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NO MILITARY EUROPE

BURST
THE BRUSSELS
BUBBLE

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INTRODUCTION

The European Union. An unfathomable monster? Too far away to be of any concern? The centre of power?

The European Union has been making consistent gains in power ever since its inception. Ever more competences have been transferred from a national level to a European level. This process shifted into high gear following the financial crisis of 2008 and the subsequent Euro crisis. The centre of power in Europe is situated ever more around the Schuman roundabout in Brussels. Here you find the European Commission and the European Council buildings and, nearby, the European Parliament.

Vredesactie has been keeping a close eye on the EU, for the EU is being militarized. The EU is taking on the bellicose traits of its Member States and as a result, the original civil peace project is acquiring a more and more military face. For the time being, the possibility of a unified European defence is ruled out, but the military initiatives undertaken by the EU are leading to extensive military collaborations amongst the Member States.

The EU is, and has always been, an economic undertaking. Originally, European economic collaboration served to lay the groundwork for an enduring peace between Member States. However, the title of 'economic superpower' soon became too tempting to pass up. To be the most competitive economy in the world has now become the all-encompassing objective. This opens the door wide open for preferential

“ The centre of power lies not in the national parliament or the regional parliaments, but in Brussels, on Schuman Square.”

treatment of corporate interests in EU policy.

Perhaps the most alarming development is the growing influence of the arms industry on European policy and policymaking. The arms industry is having its say in everything from joint defence tasks, regulations for weapons export, the priorities of European research. It even leaves its mark on immigration policy, and matters such as healthcare, the Internet, and international transport. The development of new weapon technologies by the European arms industry is being subsidized by the EU and the interests of the arms industry play an increasingly bigger role in determining military expenditure. The EU sees threats and enemies everywhere. It embraces surveillance technology because of the potential economic benefits for the arms industry. In the granting of export licenses, commercial interests are prioritised over ethical concerns.

The European decision making process is largely undemocratic. The European institutions are selectively blind to anything that does not fall within the remit of the economic project. Within the 'Brussels Bubble' decisions are made by small 'expert' groups, in which industry is heavily overrepresented. The fact that this group, by definition, puts forward solutions which serve the interests of business rather than citizens is deemed unimportant or conveniently forgotten.

International collaboration on a European level offers fantastic opportunities that we cannot allow the business world to destroy. If European security policy is outsourced to the arms industry, only a shell



Thank you, EU"

THE ARMS DEALERS

of the European peace project will remain. The EU needs to stop its economic objective riding roughshod over everything else. This will not happen by itself - social change never happens automatically. We need to push the EU to become more democratic and socially responsible. It is high time to burst the Brussels technocratic expert bubble.

This dossier is part of the 'Ctrl+Alt+EU: no military Europe' campaign of Vredesactie and Agir pour la Paix. With this campaign, vredesactie is taking on the challenge of stopping the militarisation of Europe. This dossier provides the background content, but information alone is not enough to bring about concrete change. If we want a voice in European policy, we have to be where the action is. Our presence must be felt where policy itself is formed: amongst the lobbyists and the policy makers. We have to burst the 'Brussels bubble', disrupt the routine workings of the Eurocrats and expose the link between politics and the arms industry. It's time to get out into the streets and squares of the European quarter!

Would you like to join us?

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1. The EU, a peace project?

“The EU is the world’s largest exporter of arms.”

The European Union emerged from the ashes of the Second World War and was originally aimed at creating a long-lasting peace in Europe by means of economic collaboration. In the decades since its inception this European project has, undoubtedly, played a positive role in the maintenance of that peace. However, the world does not end at the borders of Europe. The European project has also long since ceased being purely a peace project.

