretariat of the Council

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Subject: EU Battlegroup Concept

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Delegations will find attached the EEAS document with reference EEAS 01213/14.

Encl.: EEAS 01213/14

# EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



## EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY STAFF

**Brussels, 20 June 2014**

**EEAS 01213/14**

**RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED**

**CSDP/PSDC**

### **NOTE**

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From: European Union Military Staff  
To: General Secretariat of the Council

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No. Prev. doc.: ST 13618/06

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Subject: EU Battlegroup Concept

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**NOT DECLASSIFIED**

This document supersedes the following documents:

- EU Battlegroups Concept - 10501/04 - 14 June 2004 (Released to NATO: 10501/1/04 REV 1 - 19 July 2005)
- Standards & Criteria for EU Battlegroups - 7185/05 - 9 March 2005 (Released to NATO: 7185/1/05 REV 1 – 19 July 2005)
- BG Generation Process - 14336/04 - 8 November 2004 (Released to NATO: 14336/1/04 REV 1– 19 July 2005)
- Generic BGCC Methodology - 10503/05 - 24 June 2005
- Initial considerations on C2 issues on the EU Battlegroups Concept - 9889/05 - 7 June 2005
- BG-Training and Certification - 10173/05 - 16 June 2005
- EU Battlegroups Strategic Movement & Transportation Issues - 11517/05 - 27 July 2005
- Logistics Annex to the EU Battlegroups Concept - 13827/05 - 27 October 2005
- Health and Medical Support Annex to the EU Battlegroups Concept - 15391/05 - 5 December 2005
- BG Lessons Learned Methodology - 5104/06 - 6 January 2006
- Reserves Requirement for the BG Concept - 10553/06 - 15 June 2006

**EUROPEAN UNION**  
**BATTLEGROUP**  
**CONCEPT**

# EU BATTLEGROUP CONCEPT

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## REFERENCES

- A. EU Military Rapid Response Concept (5641/1/03 REV1)
- B. Headline Goal 2010 (6309/6/04 REV6)
- C. EU Framework Nation Concept (11278/02)
- D. Force Catalogue (HFC) 2004 (7591/1/04 REV1)
- E. EU Military C2 Concept (11096/03)
- F. Presidency Note concerning European Defence: NATO/EU consultation, planning and operation (SN 307/03)
- G. Strategic Movement and Transportation Concept for EU-led Crisis Management Operations (6457/06)
- H. Logistic Support Concept for EU-led Military Crisis Management Operations (16200/04)
- I. Health and Medical Support Concept for Military EU-led Crisis Management Operations (10147/02)

## MAIN BODY

### A. INTRODUCTION

1. In January 2003, the EU Military Committee (EUMC) agreed the EU Military Rapid Response Concept (Ref. A), with the aim of providing a general conceptual basis for the conduct of EU-led military crisis management operations (CMO) requiring a rapid response. Since then, the conceptual and procedural aspects of rapid response have been taken forward, leading in December 2003 to the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)<sup>1</sup>- conclusion that the work on the EU military rapid response capability should aim "*at complementing the Headline Goal with a precise definition and subsequent identification of and modalities for EU rapid response elements*".
2. In this context, the original food for thought paper "The Battlegroups Concept" was welcomed by the GAERC<sup>2</sup>, in March 2004, as a useful contribution to the ongoing work on rapid response and to the development of the structure and organisation of the rapid response capabilities of the EU. The Council further underlined its intention to take forward this work as a matter of priority, with a view to achieving concrete results as soon as possible both in the field of capabilities available and deployable at very high readiness and with regard to appropriate planning arrangements.
3. On 3 March 2004, the EUMC tasked the EU Military Staff (EUMS)<sup>3</sup> to develop an EU Battlegroup (BG) Concept. The concept is to be a building block within the overall approach of rapid response and should therefore be fully complementary to the accelerated measures and actions in the field of decision-making and planning, as described in Ref. A.
4. In May 2004 GAERC noted the Headline Goal (HLG) 2010 (Ref. B) which integrated the development of BGs in the overall capability development.

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<sup>1</sup> 2552nd Council Meeting - General Affairs Conclusions 8-12-2003 (15535/03)

<sup>2</sup> 2571st Council Meeting - General Affairs Conclusions 22-04-2004 (7380/04)

<sup>3</sup> Outcome of proceedings EUMC dated 3 March 2004 (6948/04)



## **B. PURPOSE**

5. The purpose of this document is to provide a conceptual basis for the preparations, provision and employment of BGs in order to conduct EU-led military CMOs requiring a rapid response.

## **C. SCOPE OF PAPER**

6. In the context of EU-led CMOs requiring a rapid response, this document defines the BG and provides related characteristics and requirements for BGs and associated capabilities. It covers the provision of BGs and relevant arrangements to ensure a well prepared and timely employment.

