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## **SOME THOUGHTS ON THE COMMAND STRUCTURE OF EUFOR OPERATION ALTHEA**

**(Gondolatok az EUFOR ALTHEA művelet vezetési rendszeréről)**

*The author looks at the background of the European Union Force ALTHEA, the military deployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) responsible for overseeing the military implementation of the Dayton/Paris Agreement. He examines the main objectives of Operation ALTHEA and how these are reflected in the command structure. In doing so he shares his views on human interoperability, the evolution of the comprehensive approach concept and new force structures.*

*A szerző bemutatja az Európai Unió ALTHEA műveletét, a daytoni/párizsi megállapodás katonai végrehajtásáért felelős missziót Bosznia-Hercegovinában (BiH). Megvizsgálja, hogy a művelet vezetési rendszere hogyan tükrözi a művelet fő célkitűzéseit. Eközben megosztja nézeteit a humán interoperabilitásról, az „átfogó megközelítés” kialakulásáról és új haderőstruktúrákról.*

**Kulcsszavak:** ALTHEA, Bosnia and Herzegovina, command structure, EUFOR, peace support operations ~ ALTHEA, béketámogató műveletek, Bosznia-Hercegovina, EUFOR, vezetési rendszer

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## INTRODUCTION

The crisis in the Balkans, the disintegration of Yugoslavia, right after the end of the cold, war reshaped all major players in security. It turned out that Europe was not prepared for an issue of such weight. It was also quite clear that an effective European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) would need years of hard work. NATO started a new phase of operations, to be termed Non-Article 5 crisis response operations, mainly peace support operations.

On 2 December 2004 the European Union Force (EUFOR) ALTHEA replaced the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina to oversee the military implementation of the Dayton/Paris Agreement.<sup>1</sup> EUFOR ALTHEA, alongside NATO HQ Sarajevo, was authorized by the United Nations Security Council as a legal successor to SFOR, the previously NATO-led operation. Since 2010 EUFOR was tasked to support the Armed Forces of BiH in the areas of capacity-building and training and EUFOR ALTHEA is also a part of The EU's comprehensive approach to support the country's Euro-Atlantic integration<sup>2</sup>.

### THE MISSION OF EUFOR OPERATION ALTHEA

The EUFOR Operation ALTHEA mission is based on three pillars of operation: Comprehensive Approach, Capacity-Building & Training and the ability to provide a real Deterrent capability should the safe and secure environment (SASE)<sup>3</sup> be threatened. Although 'pillars', they must not be considered to be mutually exclusive or stovepipes, but all inter-linked toward achieving the mission.

The military operation EUFOR ALTHEA monitors and ensures continued compliance of the military aspects of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP)<sup>4</sup> and denies the conditions for a resumption of violence.

Thus the mission is achieved through success in delivering the following **Force Objectives (1–6)**.

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<sup>1</sup> NATO ends SFOR mission; <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/12-december/e1202a.htm> (23 Apr 2013)

<sup>2</sup> P. M. NORHEIM-MARTINSEN: The European Union and Military Force – Governance and Strategy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2012

<sup>3</sup> The ability of the people to conduct their daily lives without fear of systematic or large-scale violence.

<sup>4</sup> The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
[http://www.oscebih.org/dejtonski\\_mirovni\\_sporazum/EN/](http://www.oscebih.org/dejtonski_mirovni_sporazum/EN/) (Entry : 30 Apr 2013)

**FO-1: The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFBiH) trained to international standards and capable of participating in Euro-Atlantic structures.**

**FO-2: Provision of a self sustaining training system for the AFBiH.**

**FO-3: Contribution to the BiH authorities' deterrence capability and reassurance.**

**FO-4: Being prepared to support the BiH authorities in maintaining and restoring the SASE.**

**FO-5: Maintaining Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities to facilitate sufficient Situational Awareness (SA) throughout BiH.**

**FO-6: Ensuring timely and effective information exchange with EU, NATO and other international organisations.**

The 3 Pillars comprise a combination of Force Objectives and implied tasks which are not mutually exclusive.

## **HUMAN INTEROPERABILITY AND CAPACITY-BUILDING AND TRAINING<sup>5</sup>**

There are 23 Troop Contributing Nations<sup>6</sup> including EU and Non EU as well as NATO and Non NATO countries in EUFOR ALTHEA (fig 1).