THE EU, A MILITARY PROJECT

For a long time, the European Union was a purely civilian project and defence remained the competence of individual Member States. That time has passed: the EU now has the power, the institutions and the operational structures to conduct military operations throughout the world. The formal decision to give the EU a military capacity was first taken at the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997. Since then, the EU can conduct military operations for humanitarian reasons (the so-called Petersberg tasks). With the Treaty of Lisbon (2009), the EU received the same military powers as NATO. This treaty stipulates that, if under armed attack, any means of help and assistance (including military assistance) will be provided to a Member State by her fellow Member States. The authority of the EU for setting up military operations outside of its territory was expanded to peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and maintaining international security. And so, the possibility of a joint defence was born.

EUROPE, ANNUAL DEFENCE EXPENDITURES: 194,000,000,000 EURO

If one adds up the expenses of various European countries, the resulting European picture becomes anything but pretty. In 2010, the 28 Member States spent 194 billion euros on defence. This figure is bigger than the expenditures of Russia, China, and Japan added together¹. Only the US spends more on defence.

European countries are militarily active worldwide. Abroad, Europe seldom acts as a single military power. European Countries intervene militarily elsewhere in the

1 http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/defence/defence-industrial-policy/index_en.htm



world in ever-changing coalitions. Tony Blair (Great Britain) and José María Aznar (Spain) were some of the greatest advocates of the war against Iraq, along with George W. Bush. Denmark often jumps the gun when military interventions are on the horizon and was one of the loudest voices calling for a military intervention in Syria, even without a UN resolution. Denmark was also very active in the interventions in Afghanistan and Mali. France too, does not hesitate to intervene imperiously with its military when the interests of Françafrique are at stake. In the course of the last ten years, the French army has intervened in Ivory Coast, Chad

The military structures of the EU: NATO as the model

With the implementation of the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, the European Security and Defence Policy was developed along the lines of the NATO model.

There is no such thing as a 'European army'. Within both NATO and the EU, soldiers remain national. The EU has 'Battle Groups', units of about 1500 soldiers each, for which the various EU countries keep military personnel on standby. These men must be deployable within 5 days for a period of 30 to 120 days. Two Battle Groups under the command of EU military staff are always at the ready. In other words, Member States have largely relinquished control over their deployment. Although it is true that Battle Groups have never been used, they certainly play an important role in facilitating the operational collaboration of troops from various countries. The military staff and staff of the ministries of defence have become well-acquainted, collaboration is becoming routine and the military units are becoming more and more familiar with each other.

The need for an operational planning and command structure has prompted the formation of the EU Operations Centre, which is responsible for the leadership of the Battle Groups. Alternative options for leading an EU operation are to make use of the NATO capacities in SHAPE or one of EU headquarters. In practice, the last option is most often used. Past instances include the French headquarters in Mont Valérien which was used during the EU operation in Chad as well as the German headquarters in Potsdam, used for an operation in Congo during the Congolese presidential elections. The further development of these operational headquarters remains a politically delicate issue. This is largely because of the rivalries between the countries who wish to follow an American-oriented policy via NATO and those, such as France and Germany, who have ambitions to be European superpowers.

Political decision-making takes place via the Political and Security Committee, better known under the French abbreviation 'COPS' (Comité Politique et Sécurité). This is advised by the EU Military Committee (EUMC). The EU military staff (EUMS) provides the support.

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative for the European Foreign Policy, plays a role in the EU similar to that of the NATO Secretary-General, albeit with a more extensive set of tasks.

and Central African Republic amongst others². Recently, France has played a leading role in the military interventions in Mali and Libya. Germany considers Saudi Arabia to be a strategic partner that must be armed as a counterweight to Iran.

A EUROPEAN FOREIGN POLICY: NO SUCCESS

In 2010 the European External Action Service (EEAS), an institution intended to mould a joint European foreign policy, was set up. A European super-ministry of foreign affairs and a European diplomacy were to be developed under the direction of Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security. This did not take place. According to a 2013 report requested by the European Parliament, researchers from the Catholic University of Leuven found that not only did the individual countries want to keep control of their foreign policy, but also the collaboration between the EEAS and the European Commission is, to put it mildly, not going smoothly³. A common foreign policy in Europe is as good as non-existent. There is little consensus amongst European countries as to the outlines of such a policy and the global strategic interests of the Member States differ greatly.

