



## **The Role of Neutrality on Irish Defence Policy Decisions: EU a Time for Change**

**Tanya Colclough**  
University College Cork

In today's real world of power politics it is no longer relevant for member states to act alone and joining forces has now become a natural solution for maintaining influence in the international arena. Ensuring stability has become even more significant as the EU enlarges and extends its borders to areas where poverty, violence and instability are constantly present. Most members do not possess the necessary resources to tackle these issues alone and by increasing cooperation on shared problems it is hoped that challenges be dealt with more effectively and help promote better foreign policy relations between member states. For Ireland, CFSP provides a holistic framework for the EU's interaction with the world in both civilian and military capacities. In order to gage this, the paper looks at how Ireland is increasingly coming to see its foreign policy in European as well as in national terms as evidenced by the White Paper on Defence and the Defence (Amendment) Act 2006. There is also an examination of the means by which EU and Irish foreign policy complement each other with the introduction of the European Security Strategy and Ireland's decision to become involved in the battlegroup concept. The paper then moves on to look at the constraints on Irish legislation that have inhibited Ireland's participation in ESDP such as the Seville Declaration and Ireland's commitment to an opening of a "triple lock" before forces can be deployed abroad. Such is a valuable indication of the strength of neutrality as a policy in Ireland that will prevent Ireland from becoming fully immersed in European defence, particularly a common defence. To date, despite its military neutrality, Ireland along with other neutrals has been a firm supporter of ESDP and an enhanced role for the EU in defence.

## **Introduction**

In today's real world of power politics it is no longer relevant for member states to act alone and joining forces has now become a natural solution for maintaining influence in the international arena. Members of the European Union are closely connected with the world economy, which means global peace and security are vital interests. Ensuring stability has become even more significant as the EU enlarges and extends its borders to areas where poverty, violence and instability are constantly present. Most members do not possess the necessary resources to tackle these issues alone and by increasing cooperation on shared problems it is hoped that not only can these challenges be dealt with more effectively but that by acting together it will help promote better foreign policy relations between member states. The development of EU battlegroups has been an ambitious move in this direction, to provide initial entry force missions as well as contributions to ongoing missions of 1500 troops ready to deploy within 5-10 days after a decision has been taken by the Council as part of the EU headline Goal 2010 process. It can be seen as a move by the EU to adopt a more proactive approach to international security rather than its more typical reactive stance, which was perhaps best illustrated in the Balkans. Whilst there still exists a need for a more robust crisis management capability the battlegroups are a promising development in that the security and defence policies of the 15 states involved are now more closely interlinked and dependent on each other. This is a remarkable achievement given the often sensitive nature of national defence policies. That is not to say that the

development of battlegroups has not been without its complications given the different cultural, historical and operational positions of member states, particularly those concerned with the transatlantic relationship or NATO membership and “neutral” or non-aligned states such as Ireland, Finland or Austria. In this article however the focus is on the more narrow national perspective as we analyse the impact of Ireland’s participation in the Nordic battlegroup on its own defence architecture and its foreign and defence policy which views ESDP through the prism of its neutrality. Ireland was part of the Nordic Battlegroup from January-June 2008 and is interesting from the Irish point of view as it was formed with other like-minded neutral states such as Sweden and Finland (as well as Norway and Estonia).

For Ireland CFSP provides a holistic framework for the EU’s interaction with the world in both civilian and military capacities. In addition to the Union’s commitment to crisis management operations through the implementation of the Petersberg Tasks, the commitment made at the December 2004 European Council for a Civilian Headline Goal 2008 ‘to enhance the capacity of the EU in the field of civilian crisis management, as an essential component of the EU’s overall external policy’ represents a more rounded response to crisis management.<sup>i</sup> For Ireland collective security, enshrined in the principles of the UN, is the means of facing these challenges and the Irish government believes that in order to maintain its credibility internationally Ireland must continue to send troops on international missions.<sup>ii</sup> The EU battlegroups it would seem

would be an ideal vehicle for this but important questions need to be answered. Firstly, does Ireland want the EU to increase its military capacity and how far does it think it should go? Secondly, what role will Ireland play in this process of militarisation and should there be any restrictions on Irish participation? Essentially the key question of this paper is how a small non-military state fits into the process of ESDP. In order to gauge this, the paper looks at how Ireland is increasingly coming to see its foreign policy in European as well as in national terms as evidenced by the White Paper on Defence and the Defence (Amendment) Act 2006. This has been facilitated by the decline in troubles in Northern Ireland, as involvement there has become a matter of domestic policy. The paper also examines the means by which EU and Irish foreign policy complement each with the introduction of the European Security Strategy and Ireland's decision to become involved in the battlegroup concept, seen as means of enhancing Ireland's commitment to the UN and crisis management. The paper then moves on to look at the constraints on Irish legislation that have inhibited Ireland's participation in ESDP such as the Seville Declaration (a safeguard that will keep Ireland from joining a European Army) and Ireland's commitment to an opening of a "triple lock" before forces can be deployed abroad. Such is a valuable indication of the strength of neutrality as a policy in Ireland that will prevent Ireland from becoming fully immersed in European defence, particularly a common defence. To date, despite its military neutrality, Ireland along with other neutrals has been a firm supporter of ESDP and an enhanced role for the EU in defence. It has not acted as a barrier to its

development to any great extent in what has become a mutually reinforcing relationship between a small state and a Union looking to enhance its international standing.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Since joining the EU in 1973 the European Union has been intricately involved in many aspects of Irish daily life be it culturally, socio – economically or politically. Ireland is also actively participating in the EU's Common European Security and Defence Policy through its contributions to the Nordic Battlegroup and ERRF. This has instigated a debate about the relationship between Irish defence policy and the EU's new security role. This debate in turn raises other interesting questions as to what new defence policy challenges ESDP will create for Ireland, how will the Irish government respond, what resources can Ireland commit to European Defence and ultimately how will these changes effect Ireland's traditional policy of neutrality?

Therefore the theoretical base for this study is that of Europeanisation and the extent to which membership of the EU changes member states or whether the reverse can be said to be true. This conceptual framework allows for analysis at various levels: domestic; European and international and also takes account of such cultural considerations as identity, all of which have impacted on the Irish policy of neutrality as it stands today. The fact that the EU impacts greatly on member states is beyond dispute, particularly in socio-economic matters, where

the EU has been most influential and successful. The myriad of rules, regulations and demands placed on member states have been essential in order for this unique integration project to work. Convergence on monetary union, agricultural policy or a Union where members can travel and work freely across borders has had a considerable influence on the domestic policies of members involved. The focus of this study is the degree to which the EU has impacted on foreign policy, through an analysis of how Ireland has responded to its participation in ESDP/CFSP. Traditionally foreign and defence policy is regarded as the preserve of the state and the course that CFSP has taken has been largely determined by the ability of members to reach compromise over various national positions. Ireland has been no different as neutrality concerns have dominated Irish negotiations at Nice and Lisbon for example. However, with reference to the Irish case one can also discern a willingness on the part of various Irish governments to adapt and change to European demands as evidenced in the several legislative changes made by Ireland in order to participate in the Battlegroup concept, as discussed below. To this extent Ireland's policy of neutrality is a good example of Europeanisation in action where in recent years it has become more fluid in its definition and direction, being more accurately described as military neutrality or non-alignment. This is not to say that Ireland has abandoned its neutral roots but rather that Ireland's understanding of what it means to be neutral has changed through its involvement with the EU. A firm commitment to remaining outside of a common defence and a European Army are two areas where the national perspective

has remained and will continue to remain dominant. The impact of the EU on this development is unquestionable however; as membership has forced the Irish government to take a greater account of what it means to be a neutral state in a world where cooperation is unavoidable and in many ways essential for a small state incapable of providing for its own defence.