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<sup>5</sup> This part of the article is a rewritten version of the author's article written earlier on the subject (L. UJHÁZY: New Force Structures – Human Interoperability – Capacity-Building and Training; In: EUFOR Forum, 78, August/September 2012, pp. 18–19)

<sup>6</sup> At the time of my presentation at the conference – 2 May 2013

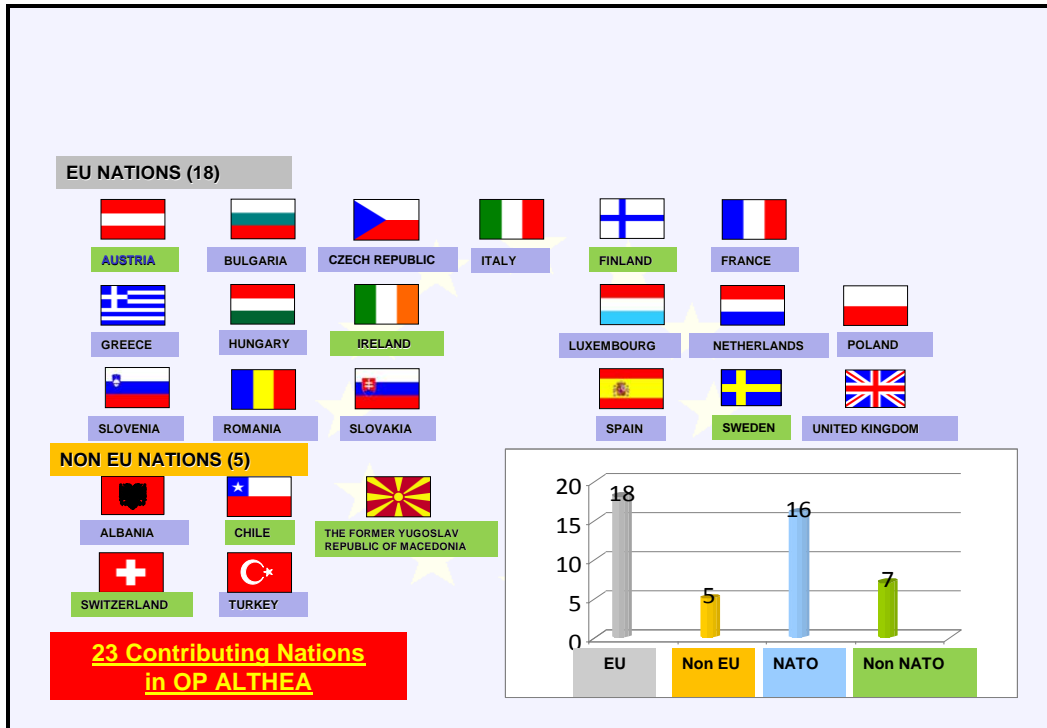


Figure 1. Troop Contributing Nations

In this situation, the human element of interoperability – human interoperability, has become a top priority. The need for human interoperability is by no means a new phenomenon. Armed Forces of various nations had been fighting side by side for a long time, but this level of cooperation started after the Second World War with the first United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations (1948–1949). NATO members also started to achieve interoperability through decades of joint planning, training and exercises since 1949, when the Organisation was brought about, but as the Alliance launched the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme<sup>7</sup> and the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD)<sup>8</sup> in 1994<sup>9</sup> and started a new enlargement policy resulting in the full membership

<sup>7</sup> The PfP programme was launched in January 1994, along with the Mediterranean Dialogue initiative. The PfP Programme was enhanced at the Spring Meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in Sintra, Portugal in May 1997. It serves as the basis for cooperation between NATO and Partner countries, most of whom belonged to the former Warsaw Treaty Organisation, or neutral countries like Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland.

The most important goals of the PfP are to increase transparency in national defence planning and military budgeting, to ensure democratic control of national armed forces, and to help develop Partner country forces that are interoperable with those of NATO member states, mainly in the field crisis response operations.

NATO also consults with the PfP countries on security issues and enables Partner countries to participate in NATO-led operations. The Programme can also be used as a vehicle to full membership in the Alliance.

<sup>8</sup> The Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) initiative was launched by NATO in 1994, recognising that the security of the European Continent is dependant on that of the Mediterranean Region. Currently Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia participate.

of 12 new (former PfP) countries, more emphasis was placed on this issue.