THE EU, LARGEST ARMS EXPORTER IN THE WORLD

The EU is the largest arms exporter in the world⁴. The four largest arms companies of the EU, namely: BAE Systems, Thales, Finmeccanica and EADS rank in the top 10 largest arms companies worldwide. The European arms industry had an annual turnover of 96 billion euros in 2012⁵. A great deal of money is made in Europe by arming the world and on armed conflicts.

There is no meeting of minds where European foreign and security policy are concerned, but everyone seems to agree on one thing: we need a flourishing arms industry. In EU-newspeak, that is 'an innovative and competitive European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB)'. The entire EU seems to be riddled with this basic assumption. Like a mantra, the following is repeated in speeches, statements, and policy documents: "A strong European foreign policy needs a common defence policy and for a common defence policy we need a strong and competitive arms industry." Not a single eyelid is batted while this mantra is tossed back and forth. In 2007, Javier Solana, the then High Representative for European Foreign Policy, said: 'Well, what is to be done? At a strategic level, there is no mystery.... We have to spend more'. 'No-one should remain under the illusion that a healthy and comprehensive DTIB can be sustained on a national basis. We are, you might say, condemned to cooperate - to pool our efforts and resources. On the government side, we must combine our requirements so as to offer industry

2 <http://www.vie-publique.fr/chronologie/chronos-thematiques/du-tchad-au-mali-interventions-armees-francaise-depuis-1981.html>
3 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=90650>
4 <http://www.sipri.org/pdfs/SIPRIDataonEU.pdf>
5 <http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013SC0279>

projects with a worthwhile economy of scale'. In other words: we want a 'healthy' European arms industry, so we have to spend more on defence and therefore we are working on a common defence policy.

THE EUROPEAN MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

The arms industry is considered to be a central stakeholder within the European institutions. With the development of a militarized Europe, we see the expansion of a military-industrial complex on a European scale. Policy decisions seem to be motivated by a military or political logic, but upon closer inspection are actually motivated by economic considerations. The development of a European defence policy is primarily the result of an industrial policy. We see a clear reversal of the policy priorities. Officially, the military policy is based on an analysis of the security problems, and the economic policy is tuned to it. In practice, the economic policy is the motor behind the decision making about defence. One forgets that the only objective of this industry is to sell more weapon technology. But the world in which weapons circulate is certainly not a safer one

MEANWHILE ON THE BORDER

In the meantime, the EU is working on common 'border management' as a component of the common asylum and immigration policy. To support this, a separate agency was set up in 2004: Frontex⁶. One of the aims of Frontex is the coordination of external European border control. Passports and travel documents do not need to be checked by military personnel, so this could remain a civilian responsibility. Frontex, however, has more in common with an army than with a customs service and is playing a large role in the militarization of the European borders. As the only EU institution authorised to purchase weapons and with a budget of 112 million euros per year (2011), Frontex has become a welcome customer for the arms industry. European border monitoring teams are powerfully equipped and operate like military commando units which can be swiftly deployed when large groups of non-EU citizens attempt to enter the EU. Frontex can hardly be called a European army, but, under the pretext of a joint asylum and immigration policy, this European institution has been given the authority to launch quasi-military operations without needing the consent of individual Member States.

6 <http://www.frontex.europa.eu>

2. The EU: an economic project

“The arms industry considers itself a sector just like any other and therefore aspires to sell more, grow more and become active on increasingly varied markets’.”

The European Union originated as an economic project. The reasoning behind this was simple: if European countries were to become economically dependent on one another, they would no longer fight with each other. More importantly, no country would be able to secretly build a strong army, once their national borders had been opened to coal and steel

from other countries. Economic interactions within the free market would unveil these secret activities. Not only would a new war between Germany and France be inconceivable, it would also be practically impossible.