A review of the literature highlights that the focus of Europeanisation has centred on the socio-economic policy areas of EU and state interaction. As the EU increased its competencies through CFSP/ESDP there have been several worthwhile studies on the Europeanisation of foreign policy with Ben Tonra defining it as 'a transformation in the way in which national foreign policies are constructed...and in the consequent internalization of norms and expectations arising from a complex system of collective European policy making'.<sup>iii</sup> Other notable works have been written by Michael E. Smith<sup>iv</sup>, Christopher Hill<sup>v</sup> and Manners and Whitman<sup>vi</sup>. This study with a focus on Ireland as a small and neutral state hopes to add to the literature as such a combination has not been frequently analysed through the conceptual framework of Europeanisation. For this reason an analysis of the impact of Europe on the foreign policy of Ireland with particular reference to its neutrality will serve as a valuable contribution to Europeanisation research.

## **Irish Defence Policy through ESDP: a More Integrated Approach**

Irish defence policy has inevitably changed since the end of the Cold War. With the new political and security environment ushered in as a result of the end of the nuclear conflict between the US and the Soviet Union new challenges and concerns began to emerge. In turn this demanded a broadening of the term security as new responses were also required. Defence no longer centred solely on territorial defence and even the terms defence and security, so closely related to each other during the Cold War began to take on new meanings. Today defence is simply a component of a state's security policy and still focuses on the defence of territory. Security on the other hand has broadened in definition requiring military, civilian and economic responses in the resolution of conflicts (Keohane, 2007). Today's threats to a state's security include humanitarian crises, political and economic breakdown, mass migration, pollution and other environmental issues, international crime as well as drug and people trafficking. Such developments have seen an increased role for the EU and consequently for Ireland as an active member of the Union. Indeed this changed European security environment where crisis management and civilian strategies are used for lower scale conflicts as opposed to larger scale conventional warfare in response to a major conflict affords Ireland a new international security decision making role. The European approach is more holistic, which in fact complements Irish foreign policy.



Increased socio-economic and political interdependence has led to a more integrated approach to security and in the Irish government's 2000 White Paper on Defence it states 'the new security environment in greater Europe, however, is marked by a lower degree of risk of large scale military conflict, but also by new challenges and uncertainties...leading to humanitarian crises and refugee flows which have affected every country in the EU'.<sup>vii</sup> Such references to the EU in a national defence paper shows that the Irish government is now thinking of security in European terms and not just from the position of its own national interest, a good example of Europeanisation at work. It is necessary to question however, how Irish and European security policy complement each other and how can Ireland impact on the advancements made by the EU. Sectarian violence in Northern Ireland throughout the 1970's and 1980's meant that foreign policy was 'localised' as the UK became the dominant state that Ireland was concerned with but as the events in the North became part of domestic policy and no longer a conflict between Ireland and Britain, Ireland began to focus on other foreign policy and security concerns (Tonra, 2001: 104). The stable position of the newly formed Executive in the North has not only enabled Ireland to broaden its security outlook but has also provided valuable lessons for European security. Ireland's experience of low-intensity conflict on the island and the Irish model of a low key security approach towards internal security problems could act as a valuable template for other states experiencing security crises within or near to EU borders. The experience gained by Irish forces as well as their involvement in UN peacekeeping missions in East Timor, Congo,

the Balkans and Lebanon with a continued “softly softly” approach will be of benefit to future battlegroup deployments beyond EU borders.

In terms of security Ireland has always valued both civilian as well as military responses to security issues. This approach correlates to the importance attached to international law and the primacy of the UN in international collective security. In this way Ireland can play a valuable role in marrying soft power instruments to hard power ones. To this end the UN Millennium Review Summit in September 2005 was of considerable significance to the Irish government in terms of restructuring the UN’s human rights apparatus, the proposed Peace Building Commission, the issue of responsibility and the overall aim of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>viii</sup> At the summit the Taoiseach spoke of the link between development, security and human rights and then singled out the UN as ‘fundamental to the pursuit of global justice, prosperity and security’ (Campbell and Tonra, 2005). With the support for and protection of human rights as a priority the Government is a firm supporter of the Human Rights Council and has committed itself to reaching by 2012 the UN target of 7% of GNP in Official Development Assistance (ODA) contribution. In 2005 the Irish government also pledged to double its spending on HIV/AIDS to €100 million while also committing to the promotion of trade, investment and technology transfer as a means of adding to the stabilisation of the security environment.<sup>ix</sup> In terms of other issues surrounding Ireland’s support for political responses to security the government strongly supports strict arms control and

in cooperation with the EU and other international organisations is pushing for an international arms trade treaty. Already Ireland was an active participant in the establishment of the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports and at the UN level Ireland took part in negotiations for an international instrument on the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons.

During the Irish presidency greater correlation between civilian and military aspects of crisis management were of prime concern for the government. Whilst cautious over the setting up of an EU Headquarter Ireland was in support of the establishment of a civilian – military cell in the EUMS. In response to the need to improve soft power instruments for conflict prevention and management the government undertook an interdepartmental audit of resources and capacities that could be activated to respond to humanitarian emergencies abroad. An interdepartmental working group on emergency planning also came into force (partly in response to the events of September 11 2001) providing guidance in planning structures and processes in times of emergency as well as exchanges of information between all those involved in emergency planning.<sup>x</sup> While such initiatives require additional refinement in terms of intelligence infrastructure they are valuable additions to how the government deals with the country's security and in the current environment where terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda have targeted Britain. Ireland, as its nearest neighbour, could be drawn into any future attacks and this needs to be addressed adequately.

Ireland has also made significant civilian security contributions with Garda Síochána involvement in UN peacekeeping since 1989. The Garda Síochána have also been involved in cross border initiatives not only with the British security forces but also the FBI and CIA. In Europe the Irish Justice Ministry has participated in the Trevi Group coordinating European intelligence and counter operations in the struggle to combat terrorism, drugs and transnational crime.<sup>xi</sup> Furthermore, as already mentioned the Irish government Official Development Assistance has extended its programme in development assistance in order to meet UN commitments by 2007. This ties in closely with the solid work being carried out by Irish non-governmental organisations such as Trocaire, Concern, Oxfam Ireland and Gorta in international development, particularly in Africa.<sup>xii</sup>

Through its Defence (Amendment) Act 2006 the government has made a provision in Section 3 of the Act with regard to the extension of the existing arrangements for training and development for humanitarian tasks.<sup>xiii</sup> Currently there is no UN security resolution for humanitarian operations in response to a disaster either natural or man-made since these do not constitute a threat to international peace and security. In response to Ireland's commitment to support disaster relief this amendment will enable defence forces to be deployed under normal military control. Previously defence forces had to volunteer for service in a civilian capacity and would then be deployed by an NGO and not the government. Under the new Defence (Amendment) Act 2006 however, Ireland will be able to respond in an appropriate way with the

necessary resources and equipment that are often only available from the military such as tents and other temporary accommodation, water treatment plants, generators and other equipment. Such is an example of the impact of the EU on Ireland and its willingness to adapt its legislation in order to participate more fully. This a very practical example of Europeanisation as it is important that these deficiencies in the legislation are being addressed in order to allow Ireland further extend its influence in international security involvement, especially through ESDP.