Interoperability refers to the ability of different military organisations to conduct joint operations. These organisations can be of different nationalities or different services (land, maritime and air) or both. Human interoperability means that forces, units or systems can operate together. It requires them to share common doctrine and procedures, and to be able to communicate with each other. Communication is not only a language issue; it is also about mindset and cross-cultural interoperability. (This does not necessarily require common military equipment.) Human interoperability is also a key element to ALTHEA's support to the country's Armed Forces in the areas of capacity-building and training.

### **FROM COMBINED ARMS TO THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH<sup>10</sup>**

Since medieval times, the combined arms approach to warfare dominated military thinking. This concept integrates different arms of services of the armed forces to achieve mutually complementary effects (for example, using infantry and armour, where one supports the other, or both support each other). Combined arms doctrine is the opposite of segregated arms where each unit is composed of only one type of service-member or weapon system.

Later the "magic term" became joint warfare. Here the focus is on the integration of the various services of a country's armed forces into one unified command. To some extent joint warfare is a form of combined arms warfare but on a larger, national scale, in which complementary forces from a state's land forces, navy, air, and special forces are to cooperate in operations, as opposed to planning and executing military operations separate from each other.

It is important to stress that until quite recently, security was basically seen as a military, and to some extent, political issue. This attitude, more or less, suited the security environment of the bipolar world. After the end of the Cold War however, with the emergence of more complex threats to peace and stability, more complex approaches to security came about. Military, political, economic, societal and environmental aspects of security also started to be examined. Current operations have proved that effective crisis management, calls for a comprehensive

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<sup>9</sup> *NATO Handbook*; Public Diplomacy Division, Brussels, 2006. pp. 193-201

<sup>10</sup> This part of the article is a rewritten version of the author's article by the same title (L. UJHÁZY: From Combined Arms to the Comprehensive Approach; In: *EUFOR Forum*, 79, October/November 2012, p. 18)

approach involving political, civilian and military instruments. It became clear that military means, although essential, are not enough on their own to meet the many complex challenges to international security. It is important to improve all crisis management instruments, to reach out to strengthen the ability to work with partner countries, international organisations, non-governmental organisations and local authorities (fig 2). Cooperation with civilian actors – that have the experience and skills in areas such as institution building, development, governance, judiciary and police – is the key to contributing to stabilization and reconstruction.

