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NOTE

from:	Secretariat
to:	Delegationsl
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Subject:	Council conclusions on the ESDP

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on the ESDP as approved by the Council on 10 November 2008.

The Council noted with satisfaction the EDA's efforts to ensure that its work was complementary with the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) and the LoI and consistent with NATO work, in compliance with the provisions of the Joint Action. The finalisation of an administrative arrangement between the EDA and OCCAR will enable the two bodies to organise their cooperation on the basis of the Statement on cooperation between the EDA and OCCAR (see Annex I).

European defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB)

The Council emphasised the need for the European Union to pursue its efforts, also within the EDA, to secure a robust and competitive EDTIB capable of meeting the Member States' capability requirements and of supporting the ESDP. In particular, further consideration should be given to the questions of reinforcing security of supply, opening up national markets and strengthening supply chains, notably through measures to encourage SMEs.

Training

In a separate statement (see Annex II), the Council approved the launching of the European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus. The aim is to develop exchanges between officers in their initial training phase, in order to reinforce the ability of the European armed forces to work together and the interoperability of forces. This initiative, which will facilitate exchanges between national training colleges, will be implemented on a national and voluntary basis, with assistance from the European Security and Defence College.

The Council noted that work on the study into the outlook for the European Security and Defence College was under way.

STATEMENT ON THE EUROPEAN YOUNG OFFICERS EXCHANGE SCHEME, MODELLED ON ERASMUS

1. The Council has agreed to adopt the European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus¹.
2. The scheme is intended to strengthen the interoperability of the armed forces and promote a European security and defence culture.
3. The ability of the European armed forces to work together has become a determining factor in preparing and conducting increasingly complex multinational military operations. It entails increased cooperation between Member States in the field of officer training.
4. The scheme will provide European officers with an opportunity to undergo part of their training, from the initial training stage, in another Member State. It will thus promote the mobility of students and teaching staff of military training colleges and facilitate shared approaches to the training of young European officers, in particular in the field of the ESDP.
5. The Member States have therefore agreed on a number of practical measures, set out in the Annex hereto, for encouraging and facilitating exchanges between their national training colleges, with assistance from the European Security and Defence College. These measures will be implemented at both European and national level. They will be based on existing bilateral and multilateral exchanges.

¹ Erasmus is the strand of the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme devoted to higher education.

6. The European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus, will be implemented on a national and voluntary basis, with due regard for each Member State's decision-making autonomy and specific characteristics in the field of training.
7. The Secretary-General/High Representative will draw up a report on the implementation of the scheme and will submit it to the Council as soon as possible in 2009.

European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus

Practical implementation measures

I. – Measures at European level

- 1/ Measures common to the three components of initial officer training (academic education, "basic military training" and professional training)¹
- a. Compare the training offered by the various colleges on the basis of national indicative lists of skills.
 - b. Create an IT platform:
 - containing national military colleges' training curricula, for ease of identification and comparison of training;
 - allowing national military training colleges to offer and request places on officer exchanges.
 - c. Identify ways of dealing with administrative, legal and other obstacles to exchanges.

¹ "The officer's training/education starts after recruitment and includes vocational training and academic training up to and including Master's Degrees (if included in the initial training)" (Stocktaking of existing exchanges and exchange programmes of national military officers during their initial education and training, 12843/08, 9 September 2008).

2/ Academic component of initial officer training

- d. Develop training modules on international issues (academic component of officer training). A training module on the EDSP is now available. Training modules should be developed in other areas relating to international security. These training modules will be made available to national military colleges.
- e. Make it easier for national military colleges to access and use the Internet-Based Advanced Distance Learning (IDL) system, which is being developed by the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), to enlarge the scope of available teaching material.

3/ "Basic military training" and professional components of initial officer training

- f. Develop an equivalence system for the military components of initial officer training. The implementing working party will examine the possibility of using the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) which also covers the academic component of initial officer training.
- g. Draw on the Erasmus programme to establish mechanisms to promote officer exchanges.

II. – Measures at national level

- a. Encourage Member States and their national military training colleges to make full use of the instruments and measures offered by the Bologna process.

- b. Encourage national military training colleges to increase the mobility of military students and teaching staff among the Member States.
- c. Encourage Member States to recognise the training which their officers have received at establishments in other EU Member States.
- d. Encourage the teaching of EU languages, in particular the teaching of a second foreign language, in order to extend the range of potential exchanges.

III. – Implementation of measures

- a. A working party will be set up to implement the measures at European level and contribute to the implementation of measures at national level. That working party will also contribute, more generally, to promoting exchanges of officers during initial training within the European Union. It may supplement the measures set out in this document.
- b. The working party will base its proceedings on the principles set out in the Ministerial Statement. This implementing working party will comprise representatives appointed by the Member States wishing to take part in it.
- c. The implementing working party will meet within the framework of the Executive Academic Board of the ESDC in order to benefit from the network already established within that framework.
- d. The database will be administered by the ESDC Secretariat and receive input from the Member States and their training colleges.
- e. Implementation of the measures will begin after the adoption by the Council (Ministers for Defence), on 10 November 2008, of the Statement officially adopting the European young officers exchange scheme, modelled on Erasmus.