For Ireland the United Nations will continue to be the cornerstone of its foreign policy with the primacy of the Security Council in maintaining peace as the ultimate protector of Irish security. Article 29 of the Irish Constitution states that:

Ireland accepts the generally recognised principles of international law as its rule of conduct in its relations with other State reaffirming this country's commitment to international law and peaceful settlement of disputes, fundamental principles of the UN Charter.<sup>xiv</sup>

The most visible expression of Ireland's commitment to the UN and its support for a multilateral approach to the prevention and management of international crises has been the deployment of Irish Defence Forces on UN peacekeeping missions since 1958 with almost 50 years of peacekeeping experience and participation in UN missions accounting for a significant part of Irish Foreign policy. In 2006 alone Irish forces served in 5 UN overseas missions. In his article 'Peacekeeping Lessons Learned: An Irish Perspective', Lt-Col. Oliver

MacDonald calculates that 65% of Irish Defence Forces have experience serving abroad (Lt-Col McDonald, 1997) while Ireland is also the sixth largest contributor to UN missions, which is significant given the country's size and military capacity.<sup>xv</sup> With this proven tradition of peacekeeping overseas Ireland has gained credibility and the respect of the international community for its efforts and it is important that Ireland continues its involvement in peacekeeping especially as the UN has seen the nature of its peacekeeping operations change in recent times.

Changes in the types of UN missions and how they are organised and run will add a further dimension to the international role of Irish Defence Forces which are now expected to take part in peace enforcement missions as well as peace support operations. In recognition of these changes in attitude to conflict resolution the Defence (Amendment) Act 2006 has taken into account the increasing need for cohesive and professional forces who can respond quickly and effectively to crises as they emerge. Central to this is improved interoperability with other forces and Section 3 of the Act allows for troops to now train abroad in an effort towards greater preparedness for rapid deployment.<sup>xvi</sup> As the UN has turned to regional organisations for support in crisis management Ireland's commitment to participating in UN established and authorised missions has continued. Ireland has been involved in UN led missions such as UNIMIL in Liberia as well as UN authorised missions with KFOR under NATO. It has also participated in missions led by the EU in Bosnia

Herzegovina and Operation Artemis in the Congo and in an EU led supporting mission to the African Union led UN mission in Darfur.

### **Working with its Partners in the Nordic Battlegroup**

One of the main reasons for Solana's European Security Strategy was to clearly outline and define the security policy goals of the EU. In this way the ESS was to act as a roadmap for member states to use in order to restructure not only their defence policies but also their military capabilities. The doctrine also advocates a more unified Union where members, in cooperation with each other, can react to crises in a flexible yet effective way. Consequently, for states deciding to join forces in the development of a battlegroup these are all important considerations as cooperation within the battlegroup could lead to a deepening interaction with participating countries in a wider area of defence related issues. In support for the development of the EU's rapid response capability in UN authorised missions the Irish government committed itself to participation in the Nordic Battlegroup. An interdepartmental group was established in 2005 to examine all the issues relating to Ireland's participation.<sup>xvii</sup> Following the group's report in November 2005 to the Cabinet Sub Committee on European Affairs the Government subsequently approached the Swedish government with a view to participating in the Nordic Battlegroup. On 9-10 March 2006 a delegation consisting of representatives from the Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs and Defence Forces met with their Swedish counterparts to outline what equipment and troop numbers Ireland

would be able to make available to the group.<sup>xviii</sup> These included smaller niche capabilities<sup>xix</sup>, up to an APC mounted light infantry company group of approximately 200 troops as well as support elements.<sup>xx</sup> The Irish government's decision to approach the Nordic Battlegroup countries is consistent with its commitment to military neutrality and its wish to develop military relations within the EU with other like-minded nations.

The Irish approach came late as Sweden, Finland and Norway had already announced that they would establish a Nordic Battlegroup as far back as 22 November 2004 at the Military Capabilities Conference in Brussels, with Estonia declaring its intention to join shortly afterwards (Andersson, 2006: 3). The Battlegroup was to be ready by 2008 and most of the core elements are already in place as Sweden, as framework nation<sup>xxi</sup>, is providing the main manoeuvre battalion.

The Swedish-Finnish-Norwegian grouping in the Nordic Battlegroup was a logical progression from previously successful cooperation in the Nordic Brigade. These states therefore know each other well, have undergone similar training and have operated to the same rules of engagement. Such cooperation in a Nordic Battlegroup made logistical sense as it would take considerable time for Sweden, Finland and Norway, to reach the same levels of interoperability with other states. As small states, they came to the Nordic Battlegroup with similar problems and issues. The development of security policy hardware



shows a willingness to participate in the advancement of an ESDP yet it also allows them to exert an influence on its direction.

As an indication of how things could work for members of the Battlegroup one can look to the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) in Liberia, made up of 600 troops from Ireland and Sweden, a grouping, which Minister for Defence Willie O’Dea has termed a ‘type of in-theatre battlegroup’.<sup>xxii</sup> Following a comprehensive peace agreement signed in Accra, Ghana on 27 August 2003 by all parties in the Liberian conflict the UN passed Security Council Resolution 1509, which established a stabilisation force in the country. This force would have a mandate to take over from the ECOWAS Monitoring Group in Liberia and would act under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Consisting of 15,000 troops, including 250 military observers and 160 staff officers UNMIL began its tour of duty in October 2003 and was deployed throughout Liberia in 4 sectors with troops coming from Nigeria, Ghana, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Ethiopia. Ireland together with Sweden provided the Quick Reaction Force to the UNMIL force commander and were considered to be the “sharp end” of UN Commander Lieut. Gen. Joseph Owinibi’s troops, being the most professional force in the UN mission. The Irish contingent comprises a motorised infantry battalion of 428 personnel with additional troops at the force headquarters as military observers. Whilst the Irish contribution was due to end in November 2006 its mission was extended for a further 6 months until May 2007. The Swedish contribution in Liberia was increased from 300 in 2005 to 800 in 2006 and its

rifle company of about 240 soldiers partners the Irish battalion. The QRF has been supported by helicopters and armoured personnel carriers, which could be deployed within one hour if needed. Furthermore, in October 2006 an Irish contingent also returned to the Lebanon under the UNIFIL mission which was extended due to increased hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah. The Irish unit of 150 troops, involved in reconnaissance, security and protection duties joined a Finnish unit responsible for reconstruction.<sup>xxiii</sup> All of this is indicative of how a diversity of arrangements in place during peacekeeping operations allow like-minded nations work in tandem to contribute effectively to peace support missions and is an encouraging indicator of how the Nordic Battlegroup will also be an effective force in the future, given the precedent set in Liberia and Lebanon.