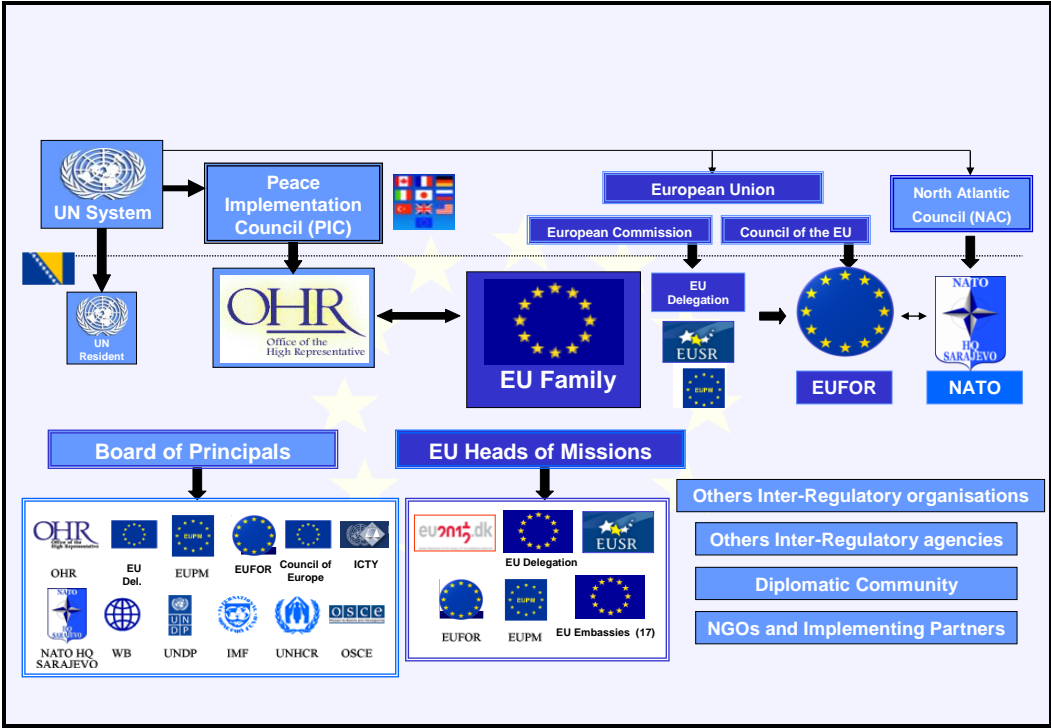


Figure 2. Some stakeholders involved in the EU’s comprehensive approach

**EU RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO AND THE CHAIN OF COMMAND**

After a slightly confused period, in 2002 the EU and NATO jointly clarified the relationship between the two organisations under a number of major headings including partnership, mutual cooperation and consultation, equality and due regard for the autonomy of both organisations, plus reinforcing and developing the military capability of the EU and NATO. The so called ‘Berlin Plus Agreement’ of March 2003 enables the EU to use NATO structures to support military operations that do not fall within the focus of NATO responsibilities. There is a

considerable exchange of information between the two organisations and there are EU/NATO liaison cells located in the headquarters of both organisations too. Since quite a lot of countries are members of the EU and also NATO, the same forces are often assigned to both EU and NATO operations. For this reason it is therefore probable that the EU will only act if NATO first decides that it will not do so.

Accordingly, at the start of Operation ALTHEA, the EU established elements at different NATO HQs (therefore there is a parallel system with NATO). As for the C2 structure, Op ALTHEA is conducted under the authority of the EU Council and the political control and strategic direction of the military operation is exercised by the Political and Security Committee (PSC). The European Union Military Committee (EUMC) monitors the proper execution of the EU military operation and its chairman acts as the point of contact for the Operation Commander (Op Com) who is Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR) in the NATO structure. DSACEUR, in his role as the Op Com, is supported by the EU Operational Headquarters (OHQ) (fig 3).