THE HEART OF THE EU: AN ECONOMIC SUPERPOWER

This reasoning was quickly expanded: not only did a unified market for coal and steel have to be established, but the entire economy also had to be organized on a European scale. At the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the EEC- the European Economic Community- was set up to fulfil this task.

The organization of trade and production on a European level soon became an end in itself, instead of a means to maintain peace. The new goal was an economy in which enormous enterprises, big enough to compete with American and Japanese giants, could grow and thrive. Along with the lifting of the borders (the free movement of goods and services has been carved into stone thanks to the Treaty), the predecessor of the EU has implemented an industrial policy designed to create such economic mammoths.

The respective home markets of various European countries are all smaller than - and cannot offer economies of a comparable scale to - those of Japan or America. Companies operating in an economy that cannot provide such scale advantages run the risk of playing a role only as subcontractors or, worse still, of being turned into local divisions of larger companies. The result of this would be a loss

of economic control and independence, a situation which the unified European market and the merger to form gigantic enterprises was supposed to avoid.

Currently, about 3600 civil servants in the European administration are working on the development of the European economic policy. The administration of health and consumers, on the other hand, must get by with 738 officials, the environment and climate change together make do with 587 and employment and social affairs has 586 employees. Education and culture count 471.

In various sectors, and most certainly in the former governmental sectors (for example, transport, the post offices, telecommunications, energy, the financial sector), a handful of large companies have emerged, which dominate and control the European market. These large-scale enterprises were created through the merger of various national enterprises. They are not just an unintended result of the free market gone out of control, but an explicit objective of the European industrial policy. The EU wants to become 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy'⁷ in the world. This is simply a European translation of the neo-liberal dogma: 'what is good for the companies is good for everyone else too'. That the interests of business (grow, sell more products, make more profit, and so on) are not the same as the public interest is simply overlooked or completely ignored.

THE ARMS INDUSTRY, A SECTOR LIKE ALL THE OTHERS.

Although the arms industry was treated as an exception for a long time, the rules of the European internal market now apply to it as well. Preserving and bolstering the European arms industry are explicit objectives of European policy. As a result of company mergers, an oligopoly of the four largest weapons manufacturers (EADS, Finmeccanica, BAE and Thales) has been created. These companies produce large weapons systems such as tanks, drones, rocket launchers and fighter planes while various smaller companies supply the components. The 'Big Four' account for two-thirds of the total turnover of the European arms industry. European arms manufacturers are extremely competitive on the world stage and the European Union is currently the largest exporter of arms worldwide.

The arms industry considers itself a sector just like any other: it wants to sell more, grow, and has ambitions to become active in more markets. The European Commission agrees, and actively promotes the 'public relations' of the arms industry. In a working document from December 2012, the European Commission argued that the EU had to develop civil applications for drones because of the opportunities it would provide for the arms industry to sell more products⁸.

Funding of 'research and development' is a central element in the industrial policy of the EU. In the past, direct funding of the arms industry was not officially permitted.

7 This is the core of the Lisbon strategy, which was launched in 2000 and plays an important role in the economic policy of the EU. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00100-f1.en0.htm
8 <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st13/st13438.en12.pdf>

Nevertheless, the arms industry managed to rake in a good amount of money from European subsidies for research and development. In the period of 2007-2013, a budget of 1.4 billion euros was made available for 'security research'⁹. European and Israeli arms companies used these funds to finance the development of new weapon technology.¹⁰ Even the development of drone technology was subsidized, regardless of the fact that there was no guarantee at all that the results would not be used in military drones.

