COVER NOTE

From: European External Action Service
To: Political and Security Committee
Subject: Exercise Policy of the European Union under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

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Delegations will find attached EEAS document ARES (2013) 3756590. This document is complemented by doc. 18048/1/13 REV 1 on the Guidelines for the Scheduling and Implementation of EU Exercises.

Encl.: EEAS document ARES (2013) 3756590
**NOTE**

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Delegations will find attached the revised Exercise Policy of the European Union under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which is complemented by revised doc. 18048/13 on the Guidelines for the Scheduling and Implementation of EU Exercises.
A. Introduction

2. Exercising is an essential component of the EU effort to ensure a timely and coherent response to crises, and to turn the comprehensive approach into comprehensive action through the coordinated and synergic use of all available EU instruments. This applies to the whole crisis cycle.

3. This document outlines the Exercise Policy of the EU under the CFSP. It is complemented by doc. 18048/13 on the Guidelines for the Scheduling and Implementation of EU Exercises. For the purpose of this policy, "exercises" means "exercises of the EU conducted under the CFSP", also called "EU exercises".

4. The Exercise Policy of the EU and the exercises developed and implemented within the Policy and the Guidelines fully respect the competence of the institutions and bodies as set out in the Treaty. The Policy and its Guidelines may require revision as result of changes to the operating environment, structures and lessons learned. The revision process will involve the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission (Commission), Council bodies including the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) and Member States (MS), as appropriate.

B. Fundamental Reasons for Exercising

5. The fundamental reason for exercising is to ensure the ability of the EU to take action in a competent, effective and prepared manner in its role as an international security actor. This ability comprises the twin paths of systems (which include structures, concepts, procedures and processes) and personnel. While each path is standalone, it is the dynamics of their interaction that is the key to effectiveness and efficiency. Exercising permits the validation and testing of the individual aspects of each pillar and their interaction dynamics to ensure competence and coherence.

6. Exercising has a number of implications that go beyond the conduct ambition. A key consideration is that staff must develop and then retain their individual knowledge of how to address crises. The retention of sufficient corporate knowledge is paramount to optimising EU capabilities and ensuring the ability to act. This is true for all crisis
responders but especially important in high turnover staff sections. Exercising, in this instance enables the development of both the individual and corporate knowledge. That is why the Lessons Learned and its incorporation into EU policies and procedures constitute a key outcome of exercising and must form its integral part. The development and implementation of the EU comprehensive approach requires focus and interaction to reach beyond the boundaries of the EU institutions and individual services. Exercising facilitates and nurtures comprehensiveness through increased awareness and mutual familiarity. This ethos is the overarching consideration which frames EU exercises. In facing complex global challenges, the EU needs to engage and work together with other international and regional actors. This underlines the importance of involving partners, in particular the UN, as well as other international organisations and third states in the EU exercises.

7. Exercises can also indicate requirements for new capabilities and represent a valuable means to demonstrate the solidarity between the MS and their willingness to contribute to crisis management. Hence, exercises contribute substantially to the credibility of the CFSP as a central part of the Union's external action. This philosophy, when coupled with the EU comprehensive approach, underpins the ability of the Union to take effective, efficient, and timely action on the international stage.

8. Exercising is about practicing in a safe environment (both politically and physically). It provides the opportunity to make mistakes, build team-work, identify and resolve points of friction and broaden understanding.

9. Accordingly, in developing the following policy, exercises when scheduled must not be considered as discretionary. There must be an implicit obligation on those nominated as the training audience to fulfil that commitment as if the scenario were a live crisis. Exceptional circumstances, driven by concurrent operational activity, may force modification to the schedule but this again must be subject to corporate level endorsement of such change. The consequence of establishing such priority to exercises is that the scheduling of exercises must be developed fully cognisant of extant real life obligations and the limits of individual department's means and capabilities. This at times might result in the scheduling of an exercise being far from optimum; albeit the purpose of exercising, even in the busiest of contexts, must not be ignored.
C. **Aim**

10. The aim of this document is to set out policy guidance for the scheduling and implementation of EU exercises under the CFSP.

D. **Scope**

11. The Policy encompasses all exercises that are undertaken under the CFSP, internal EEAS exercises, and EU participation in relevant non-EU exercises.

12. Relevant Council instances (including the GSC), the Commission, relevant EU agencies and MS will be associated with the development of these exercises in a manner appropriate to their envisaged participation and in accordance with their respective competences, with a view to ensure consistency between the different areas of the Union's external action and between these and its other policies.

E. **General Principles**

13. EU exercises and the EU participation in relevant non-EU exercises should emphasise the comprehensive approach and can include the following areas and aspects:

   − the Union’s internal structures and mechanisms, in particular their preparedness and responsiveness in policies and procedures, as well as the interaction between EU institutional actors and MS;
   
   − Union and MS' civilian and military crisis response and management assets and capabilities, and their interaction in a comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated manner;
   
   − public relations and media outreach;
   
   − consultation and cooperation with EU partners and Third States;
   
   − the strategic partnership in crisis management between the EU and NATO, with due regard for the two organisations' decision-making autonomy, each organisation dealing with the other on an equal footing and without discrimination against any of the
Member States;

– consultation, cooperation and capacity building with the UN, the OSCE, the AU and other international organisation;

– cooperation with other organisations, in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);

– cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), as appropriate;

– other relevant aspects of the Union's external action\(^1\).