### **EU Battlegroups: What is needed for Effective Actions?**

At the operational level Nordic Battlegroup missions were determined by the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council on 17 May 2004 and include joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management and support for third countries in combating terrorism.<sup>xxiv</sup> Such probable missions and mission areas will demand the ability to expect the unexpected as opponents deviate from traditional concepts of attack, opting for innovative tactics and technology, making Nordic Battlegroup composition and training of vital importance. The core unit and manoeuvre element of the battlegroup was a mechanised

battalion with two mechanised companies, one air mobile squadron, one logistics company and a mortar company. The make up of this manoeuvre unit was entirely Swedish apart from five Finnish staff officers. Groups of support facilities will be made up of engineers, air defences, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance, with additional operational enablers such as air and naval defence as well as logistical and strategic air and sealift capabilities.

As framework nation it was the responsibility of Sweden to provide for the latter. Strategic transport capabilities form a central component of any mission and will be a problem for most EU countries (except Britain), not just those involved in the Nordic Battlegroup. For conflict areas on the continent of Europe existing rail and road networks can be utilised. For areas where such modes of transport are not available sea and airlift capabilities will need to be developed to maximum effect so that troops and equipment can be dispatched to problem areas in the quickest time possible. From the Swedish point of view however the acquisition of strategic air or sea lift capabilities have not been provided for in defence budgets up to 2016 (Ibison, 2007). It has been estimated that Sweden may have three c17 aircraft at its disposal by 2020; twelve years after the battlegroups have become operational. If resources are pooled Sweden could have access to A400m aircraft and through the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) (a temporary measure to improve EU strategic airlift capabilities) an adequate strategic airlift capacity will be available through Sweden's NATO partners operating out of the Strategic Air-Lift Coordination

Centre located in the European Airlift Centre (EAC).<sup>xxv</sup> Together Sweden and Norway provided a sealift capability using contracted ships and the Sealift Coordination Centre in Eindhoven for logistical support.<sup>xxvi</sup> Sweden is also currently researching the possible acquisition of an amphibious transport ship, which would serve several functions: transportation of troops and equipment, command and control centre, or hospital ship. Costing €200 million approximately the ship could be operational in 3-5 years, offering vital assistance to not only the battlegroups but to other EU missions also.

### **Irish Defence Policy: Changes in the Legislation**

Ireland views its participation in EU missions and in the EU's European Security and Defence Policy as further evidence of its traditional support for the UN and its obligation as a member of the international community to come to the aid of those in need in times of crisis or humanitarian disasters. According to Willie O'Dea 'the European Union today has the potential to play an increasing role responding to such crises, in providing humanitarian relief and in supporting the maintenance of international peace and security in furtherance of the aims of the United Nations and the UN Charter'.<sup>xxvii</sup> As the security interests of the members of the EU have become increasingly interdependent the operational focus of the Union is now on crisis management, a move supported by Ireland and evident in changes in Irish legislation. Whereas the White Paper on Defence published in 1993 in allowing for Irish forces to participate in 'United Nations missions in the cause of international peace'<sup>xxviii</sup> was vague and difficult

to interpret the 2000 White Paper on Defence more specifically allows Irish Defence Forces involvement in 'multinational peace support, crisis management and humanitarian operations'<sup>xxix</sup>, a move which Daniel Keohane believes was heavily influenced by the EU's furtherance of the 'Petersberg Tasks' through its ESDP (Keohane, 2001: 8). The development of the battlegroups ties in closely with this concept as they enjoy the support of the UN, willing to make use of such a capability available for crisis management and giving Ireland the authorisation it needs to become involved. Seen as a means of further contributing to United Nations peace support operations EU battlegroups (and also the ERF) therefore cannot be taken as a decrease in Ireland's commitment to the UN in preference for the EU. Whilst Ireland is willing to become involved in battlegroup missions it will only participate under a UN mandate. As the international environment changes and formations such as the Nordic Battlegroup are better suited as an initial response before traditional UN forces move in, Irish forces will in effect be operating within an EU force but under a UN mandate as before with no weakening commitment to the institution.

The findings of the interdepartmental group who reported in 2005 on the possibility of joining an EU battlegroup also led to changes in Irish legislation through the Defence (Amendment) Act 2006 which will afford the government greater leeway in organising overseas operations by the Defence Forces. Irish forces will now be able to participate in emergency humanitarian or disaster

relief tasks, train abroad for EU Battlegroup participation and be dispatched for monitoring or training duties at the discretion of the government without prior Dáil approval. Such a move relaxes the triple lock arrangement that previously required the approval of the Oireachtas, the government and the United Nations and therefore is seen as a significant piece of legislation that could be perceived to threaten the triple lock guarantee. Overall the Amendment Act represents a pragmatic development in that it accounts for the changes in international security and the United Nations willingness to use regional organisations such as the EU for international peacekeeping or peacemaking duties. It ensures that Ireland's Defence Forces will be able to react to and participate in this new development. However, for a traditionally neutral country the Act has proved controversial and is considered by some as representing the thin edge of the wedge in a growing militarisation of the EU and Ireland's part in this. For instance a Green Party policy statement concluded that the Defence (Amendment) Act 2006 had been hurried through the Dail in an effort to take Irish defence policy in a 'new, highly dubious and regrettable direction' threatening Irish commitment to the triple lock and the country's tradition as a supporter of the UN.<sup>xxx</sup> It is necessary therefore to elaborate on the various provisions of the Act. Section one of the Act provides a definition of 'international organisation' as the UN, the EU, OSCE and any regional arrangement or agency that participates, or has participated, in operations as part of an International United Nations Force<sup>xxxix</sup>. Together with Section 3(1) this definition allows for the assignment of Irish Defence Forces to positions in

international organisations such as the UN, the EU and OSCE as well as other regional organisations involved in UN peacekeeping operations like NATO and the African Union. It formalises existing arrangements for personnel already assigned to the UN, the EU and the OSCE and provides for personnel serving in Ireland's representative office at NATO's Partnership for Peace Liaison Office. Section one also alters the definition of 'international United Nations Force' previously given in the 1960 and 1993 Acts to 'an international force or body established, mandated, authorised, endorsed, supported, approved or otherwise sanctioned by resolution of the Security Council or the General Assembly of the United Nations'.<sup>xxxii</sup> A recent policy statement by the Green Party terms such wording as 'so broad that any vague resolution from the Security Council will do'.<sup>xxxiii</sup> The need for a UN mandate to establish peacekeeping forces has been extended to 'authorised' by the UN Security Council as seen with UN resolution 1244 and the decision to establish a civil and security presence in Kosovo. The Green Party, in a policy statement in June 2006, claimed that whilst it supported the terms established, mandated and authorised, it is opposed to the other terms used in the definition above such as endorsed, supported or approved, which it considers too broad and open to misinterpretation and abuse. The party cites the attack on Iraq as an example of such a misinterpretation as the US and Britain insisted that their offensive was based on previous UN resolutions and therefore in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. It can be argued however that while this new definition does widen the conditions under which force can be used it is

also necessary for Ireland to adapt to the changing language of the UN and the provision in Section 2 that makes the deployment of defence forces on UN missions subject to Dáil approval ensures that any decision to despatch troops will not be taken lightly nor without careful consideration.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Concern however has been raised over Section 3 of the Act which allows for troops involved in training, military reconnaissance or humanitarian tasks to be sent abroad without Dáil approval. While it is accepted that troops involved in ceremonial duties or taking part in sporting events would not need Dáil approval opposition parties have questioned the decision that personnel involved in training exercises, representational duties or fact finding missions will now only need the approval of the government. For the government such changes to the existing training programme of the Defence Forces as participation in field exercises overseas is essential in order to maintain high standards as well as to ensure that Irish troops are properly prepared for the missions that they will undertake to avoid a situation where joint training is undertaken on the ground, during a mission in a dangerous environment. According to Minister for Defence, Willie O'Dea 'We can't continue with the current situation where our first joint training is when we are on the ground in a real live and potentially dangerous environment.'<sup>xxxv</sup>