The purpose this technology would serve, who would be using it and whether it would contribute to a safer and more peaceful world, seem to have been of secondary importance. With regard to the arms industry, the European economic



9 http://ec.europa.eu/research/tp7/index_en.cfm?pg=security

10 David Cronin (2010) Europe's alliance with Israel. Aiding the Occupation.
<http://www.vredesactie.be/nl/nieuws/europa-uw-geld-voor-de-defensie-industrie-en-de-isra%C3%ABlische-bezettingpolitiek>

project has led to nothing short of an arms race. This is an arms race between the arms manufacturers, who are eager to keep ahead of their competitors by constantly developing new arms technology. It has also led to a secondary arms race between governments, who are asked to support these same arms manufacturers in order to secure their competitive position. Every time new weapon systems are available, arms companies lobby their respective governments to buy their products and to be able to export them worldwide.

Driven by a one-sided focus on economic objectives, the EU is stimulating the development and purchase of new arms technologies and consequently of the worldwide arms trade. The dominance of the principle of economic competition, which places the interests of the company above all other principles, leads to a situation where policy based on peaceful cooperation or international solidarity is left with little to no chance.

The 'Defence package'

In 2009, the European Parliament and the European Council accepted two Directives regarding arms trade and military purchases in the EU¹¹. In combination with a communication from the European Commission which describes 'a strategy for a stronger and more competitive European defence industry', these two Directives constitute the so-called 'Defence Package'¹². Directive 2009/81/EC harmonizes arms procurements by the Member States, while Directive 2009/43/EC aims to free up the trade in weapons and other security and defence goods. The Defence Package meets an old demand of the arms industry: it opens procedures for national arms purchases and simplifies arms trade within the EU. The implementation of these directives eviscerates, amongst other things, the control of the arms trade in Flanders. Due to the elimination of control at the borders between member states, weapons can now be exported worldwide via the European country with the least stringent export rules. During the preparatory phase of the Guidelines, the Commission consulted intensively with representatives of the industry.

Representatives of the major European arms companies consulted with members of the Commission about the Defence Package on more than ten occasions. The European umbrella organization of the defence industry (ASD) played an active role in this process. In a newsletter, ASD wrote that 'the two Directives ... each in their own way, introduce a revolution in the European defence and security markets' and that 'ASD is satisfied that it was regularly consulted by the European Commission during the drafting of the Guidelines'.

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http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/defence/documents/index_en.htm
COM(2007)764

3. Conflicts of interest within 'the Brussels Bubble'

“Brussels ranks second, after Washington D.C., as the city with the most lobbying activities worldwide. It is estimated that 25,000 to 30,000 lobbyists are actively promoting corporate interests in Brussels.”

EU decision making happens within 'the Brussels Bubble', situated in the European Quarter; a few square kilometres full of European institutions. The impressive EU buildings stand alongside the offices of corporate lobby groups. The nature of the Bubble itself determines the way in which decisions are made. In this Bubble there is a club of self-declared experts for every policy area.

Industries are often over-represented in these clubs. Via advisory councils and expert groups, consultations and discussions, the corporations get privileged access to policy and policymaking. In this way, industries are able to sell solutions to problems that the businesses themselves have brought up. The companies make sure their 'solutions' get funded by the EU. They have a say in what the EU funding programmes look like, and are the first ones in line for collecting subsidies for their own research and product development. The Bubble is an exclusive network in which personal relations are of utmost importance. Anyone who has the money to invest in these personal relations knows that the reward is always greater than the investment.

THE BRUSSELS BUSINESS

European policy strongly builds on the preparatory work in the administration. The European Parliament cannot take policy initiatives or propose laws. This is the competence of the European Commission. The European Commission is comprised of 27 commissioners and an extensive administrative body. The Commission has the monopoly on legislative initiatives and is both the legislative and the executive authority. The European Parliament holds more power since the Treaty