F. **Dimensions of EU exercises**

14. EU exercises should cover CFSP activities, with a focus on conflict prevention, crisis response and management in a comprehensive approach and be based on fictitious but realistic crisis scenarios outside the EU. Additionally, new innovative exercises will have to be developed to deal with unanticipated or unforeseen crisis manifestations.

15. EU Exercises should have detailed and specific exercise and stakeholder objectives. In general, scenarios should have a CFSP dimension and should be sufficiently challenging to optimise benefit for the training audience and to identify significant lessons and best practices.

16. Exercises scenarios could reflect the following situations, which are not prescriptive, exhaustive or future proofed:

– Emerging or existing crisis;

– Time-sensitive crisis;

– Technological incidents;

– Man-made or natural disaster;

– Asymmetric threats, such as those arising from terrorism, proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) and cyber attacks;

– Risks and threats related to the operation and utilisation of EU Space systems (e.g.

\(^1\) Part V of the TEU.
G. Categories of exercises

Exercises are categorised by scope, focus and form:

– **Scope**: EU exercises can be comprehensive, thematic and combined:

  - Comprehensive exercises will involve several aspects of a crisis, involving all relevant EU instruments within the framework of CFSP activities;
  - Thematic exercises will involve one specific aspect of a crisis situation;
  - Combined exercises are planned and conducted with regional, international or other organisations. Modalities for such exercises will be developed on a case-by-case basis, in full respect of responsibilities, structures and procedures in place in competent EU services (e.g. Commission and Civil Protection Mechanism);
    - CME/CMX is a particular type of exercise with NATO which is based on scenarios for EU-led operations with recourse to NATO assets and capabilities.

– **Focus**: The focus of exercises is characterised by (a) their specific aim and objectives and (b) which aspects of a crisis are addressed (e.g. conflict analysis, space security, consular aspects, civilian CSDP, military CSDP):

  - Conflict prevention exercises focus on the EU’s ability to achieve early identification of risk of violent conflict, and closing the gap to early action, improved understanding of conflict situations, root causes, actors and dynamics, enhanced identification of the range of options for EU action in crisis-prone areas, and conflict-sensitive programming of external assistance;
  - Crisis response and management exercises focus on the EU’s ability to respond to and manage crisis situations, including crisis situation requiring an immediate or continuous response.

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2 For the purpose of this Policy, Crisis response implies the immediate mobilisation of EU resources to deal with the consequences of external crises. Crisis management involves dealing with threats/consequences of external crisis before, during, and after they have occurred.
rapid response;

- Other exercises may be considered as appropriate.

- **Form**: There are several ways in which exercises can be conducted. They could take the form either of:

  - **Command Post Exercise (CPX)**: A CPX is an exercise that involves the EU Institutions and bodies and Member States (MS) and focuses primarily testing the crisis management procedures with the involvement of CSDP structures and actors, such as civilian and/or military decision-makers/commanders and their staffs. It would thus include communications within and between these entities. As it does only involve personnel in Headquarters and not involve actual deployment of personnel under a simulated theatre of operations, it is a cost-efficient means of exercising in a realistic manner decision-making, planning, coordination and cooperation in a realistic manner;

  - **Live Exercise (LIVEX)**: A LIVEX is an exercise which involves deployment of assets and within a simulated theatre of operation. The EU Battlegroup certification exercises among the participating Member States constitute an important example of LIVEX. Though associated responsibility and costs remain national, they could be integrated into the exercise programme on a voluntary basis;

  - **Exercise-related activities**: Activities such as studies, workshops, seminars or tabletop exercises focused on selected aspects of EU conflict prevention, crisis response or management activities. These activities involve a limited number of participants (key personnel) with a specific functional focus, and are conducted at a single location.
H. **Training Audience**

18. The Training Audience for EU exercises will be tailored in accordance with each exercise aim and its objectives, and includes relevant staff as well as decision-makers within the EEAS who need a broad understanding of crisis response and crisis management structures and procedures. Depending on the nature of an exercise, it includes Member States.

19. The Training Audience could include the involvement of Union delegations in third countries and at international organisations, relevant Council instances, relevant services of the Commission, relevant EU agencies\(^3\), designated military HQs, pools of experts (e.g. Military and Civilian Response Teams), and other entities/bodies in accordance with the exercise aim and objectives.

20. The EU should seek to optimize its Training Audience by exercising the interaction between all relevant levels of decision-making as a reflection of real life actuality.

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\(^3\) Including capitals, delegations, diplomatic, consular missions in third countries, and national experts.