As an extension of this, Section 8 of the Act also allows for a force to be assembled and embarked to a theatre before it has officially become part of an International United Nations Force.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Such a provision is designed to provide



for a situation where rapid response is necessary including battlegroups and where a finalised UN resolution has not yet been issued. It allows for equipment to be containerised and despatched and for personnel to assemble in the theatre of operations, or in the case of battlegroup deployments, in the framework nation, ready for deployment. While this provision would enable a rapid response, defence forces would not actually deploy operationally until a formal UN resolution has been declared and deployment has also been sanctioned by the government and Dáil Éireann. However, although the need for rapid response is essential certain questions need to be answered. Perhaps most importantly what happens if Irish troops, waiting in an armed conflict for UN authorisation is fired upon? Can Irish forces defend themselves against attack in such a situation? If the answer is yes then Ireland would become involved in a conflict without the necessary UN authorisation. Also the government needs to address the instance where UN authorisation is not forthcoming and Irish Defence Forces would find themselves in the complicated situation where they need to disengage and extricate themselves from the theatre which would prove to be a complex and costly manoeuvre. Such criticisms are all the more valid given the quick passage of the Act through the Dáil. The rushed nature of the Act gave the opposition cause for concern given the fundamental changes for Irish defence contained within the Act and the government must now work to ease the tensions and concerns caused by this legislation.

### ***The Impact of Constitutional Restrictions on Irish Defence***

Ireland's participation in the ESDP and more specifically EU battlegroups is essentially determined by the Irish Constitution which states under Article 29.4.9° that 'The State shall not adopt a decision taken by the European Council to establish a common defence pursuant to Article 1.2 of the Treaty referred to in subsection 7° of this section where that common defence would include the State.'<sup>xxxvii</sup> In this way Ireland is precluded from joining a European common defence that may be established under the EU Treaties. Any change to this would only come about as a result of a referendum. Irish legislation also constrains the conditions under which Irish troops may be sent abroad as part of an international force. Whether it be part of a UN or EU mission. Taking into account the amendments dealt with in the previous section the "triple lock" remains in place. The "triple lock" mechanism stipulates that for Irish forces to take part in peace missions overseas there is a requirement for Dail, government approval as well as a UN mandate for the mission. This requirement remains in place. Consequently, the Irish refusal to ever adopt a common European Defence and its commitment to the triple lock places several legal and constitutional restrictions on Irish Defence Policy and participation in the battlegroup concept. These constraints need to be carefully considered in terms of the battlegroup where a unit must be kept at high state of readiness as a fully integrated and trained unit that can be deployed with 10-15 days. With such a short time frame for deployment any delays or constraints could prove extremely problematic. If an EU peacekeeping mission did not gain a UN

mandate then Irish troops would have to withdraw making it more difficult to deploy the rest of the battlegroup effectively and would also diminish Ireland's influence internationally.

While the legislation reinforces the government's commitment to uphold the triple lock principle others such as John Gormley, the Minister for the Environment, have called on the government to enshrine the triple lock in the Constitution by means of a referendum with the Irish people in order to ensure its centrality in Irish defence policy (Gormley, 2006). Willie O'Dea however, believes that the Irish public are highly confident in the triple lock as it stands and that it provides 'significant' reassurance to the public and that there is widespread support for its retention because of the strict control it exercises over Irish military venture overseas.<sup>xxxviii</sup> The Minister also firmly believes that Irish participation in a battlegroup will not compromise Ireland's commitment to the UN Charter, nor is there conflict between Ireland's involvement with regional arrangements and the principles of the UN.<sup>xxxix</sup> Any decision to participate in an EU mission will be made on a case by case basis and will ultimately remain a national sovereign decision. Those opposed to the stringency of the triple lock argue that the mechanism can act as a restriction to Irish sovereignty and threatens the country's ability to send Irish troops on international missions. While the EU does not require UN authorisation as a prerequisite for establishing peacekeeping missions most EU missions have acted with the support of the UN Security Council. In the case of Operation Concordia

however a Macedonian request for the intervention of UN peacekeepers in Macedonia in 1999 was vetoed by China in the Security Council because of Macedonia's position with regard to Taiwan.<sup>x1</sup> As a result Ireland was legally prevented from contributing to the mission in spite of the fact that a senior Irish officer had been selected to command the force. As a result, it seems reasonable to question why another state (and indirectly the triple lock) should be allowed dictate Irish foreign policy and the country's participation in a valid mission in line with UN principles but denied a UN mandate. It is also interesting to note that in the same year Ireland detoured from its traditional policy of neutrality and backed an EU-NATO members' statement endorsing NATO military action in Kosovo in 1999. While the triple lock was not compromised as Ireland did not commit any forces to NATO it was the first time Ireland supported military action without a UN mandate and is significant for that reason. The government's position on Kosovo highlights the fact that Ireland is now considering foreign policy from a European perspective as well as a national and UN one, a move some suggest could endanger the triple lock.

Essential to the argument to remove the triple lock is the fact that the lock takes time to open which detracts from the purpose of the battlegroups to remain flexible, ready to intervene in crises and resolve them as quickly as possible. Tied in with the issue of the veto rights of the permanent members of the Security Council is the fact that the UN can often be slow in coming to a decision to issue a resolution and with the ten day proviso for battlegroup

deployments it is unlikely that such a resolution will be passed in time. This will complicate matters for other members of the battlegroups that Ireland is involved in, as a unanimous decision is needed before the group can be deployed. It is important that battlegroups have as few limitations as possible in order to be effective and members of the battlegroups should try to harmonise their national legislation as closely as possible to facilitate the training for and planning of missions. Like Ireland, Finland's Peacekeeping Act places restrictions on its participation in international missions requiring either a UN or OSCE mandate and will be discussed further below (Kaukoranta, 1998: 328). This legal requirement has caused much political debate in the country with the President conceding in 2005 that it might not always be possible to gain a UN mandate in situations where Finland is willing to act (Kerttunen, Koivula & Jeppsson, 2005: 86). These include the possibility that the two sides involved in a conflict request EU action directly or that if the situation in which Finland wishes to become involved is so complicated that the UN cannot reach agreement thus preventing Finland's participation. Having concluded its investigations the working group set up in 2004 to investigate possible reforms to the Act delivered its findings in May 2005 stating that 'the operations in which Finland intends to participate should, under the main rule have the mandate of the UN Security Council. Exceptionally Finland could also participate in other operations' once a report has been submitted by Government for discussion in parliament and then a final proposal given to the president upon which a decision can be made.<sup>xii</sup> Therefore, member states need to be mindful of the

fact that whilst battlegroups cannot have any limitations to action their partners in the group often do, such is the nature of defence policy.