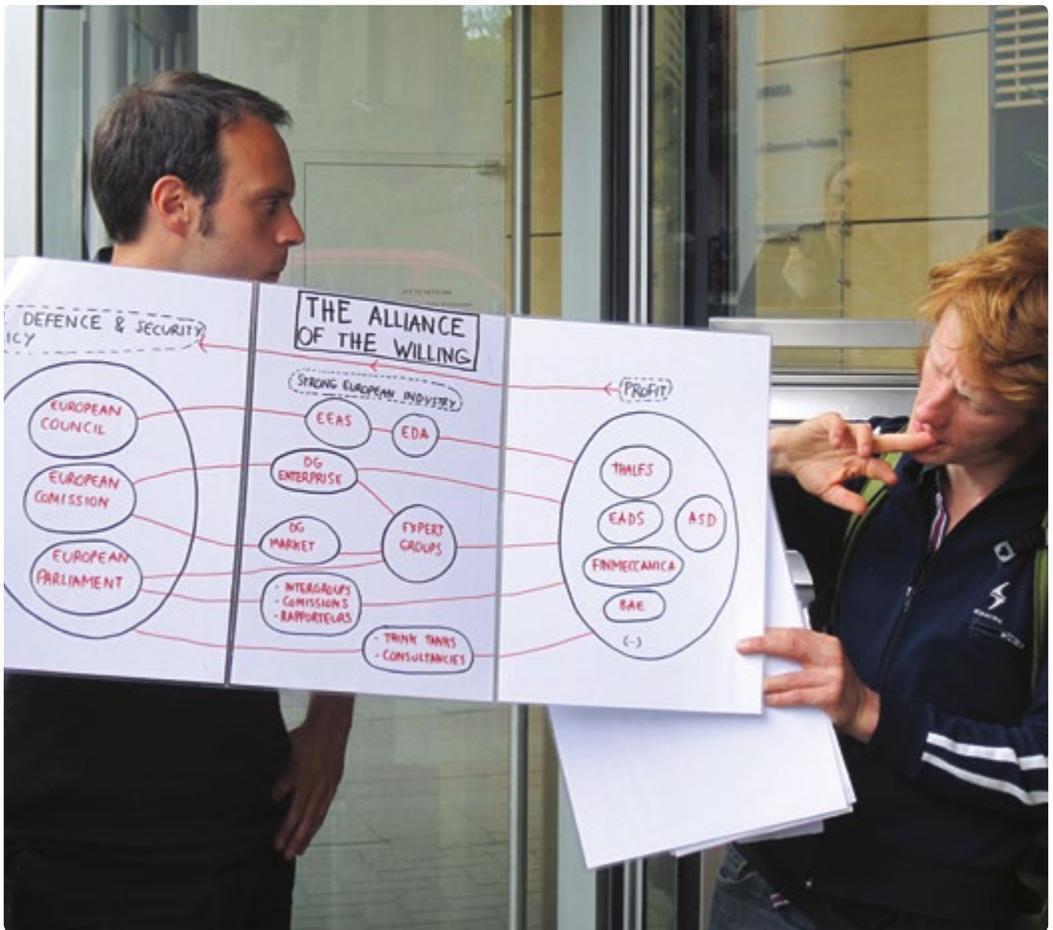
of Lisbon (2009), but this power remains limited to the voting on and amendment of legislation which has been proposed by the Commission. By the time new European rules are presented for vote, they have already travelled a long way through the European bureaucracy.

A good lobbyist knows how to find his or her way through this maze of bureaucracy. The sooner he or she becomes involved in the process, the more influence he or she can exert on the outcome of the discussions. The European Commission invites representatives of industry as 'experts'. Expert groups and advisory groups play an important role in the preparation of European policy. Whenever there is a new proposal or policy initiative in the making, the European Commission gets these select groups together. By using external expertise, the Commission compensates for the lack of in-house knowledge and is able to secure the necessary support for its proposals. The gross overrepresentation of industry in these groups unveils where the Commission mainly looks for this support. Experts from public interest groups are only a small minority in The Brussels Bubble.