## **D. DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS**

7. The BG is a specific form of the Rapid Response Elements defined in Ref. A. It constitutes one possible answer to the timely provision of the necessary capabilities for an EU-led CMO requiring a Rapid Response.
8. In this context a BG:
  - a. Is the minimum militarily effective, credible, rapidly deployable, coherent force package capable of stand-alone operations, or for the initial phase of larger operations;
  - b. Is based on a combined arms, battalion sized force and re-inforced with Combat Support (CS) and Combat Service Support (CSS) elements. A generic outline is depicted in Annex A (pt2);
  - c. Will be based on the principle of multinationality and could be formed by a Framework Nation<sup>4</sup> or a multinational coalition of MS<sup>5</sup>. In any case, interoperability and military effectiveness have to be the key criteria;

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<sup>4</sup> In accordance with Ref. C, a Framework Nation is defined as "*A Member State or a group of Member States that has volunteered to, and that the Council has agreed, should have specific responsibilities in an operation over which EU exercises political control*".

<sup>5</sup> In line with the Nice European Council Conclusions MS are welcome to include the non-EU European NATO countries and other countries which are candidates for accession to the EU in their BGs. In such cases this will be done without prejudice to the rights of any MS. MS are also welcome to consider including other potential partners in their BGs.

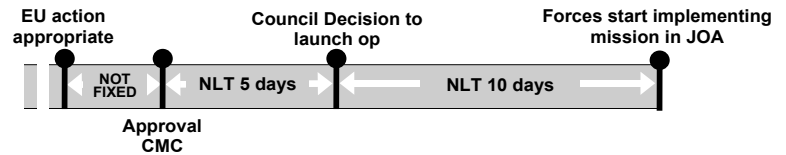
- d. Must be associated with a Force Headquarters ((F)HQ) (see also paragraph 27) and pre-identified operational and strategic enablers, such as strategic lift and logistics.

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9. In addition, the following main characteristics relate specifically to a BG:

- a. The ambition set out in Ref. B is that the EU should be able to take the decision to launch an operation within 5 days of the approval of a Crisis Management Concept (CMC) and that forces start

implementing their mission on the ground no later than 10 days after that decision.



This requires that BGs are to be built on assets and capabilities held at a readiness<sup>6</sup> of 5-10 days. This readiness criterion applies as a benchmark to the MS as a whole.

However, having regard for national decision making, some MS may be in a position to contribute to a BG at higher readiness.

- b. The BG is designed for a range of possible missions and would have in its generic composition a strength of around 1500 troops. It will require specific guidance to tailor the BG for one particular mission in advance. Therefore, in response to an operation, some adaptation by the designated Operation Commander (OpCdr) is to be expected;
- c. Air, naval and other operational and strategic enablers are to be associated as required. A BG requires pre-identified Reception, Staging and Onward Movement (RSOM) capabilities, with adequate force protection (FP) commensurate with the threat and independent of host nation resources.
- d. The BG needs to be sustainable until mission termination or until relief by other forces. As a planning basis BGs should therefore be sustainable for 30 days initial operations, extendable to 120 days, if re-supplied appropriately;
- e. Given their close interrelationship, interoperability and prior training is required between the (F)HQ and the core of a BG, the infantry battalion.

10. The EU BG Concept is complementary with NATO Response Force (NRF) documents, while taking into account the characteristics of the EU.

<sup>6</sup> Readiness as defined in Ref. D

E. **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

11. **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

12. **NOT DECLASSIFIED**<sup>7</sup>

13. **NOT DECLASSIFIED**<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

<sup>8</sup> **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

15. Required Number of Battlegroups. To be able to meet the EU ambition, the required number of BGs is two per standby phase.

## **F. PROVISION**

16. Commitment. A crucial factor enabling the conduct of EU-led CMO requiring a rapid response is MS' readiness to rapidly contribute the required interoperable assets and capabilities for the conduct of operations. The structure within which BGs and associated capabilities are provided needs to be credible and should ensure the timely availability of the required, interoperable capabilities for the conduct of EU-led CMOs.
17. Battlegroup Generation. The basis for the process of generating BGs will be initiatives from MS to offer and make available rapidly deployable force packages (**NOT DECLASSIFIED**) associated with pre-identified deployment, support, logistic assets and C2, at the required readiness of 5-10 days. In this context the MS will indicate when and how long their offers remain available. The EUMC, will direct the EUMS to conduct a co-ordination process that will ensure that the requisite number of BGs is permanently available. This process should allow enough flexibility in order to take advantage of all forms of contributions that MS may desire to forward. The modalities of the BG generation process are described in Annex B. In all cases it is understood that the final decision to commit assets and capabilities to a specific EU led CMO rests with the MS concerned.