In discussing the restrictions imposed on Irish defence policy one must consider the prohibition on Irish participation in a common defence. In the Seville Declaration of June 2002 the European Union recognised Ireland's military neutrality as a response to Article 1.2 of the Treaty of Nice which states 'The Common Foreign and Security Policy shall include all questions relating to the security of the Union, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy, which might lead to a common defence, should the European Council so decide'.<sup>xiii</sup> The term common defence is taken to mean a binding mutual defence commitment but it is also clear that no decision to move towards a common defence could be taken without Irish approval, as the European Council, charged with making such a decision, operates by consensus. As a further commitment to non-participation for Ireland in a common defence the Twenty-sixth Amendment to the Constitution Act, 2002 published 17 months after the first referendum on the Nice Treaty, also acted as a guarantee against Ireland adopting any decision taken by the European Council on establishing a common defence and that Ireland could not participate in such a common defence without amendment to the Constitution by way of a referendum. The amendment proposed in the Act also gave constitutional effect to the National Declaration by Ireland at Seville in order to remove the doubts amongst the Irish people that the Nice Treaty posed a threat to Irish neutrality, believed to be

under threat during the first referendum on the Treaty. Through the Seville Declaration the government negotiated safeguards for Ireland's policy of military neutrality by establishing an agreed interpretation of the relevant provisions of the treaties. These declarations confirmed that the development of the EU's CFSP would not influence Ireland's traditional policy of military neutrality that the treaties would not impose on Ireland a binding defence commitment and also that participation in EU efforts and crisis management and humanitarian relief would not constitute the development of a European Army. Furthermore, the declarations confirm that Irish troops will not take part in EU operations without a UN mandate and that Ireland will not become involved in a common defence arrangement without the approval of the Irish people through a referendum on the issue.<sup>xliii</sup> The EU Constitution, now the Reform Treaty maintains these declarations. What these declarations along with the Twenty-Sixth Amendment to the Constitution Act will not prevent however is the situation in which the Oireachtas adopts a decision by the European Council to establish a common defence, which does not include Ireland. In such a situation Ireland would not block the defensive ambitions of other member states wishing to establish a common defence, as long as it does not interfere with Ireland's national interests. For Roisin Doherty flexible cooperation is an important option for the neutral states, for whom participation in CFSP means they can take part in closer security cooperation yet can also opt-out if they consider their national interest to be at stake. The danger however to be mindful of is the creation of a 'multi-speed' Europe where the smaller neutral states are left behind by their

larger more active partners (Doherty, 2002: 156). In many ways such a situation as an Irish opt out of defence could be similar to the introduction of the Euro, which was approved by all 15 member states although 3 states did not replace their national currencies with the Euro. While the Seville Declarations do much to dispel the idea that the Nice Treaty represented a threat to Irish neutrality it is essential that Ireland does participate in CFSP. There are fears amongst some analysts that Ireland would be 'left out in the cold' if the EU moves towards a common defence and could lose significant influence over time (Keatinge and Tonra, 2002).

### ***The Future of Defence: an Increased Irish Ambition***

In order to remain at the forefront of multinational arrangements for international security one must remember that Ireland is in fact an active participant in the ESDP process, not a mere spectator, and must take responsibility for how it is developed with other member states. Consequently, ESDP and Ireland's involvement in the battlegroups will pose new defence challenges for the Government, the Department of Defence and the Department of Foreign Affairs. The re-organisation of the Defence Forces structure is already underway and changes have produced positive results. If the increased demand for troops for international missions as well as demands at home for troops patrols at the Northern Irish border continue Ireland will have to consider some changes. With the changing international environment states across Europe have been forced to reassess the make-up of their defence forces as well as the resources



needed in the future. Changes within the Irish Defence Forces have been long overdue and reforms have been far reaching. Following on from the Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan the Defence Forces have changed from a four command structure to a three brigade structure with larger unit sizes in order to augment operational capabilities.<sup>xliv</sup> The Implementation Plan also recommended reducing troop numbers to 11,500 while also lowering age profiles.<sup>xlv</sup> Infantry battalions were also reduced from eleven to nine and the top level structure of the Defence Forces has been altered and brought more in line with modern times.

Improvements have also been made in the area of investment in equipment and facilities. Taking defence expenditure figures for 2005, which came to €731,971 million there was in fact a 5.04% increase in expenditure from 2004 (See table 2).<sup>xlvi</sup> While a significant proportion of this figure is made up of pay and pensions there has been significant investment in military hardware. The biggest defence contract in the history of the Irish State involved the purchase of 25 additional armoured personnel carriers (APC's) from Mowag of Switzerland at a cost of €84 million.<sup>xlvii</sup> These APC's bring the total to 65 and are essential for duties at home and on peacekeeping duties overseas, having been used by Irish troops in Liberia and Kosovo. In addition improvements were made to Defence Forces anti-armour capability as the Javelin medium range anti-tank guided weapon system replaced the Milan System in 2005 at a cost of €13 million. Whilst these defence expenditures are modest in comparison to other European states from

the Irish perspective they highlight the commitment within the Department of Defence to modernise its army resources and equipment for more effective use at home and abroad. This is all the more significant given the fact that Ireland finds itself in a 'very benign external security environment' as stated in the Irish Government 2000 White Paper on Defence and faces little prospect of external military attack on the island.<sup>xlviii</sup>

	2005 Provision €	2005 Outturn €	2004 Provision €	2004 Outturn €
DOD Administration	22,858	21,131	21,662	20,787
Defence Forces & Pay Allowances	528,574	515,645	506,679	493,703
Defence Forces Non-Payment Expenditure	204,972	215,136	199,455	210,901
Other Services	7,778	7778	7152	7152
<b>Total Defence Expenditure</b>	<b>737,982</b>	<b>731,971</b>	<b>697,656</b>	<b>695,028</b>

Source: Adapted from Defence Forces Annual Report 2005

The future of Ireland's security architecture will continue to centre on UN international peacekeeping. At the start of the decade Ireland was the third highest contributor to peacekeeping duties with missions highlighting the significance of peace support missions to Irish defence but also indicating the increasing scope of missions that Ireland will become involved in.<sup>xlix</sup> Challenges with regard to NATO led missions in terms of interoperability and sustainability have been overcome by Irish Defence Forces through their participation in both

SFOR in Bosnia and KFOR in Kosovo. In addition involvement in the UN enforcement operation in Somalia represented a new departure for Ireland both militarily and politically being the first time Irish forces participated in a Chapter VII enforcement operation. As the UN has changed the types of missions it has become involved in and how they are organised so too has Ireland been forced to adapt to these changing circumstances. Tied to this is the issue of defence expenditure and as discussed earlier the difficulties that may follow on from increased investment in procurement whilst not increasing the defence budget. Such a move will force the Irish Government to make changes as to what types of missions it can become involved in. Daniel Keohane has argued that two options lie before the Irish Government: to either concentrate on lower end 'Petersberg Tasks' through the UN or alternatively to specialise in a key participating role in high intensity peace enforcement forces with bigger countries like Britain, France and Germany. Obviously such action would require increased spending and better planning and training whilst also bringing increased benefits for Ireland's defence forces. Essentially a decision between the two could come down to spending and Ireland's defence budget and not solely the political considerations that would influence such a decision. Force overstretch is an important consideration here also as Ireland and its preparations for involvement in the battlegroups should not risk reaching its operational limit too quickly by becoming involved in high-intensity operations should troops be suddenly needed elsewhere or even at home. Whilst traditionally Ireland has provided standard troop deployments for UN missions

as well as logistically in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks Ireland is contributing to intelligence also. Irish army personnel have secured intelligence roles in Liberia, Lebanon, Israel and Sudan as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and ISAF headquarters in Kabul (Keohane, 2001: 25).