Brussels is one of the cities with the highest activity of lobbying worldwide, just behind Washington D.C.. Estimates say that 25,000 to 30,000 lobbyists are actively promoting corporate interests within the European institutions on a daily basis. Very little information about these activities is available to the public. Information about lobbying activities (budget, personnel, objectives etc.) has only recently been collected via the so called 'transparency register'¹³. Unfortunately, unlike with the register in Washington D.C., registration to the transparency register in Brussels is not mandatory. One could describe the preparation of EU policy as nothing more than large-scale 'back room politics'. Lobbyists don't politely communicate their questions to officials and politicians. The representatives of the business world are, quite literally, writing European policy behind closed doors.

The most strategic decisions are made by a small, elitist group of top politicians, top officials, and top business people. European institutions have a close relationship with large European companies, they meet each other at formal meetings and brush shoulders at informal gatherings. It is at these informal meetings - often sponsored by an industry - that they become acquainted with each other and develop relationships of trust and confidence. This formation of elites occurs in all policy areas of the EU but is illustrated most clearly by the way in which European defence and security policy is generated.

13 <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency>



INSTITUTIONALIZED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In the dossier 'Lobbying warfare. the arms industry's role in building a military Europe'¹⁴ which was published by Vredesactie and Corporate Europe Observatory in 2011, all players in the Brussels Bubble and the defence and security sector are presented. This document gives further background information about the Big Four (Thales, Finmeccanica, BAE systems, and EADS) and their lobbying activities in Brussels as well as about the role of the umbrella organizations of the defence and security industry.

Now let's have a look at where the interests in the EU institutions are most strongly mingled with these of the industry and at where the distinction between the interests of the arms industry and the public interest has disappeared.

DG ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY, DG MARKET: GUARDIANS OF THE ECONOMIC PROJECT

The departments (or 'directorates general' in EU terminology) of Enterprise and Industry (DG Enterprise) and of the European Single Market (DG Market) are the two most powerful administrations in the European Commission. The first is responsible for industrial policy and the second for the functioning of the unified market. Together, they are the guardians of the economic project at the heart of the EU. They are largely responsible for the so-called 'Defence Package', the two directives issued in 2009 that introduced the European spirit of liberalization – open markets without public control – to the defence and security sector. These departments often call on expert groups, which are almost-exclusively made up of representatives of the industry. These expert groups have shaped the security-research programme 'FP7 security'.¹⁵ The recommendations by the European Commission to strengthen the arms industry, made in July 2013,¹⁶ also went through a number of consultation rounds and conferences with representatives of the industry.

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Hayes, Ben (2006): *Arming Big Brother. The EU's Security Research Programme*. Amsterdam: TNI / Statewatch.

16

<http://www.vredesactie.be/nl/nieuws/de-europese-commissie-beveelt-aan-meer-wapenproductie-in-europa-en-meer-wapenhandel>

FP7-Security?

The European Security Research Programme (or 'FP7 Security') of the Commission is a dream come true for the arms industry.¹⁷ For the period of 2007-2013, a budget of 1.4 billion Euros was allocated to security research in the broadest sense of the term. Officially, no money was given for research into weapon technology, but arms manufacturers managed to help themselves to a sizeable sum out of the research fund. There were immense conflicts of interest in the funding: the future recipients of subsidies had a hand in writing the rules and guidelines. Two expert groups were of crucial importance: The Group of Personalities in the Field of Security Research (GoP) (2003-2004) determined the basic structure of the programme while ESRAB (The European Security Research Advisory Board) advised the Commission on the course to be followed for the duration of the programme. The 'Big Four' (BAE Systems, EADS, Finmeccanica, and Thales), as well as various other arms producers have representatives in these bodies. Eight of the 28 experts in the GoP were representatives of the industry, and three were from research institutions. In ESRAB, 17 of the 50 members are representatives from the industry and 11 work for research groups. The other members of both expert groups are representatives of the European or national administrations. Result: the 'Big Four' are the most important applicants for and important beneficiaries of the research grants.¹⁸

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Hayes, Ben (2009): *Neonopticon. The EU Security-Industrial Complex*. Amsterdam: TNI / Statewatch, p. 16.