18. **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

## **G. GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS**

19. Standards. Commonly defined and agreed, detailed military capability standards for BGs are a necessity. Wherever possible such standards should be the same as those required for similar formations assigned to the NRF. **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

20. Training/Preparations.<sup>9</sup> The necessary training and preparation of the forces to meet these defined requirements remains the responsibility of the contributing MS. BGs will need to undertake regular and realistic training, including multinational exercises. BGs, including HQs and associated air and naval capability packages will need to be trained using HQ exercises as well as national and multinational field exercises, organised by MS. BGs and associated capabilities packages are encouraged to develop working relationships with relevant (F)HQs. Training could culminate in a joint and possibly combined field exercise at unit level, including an augmented (F)HQ and the required additional capabilities, guaranteeing full operational capability (FOC) for the deployment and conduct of potential EU-led CMOs requiring a rapid response.
21. Certification. Certification of formed elements is required, in order to guarantee that the defined standards are being met. The certification of BGs remains a national responsibility of the contributing MS, who should undertake this certification, according to fixed EU-agreed procedures (**NOT DECLASSIFIED**), recognising the principle of multinationality and the overall evaluation principle identified in Ref. B. The EUMC is the overall guiding authority and should monitor the certification process.
22. Deployment.<sup>10</sup> Assured deployability is a fundamental component of this concept. MS offering BGs will need to ensure that their contribution includes associated strategic lift assets, pre-identified, earmarked and available to meet the EU ambition as stated in Ref. B.
23. Sustainability.<sup>11</sup> Meeting the sustainability<sup>12</sup> requirements will necessitate sufficient deployable logistic support that is to be arranged with the commitment of a BG for a specific operation. Depending on the mission and given the likely operational theatres, the amount of HNS will be variable and, in the worst case, non-existent.

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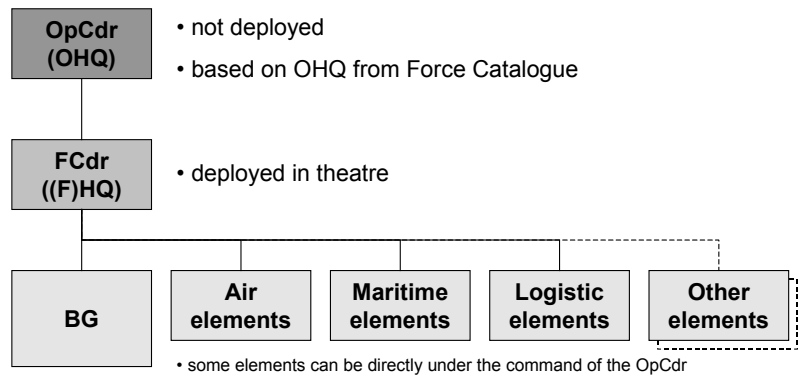
<sup>9</sup> **NOT DECLASSIFIED**  
<sup>10</sup> **NOT DECLASSIFIED**  
<sup>11</sup> **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

<sup>12</sup> 30 days initial operations, extendable to 120 days.

24. Complementarity with NRF. The EU BG Concept seeks to be complementary with NRF documents. Wherever possible and applicable, standards, practical methods and procedures mentioned in this document are analogous to those defined within NRF. This is of utmost importance as MS may commit their assets and capabilities (from a single set of forces fielded by each MS) to both the BG and the NRF.

**H. COMMAND & CONTROL**<sup>13</sup>

25. The C2 structure for EU-led CMOs requiring rapid response will be established in accordance with the EU Military C2 Concept (Ref. E). Because of the short reaction time, the Framework Nation Principle (see Ref. C) is likely to be applied in many cases. However, regardless of the command option, it is essential that the C2 structure and commanders for the operation are identified as early as possible.



26. Operation Headquarter (OHQ). Selection and designation of the OHQ shall take place in accordance with the Presidency Paper (SN 307/03, 11 December 2003) endorsed by the European Council (Ref. F).
27. Force Headquarter ((F)HQ). The exact C2 arrangements will depend on the mission- and will require case by case analysis. The simplified requirements of BG operations could allow for the adaptation and augmentation of Brigade based headquarters (HQs) as a basis for an (F)HQ. It must have the ability to conduct joint operations and be certified to meet the military criteria defined. The size of the (F)HQ to be rapidly deployed for BG type operations should be kept as lean as possible.

<sup>13</sup> **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

28. Given their close interrelationship, interoperability is required between the (F)HQ and the core of a BG, the infantry battalion. It would therefore be advantageous if both could be provided by the same MS. The appropriate (F)HQ should be identified in advance by the MS providing the BG, just like its activation and augmentation should be prepared and trained.

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