### ***Conclusion***

The central question throughout this article has been to what extent Ireland has redefined its defence policy by participating in ESDP and more specifically in the battlegroup concept. This in turn has generated several other questions such as will Ireland now bypass the 'triple lock'? Can Ireland meet the challenges of today's world? Will this lead to a radical change in Irish defence policy? It has also highlighted the fact that using Europeanisation as a conceptual framework one can assess the impact of the EU and more specifically ESDP on a small non-military neutral state, that one might expect to be outside such influence. Since the 1990's Ireland has been more disposed towards considering its foreign and security policy in the broader European context and not just through the national lens. This shift in policy coupled with Ireland's commitment to UN peacekeeping has seen Ireland commit to participation in the battlegroup concept. Whilst Ireland is now facing up to its responsibilities towards ESDP that is not to say it is without its challenges. The decision to take part in the battlegroup concept has put pressure on the national decision making process where sensitivities towards militarising the EU are high and where serious changes in defence require constitutional amendments.

Ultimately, however if the underlying logic of the battlegroup is to improve military capabilities then it is important for Ireland to bring its defence forces into the modern age. For Ireland participation is feasible, the army will be strengthened and practical problems can be resolved. Having already participated in the Nordic Battlegroup Ireland has learned valuable lessons from involvement with its partner states, which it can bring with it to future participation in other battlegroups. A NATO –like organisation does not appeal to Ireland as territorial defence is not paramount and it does not appear to face any imminent territorial threat. What matters more for Irish security policy is humanitarian and disaster relief, peacekeeping and enforcement missions such as IFOR/SFOR and KFOR which Irish forces have taken part in. Ireland therefore can make a significant contribution to international security through the battlegroups while also benefiting itself from a participation that requires professional well-trained soldiers. Capabilities for crisis management will increase, driven by experience gained through missions and new responsibilities will have to be undertaken with new partners. Participation will have a positive impact on Irish defence forces. A neutrality that was once practical during the Cold War is no longer as vital. In today's world collective action is required and through its participation in the Battlegroup concept Ireland is helping the EU develop structures to direct its own military operations.

---

<sup>i</sup> “I/A” Item Note from the General Secretariat of the Council to the COREPER Council on the subject of the Civilian Headline Goal 2008, Council of the European Union, Brussels, 7 December 2004, 15863/04

<sup>ii</sup> In referring to Ireland's commitment to participate in the United Nations Standby Arrangement System Minister for Defence, Michael Smith asserted that in order to maintain international

---

peace and security it was important for Ireland to advance such structures as the PfP and the EU Headline Goal in support of the UN. Statement by the Minister for Defence, Mr. Michael Smith T.D., to the select Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Womens Rights on the Motion before Dáil Éireann seeking approval for the Minister's Report to Dáil Éireann regarding service by the Defence Forces with the United Nations in 2001, <http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/Speech+ID/472D75A540F90FFA80256C7800402138?OpenDocument>

iii Ben Tonra, 'Denmark and Ireland', in Ian Manners and Whitmann R. (eds), *The Foreign Policies of European Union Members*, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000). Also see Ben Tonra, *The Europeanisation of National Foreign Policy: Dutch, Danish and Irish Foreign Policy in the European Union*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

iv Michael E. Smith, *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy: the Institutionalization of Cooperation*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004). Michael E. Smith, 'Conforming to Europe: the Domestic Impact of EU Foreign Policy Cooperation', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 7, No. 4, October, 2000, pp. 613-631.

v Christopher Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy* (Routledge, London, 1996).

vi Ian Manners and R. Whitmann, *The Foreign Policies of European Union Member*, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000)

vii Government of Ireland, White Paper on Defence, February 2000, [http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/93191a155924dad5802570c8005065d3/\\$FILE/whitepr.pdf](http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/93191a155924dad5802570c8005065d3/$FILE/whitepr.pdf) (accessed 02 September 2007)

viii The Millennium Development Goals which include cutting extreme poverty in half by 2015 are to be addressed through trade liberalisation and advancements in debt relief and increased aid to improve infrastructure such as education and healthcare. Another focus of the Summit was the establishment of A Peacebuilding Commission in order to aid those countries in transition from armed conflict to more peaceful and stable relations. There was also an agreement to protect civilian populations from crimes against humanity through an extension of Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights as well as a proposal to convert the Human Rights Commission into a smaller standing body, a new Human Rights Council.

ix Taoiseach to announce new date for achieving UN Overseas Development Aid target; At UN Summit, <http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?locID=470&docID=2155> (accessed 25 October 2007)

x The Emergency Planning Objective, <http://www.emergencyplanning.ie/media/docs/1Strategy.doc>

xi For more on the Trevi Group see *Tony Bunyan*, Trevi, Europol and the European state, <http://www.statewatch.org/news/handbook-trevi.pdf>

xii According to the Dochas Member Survey Consolidated, June 2007, report by Camille Donnat of the 35 members surveyed had a total income of €281.78 million in 2005 and in the same year spent a total of €258.45 million that same year. The core programme focus of members centres on such areas as human rights and democracy, gender and children, food security and hunger as well as agriculture and rural development. Camille Donnat, Dochas Member Survey Consolidated, June 2007, pg. 25.

xiii The Defence (Amendment) Act 2006 states that "3.—(1) A contingent or member of the Permanent Defence Force may, with the prior approval of and on the authority of the Government, be dispatched for service outside the State for the purposes of - (f) undertaking humanitarian tasks in response to an actual or potential disaster or emergency.", <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2006/A2006.pdf>

xiv Bunreacht na hEireann, Constitution of Ireland, [http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/attached\\_files/Pdf%20files/Constitution%20of%20IrelandNov2004.pdf](http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/attached_files/Pdf%20files/Constitution%20of%20IrelandNov2004.pdf)

xv Speech by Mr. Willie O'Dea TD, Minister for Defence at the Review of 30th Infantry Group Shortly to Leave Ireland for UN Peacekeeping Duty in Kosovo, <http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/Speech+ID/A9F7646AEDD28ADB80256FDD00321FF5?OpenDocument> (accessed 20 August 2007)