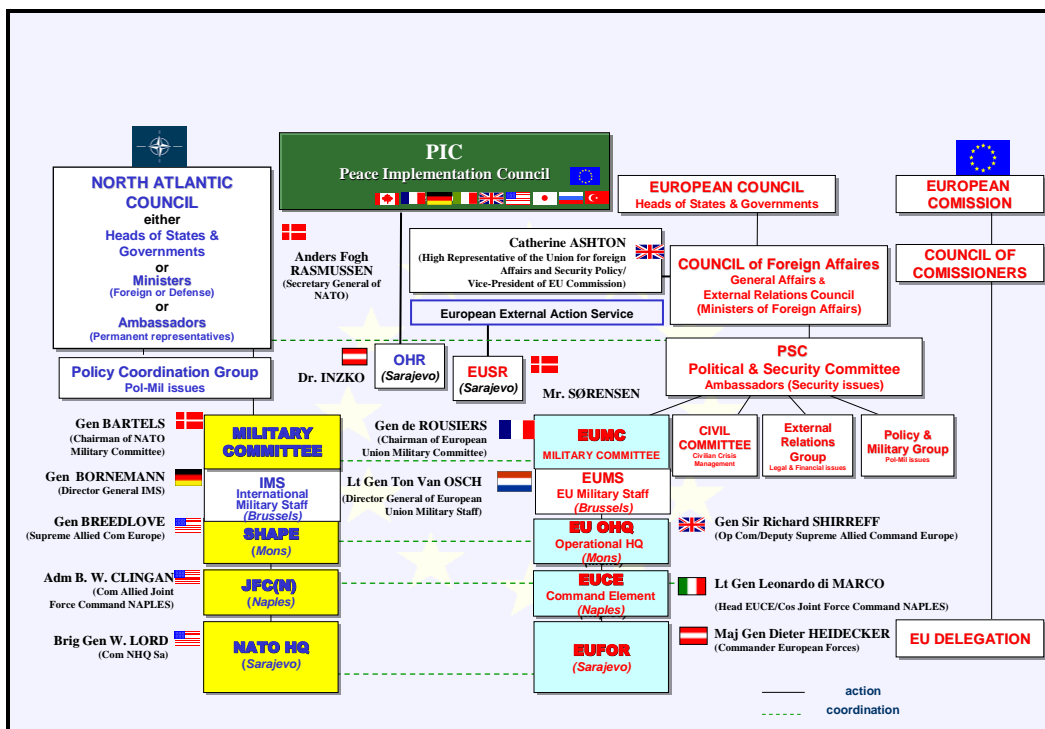


Figure 3. Chain of Command

## NEW FORCE STRUCTURES AFTER THE COLD WAR<sup>11</sup>

To meet the complex, new challenges, of the post-Cold War security environment, the emergence of smaller, but diverse and unpredictable threats to peace and stability, newer and more flexible force structures were required. A perfect example of this approach was the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) concept which was inspired by experience gained during the First Gulf War and NATO operations in the Balkans. The CJTF concept was initiated in 1993 and its foundations were laid by NATO Heads of State and Government at their Brussels Summit in January 1994. They tasked the Alliance to examine how its political and military structures and procedures could be developed and adapted to conduct its missions, including peacekeeping, more efficiently and flexibly, as well as to improve cooperation with the Western European Union (WEU) and to reflect the emerging European Security and Defence Identity. As part of that process, they endorsed the development of a CJTF concept as a means to facilitate contingency operations, including operations with nations outside the Alliance in situations not related to collective defence. One of the main features of the CJTF concept is its “combined-ness”, its multinational character, the fact that not only NATO member states, but also (non-NATO) allies can participate in NATO-led operations. When the EU started getting involved in military operations, it relied on this experience and set up command structures in this manner. This is clearly reflected in the EU’s largest military operation<sup>12</sup>, ALTHEA.

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11 This chapter of the article is a part of the author’s article that appeared in the EUFOR Forum during his operational tour in BiH (L. UJHÁZY: New Force Structures – Human Interoperability – Capacity-Building and Training; In: EUFOR Forum, 78, August/September 2012, pp. 18–19)

12 Operation Althea seen as major step in US withdrawal from Balkans; <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/operation-althea-seen-as-major-step-in-us-withdrawal-from-balkans/50447.aspx> (Entry: 23 Apr 2013)



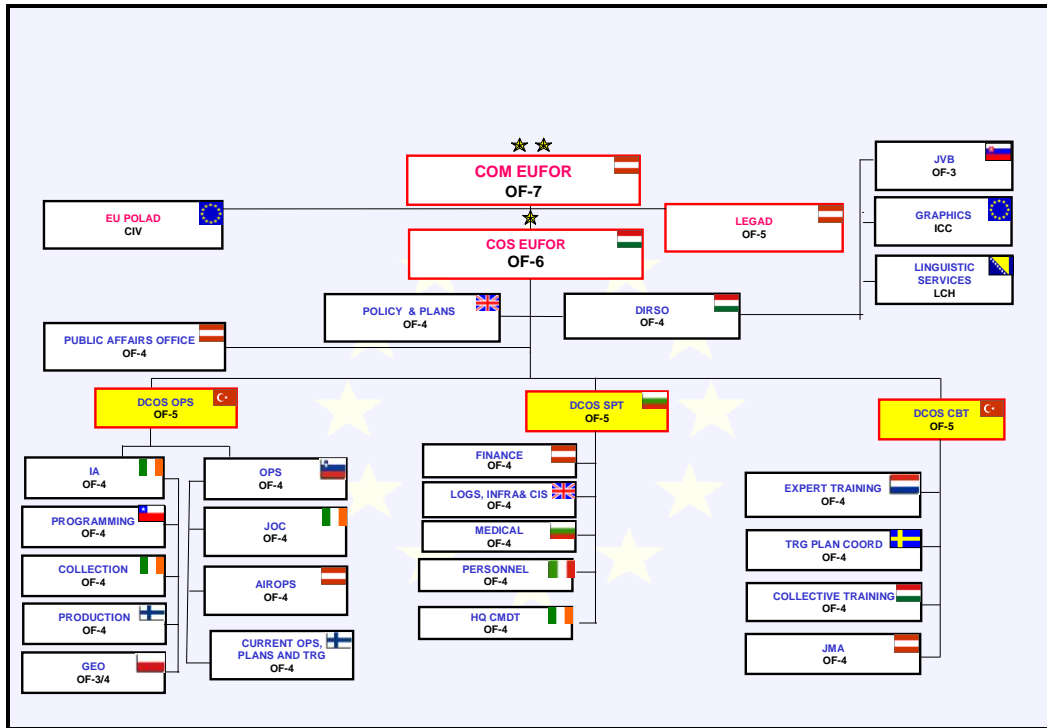


Figure 4. HQ EUFOR Structure

The organisational structure of the HQ is flexible, enabling changes should the situation make them necessary. This comes from the Task Force concept – originally a naval concept – allowing mission-tailored flexibility in the composition of forces. This flexibility is also reflected in the service, branch and national composition of the HQ. Troop contribution is one of the key factors when posts are assigned to nations in the HQ (fig 4).

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