- <sup>xvi</sup> Defence (Amendment) Act 2006, <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2006/A2006.pdf> (accessed 25 October 2007)
- <sup>xvii</sup> Speech by the Minister for Defence, Mr. Willie O’Dea, T.D., at the IEA Conference on EU Battlegroups, University of Limerick 28th April 2006, pg 4.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Presentation by the Minister for Defence, Mr Willie O’Dea T.D. to the Joint Committee on European Affairs - “Ireland’s Participation in EU Battlegroups”, 22 March 2006 at 2.45p.m., <http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/Speech+ID/3217A4CEC75C1D388025713A003F70D9>
- <sup>xix</sup> For instance the 100 strong Irish Defence Forces contingent that are on standby since the start of January 2008 are drawn mostly from the Western Brigade in Athlone and are providing a bomb disposal and mine clearance unit to the Nordic battlegroup, <http://www.rte.ie/news/2008/0101/defence.html?rss>
- <sup>xx</sup> Presentation by the Minister for Defence Mr. Willie O’Dea, TD to the Forum on Europe, ‘Ireland and the EU Battlegroups’, <http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/Speech+ID/AE5582F1BDEA04318025716B00520D06?OpenDocument> (accessed 18 October 2007).
- <sup>xxi</sup> A framework nation of a battlegroup is the lead nation who will take operational command of the group.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Speech by Minister Willie O’Dea on Ireland’s Future Participation in UN Support Missions, McKee Barracks, February 9 2006, <http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/Speech+ID/A62A6EDC7CCFCE280257110004E356C?OpenDocument>
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Irish peacekeepers depart for Lebanon, 31 October 2006, <http://www.rte.ie/news/2006/1031/lebanon.html>
- <sup>xxiv</sup> 2582nd External Relations Council Meeting - Brussels, 17 May 2004 17/5/2004 ( English ) - Press:149 Nr: 9210/04 [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/80498.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/80498.pdf)
- <sup>xxv</sup> SALIS emerged from a letter of intent signed by 11 NATO members at a meeting of NATO Minister’s for Defence in June 2003, with the aim of giving NATO strategic airlift capabilities. Now a 15 member consortium led by Germany, and including Sweden and Norway, states involved have pooled resources and chartered six Antonov AN-124-100 allowing for quick transportation of large equipment over long distances. SALIS was developed as a measure to improve European strategic airlift capabilities which are lacking and is see as an interim solution until 2010, the expected delivery date of Europe’s A400M aircraft. See <http://www.nato.int/issues/strategic-lift-air/index.html>
- <sup>xxvi</sup> The need for increased multinational cooperation to reduce sealift capabilities shortfalls was discussed at the NATO Prague Summit in 2002; the Sealift Coordination Centre (SCC) was established to overcome gaps in the sealift capabilities in the Alliance. The consortium led by Norway also includes Canada, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, which have agreed to pool their resources in order to charter special roll off/roll on ships. It has access to three roll-on/roll-off (Ro/Ro) ships on assured access; one to two Danish Ro/Ro ships on fulltime charter; residual capacity of four United Kingdom Ro/Ro ships; and a Norwegian Ro/Ro ship on ad hoc basis. See <http://www.nosu.no/sealift/>
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Mika Kerttunen, Tommi Koivula and Tommy Jeppsson, ‘EU Battlegroups: Theory and Development in the Light of Finnish-Swedish Co-operation’, Julkaisusarja 2, Series 2, Research Report No. 30, pg. 80.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Speech by Minister Willie O’Dea on Ireland’s Future Participation in UN Peace Support Missions McKee Barracks, <http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/Speech+ID/A62A6EDC7CCFCE280257110004E356C?OpenDocument> (accessed 15 August 2007)
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Also stated in White Paper on Defence, (February 2002), [http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/93191a155924dad5802570c8005065d3/\\$FILE/whiteppr.pdf](http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/93191a155924dad5802570c8005065d3/$FILE/whiteppr.pdf)
- <sup>xxix</sup> Ibid

- <sup>xxx</sup> EU battlegroups legislation - a Policy statement, Green Party, June 2006, <http://www.pana.ie/idn/150606.html> (accessed 25 October, 2007)
- <sup>xxxI</sup> Defence (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2006, <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1960/en/act/pub/0044/sec0002.html#zza44y1960s2> (accessed 05 November 2007).
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Ibid. See also Defence (Amendment) Act 1960, <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1960/en/act/pub/0022/index.html> and Defence (Amendment) Act 1993, <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1993/en/act/pub/0018/index.html> (accessed 14 October 2007)
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> EU battlegroups legislation - a Policy Statement, Green Party, June 2006.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Defence (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2006, <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1960/en/act/pub/0044/sec0002.html#zza44y1960s2> (accessed 05 November 2007).
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Defence (Amendment) Bill 2006, Second Stage Speech, Dail Eireann, 14 July 2006, <http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/Speech+ID/BEA372D120ABF923802571A20050A11E?OpenDocument>
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> “(3) A contingent or member of the Permanent Defence Force may, with the prior approval of and on the authority of the Government, be dispatched for service outside the State as part of a force to be assembled or embarked before being deployed as part of a particular International United Nations Force if, but only if, the contingent or member is not so deployed until a resolution under subsection (1) of this section has been passed by Dail Eireann approving of their dispatch for such service.” Amendment of Section 2 of Act of 1960, pg. 5, Defence (Amendment) Act 2006, <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2006/A2006.pdf>
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Bunreacht na hEireann (Constitution of Ireland), Article 29.4.9<sup>o</sup>
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Priority Questions. - Overseas Missions, Dáil Éireann - Volume 603 - 26 May 2005, <http://historical-debates.oireachtas.ie/D/0603/D.0603.200505260009.html> (accessed 10 October 2007).
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Speech by the Minister for Defence, Mr. Willie O’Dea, T.D., at the Conference on “EU Battlegroups - Perspectives from Neutral and Non-aligned states”, University of Limerick, 28 April 2006, <http://www.defence.ie/WebSite.nsf/Speech+ID/408FB80516C9F6528025715E004BA4C9?OpenDocument>, (accessed 20 August 2007).
- <sup>xl</sup> ‘Mitchell welcomes EU enlargement but criticises Irish deployment of Defence Forces’, <http://www.fine Gael.ie/news/index.cfm/type/details/nkey/22934/pkey/653> (Accessed 11 February, 2008).
- <sup>xli</sup> Finnish legislation on peacekeeping operations to be revised - Working group report delivered, *Ministry for Foreign Affairs* Press release 146/2005 10 May, 2005, <http://www.finland.or.jp/netcomm/news/ShowArticle.asp?intNWSAID=36464&intToPrint=1&LAN=JA>
- <sup>xliii</sup> Seville Declarations on the Nice Treaty, 21 June 2002, <http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.ie/home/index.aspx?id=26263> (accessed 05 November 2007).
- <sup>xliiv</sup> Seanad Éireann - Volume 156, Defence (Amendment) Bill, 1998: Second Stage, 02 July 1998, <http://historical-debates.oireachtas.ie/S/0156/S.0156.199807020010.html> (accessed 12 October 2007).
- <sup>xli v</sup> Numbers have been reduced through a voluntary early retirement scheme costing nearly €50 million
- <sup>xli vi</sup> Defence Forces Annual Report, pg 65
- <sup>xli vii</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xli viii</sup> Department of Defence Whitepaper (February 2000), 2.2 Developments in the External Security Environment 2.2.1, [http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/93191a155924dad5802570c8005065d3/\\$FILE/whiteppr.pdf](http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/72804bb4760386f380256c610055a16b/93191a155924dad5802570c8005065d3/$FILE/whiteppr.pdf)
- <sup>xli x</sup> For the list of Contributors to UN peacekeeping operations as of 31 December 200 see <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/dec.htm>.