18

Hayes, Ben (2009): *Neonopticon. The EU Security-Industrial Complex*. Amsterdam: TNI / Statewatch, p. 18-19.

THE EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY (EDA): WHERE CEOs CAN FEEL AT HOME

In 2004 the European Defence Agency was founded along the lines of proposals made by the arms industry.¹⁹ The main objective of the Agency is, as Ashton's predecessor Javier Solana put it, to persuade Europe to 'spend more, to spend better and to spend more together' on arms. Spending more is no longer possible in these times of austerity, but it appears that the need to run a tight ship is felt less urgently when it comes to expenditures for defence than for other government expenditures. With a budget of 31 million euros and more than 100 employees, the EDA is responsible for stimulating joint arms programmes and joint research and development projects between Member States. Because stimulating the European defence industry is part and parcel of the work of the EDA, the organization has become the darling of the arms companies. The arms industry in return, is considered to be a central stakeholder and is a friend of the EDA family. This attitude is reflected, for example, in the way in which the business world is so well-represented at the EDA's annual conferences.

19 Sliper, Frank (2005): *The emerging EU Military-Industrial Complex. Arms industry lobbying in Brussels*. Amsterdam: TNI / Dutch Campaign Against Arms Trade, p. 5-11.

EDA Conference 2013 "European Defence Matters"

Herman Van Rompuy, Catherine Ashton and the Belgian Minister of Defence Pieter De Crem all spoke at the conference 'European Defence Matters' of EDA, March 21st, 2013. CEOs of the European arms manufacturers EADS and Dassault played a prominent role at this strictly invitation-only conference. Of course, unwelcome eavesdroppers could not be tolerated to witness the intimate relationship between European policy makers and the defence industry. Tom Enders, CEO of the defence company EADS, didn't mince his words: 'We need real tangible action and money'. European President Herman Van Rompuy was clear about where that money could come from: 'While civilian money must be used for civilian purposes, can we reap the benefits of research for dual use?' Loosely translated: How can the defence industry get hold of money that actually is intended for civilian purposes? Catherine Ashton, the High Representative for EU foreign policy, too was direct: 'We cannot allow investment in R&T to decline further'. Loosely translated: the EU must support the development of new arms technology with subsidies. The Director of EDA, Claude-France Arnould, in turn clearly stated the mission of the EDA: 'success will also require the active involvement of those who are responsible for providing our soldiers with the necessary capabilities We need a cutting-edge industry to support our defence, our innovation, our growth and our security of supply'. In other words: the arms industry must be closely involved in the decisions made by the EU on matters of foreign and defence policy because it has to grow. The EDA conference was the perfect illustration of the growing European military-industrial complex. A complex in which the distinction between political, economic, and military motives to modernize armies, buy weapons and grant arms export licences is becoming increasingly blurred.

THE SECURITY AND DEFENCE AGENDA (SDA): THE 'NEUTRAL' THINK TANK OF THE ARMS INDUSTRY

The Security and Defence Agenda (SDA) contends that it is 'the only security and defence think tank in Brussels and is a neutral platform for the discussion of security and defence policy'²⁰. This organization boasts highly ranking members and directors: Javier Solana, former High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and former NATO Secretary-General as well as Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, also a former NATO Secretary-General and chairman of the advisory council. Various highly ranked staff members of NATO, the EU, the national defence ministries, top people from the industry, and European Members of Parliament are also members. Amongst them are Claude-France Arnould (General Director of the European Defence Agency), Robert Cooper (Counsellor at the European External Action Service), Christian Ehler and Geoffrey Van Orden (European members of parliament and members of the Security & Defence Committee of the European Parliament), and Gilles de Kerchove (EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator).

Half of the annual income of SDA (about € 600,000) comes from companies. The other half is provided by governments, international institutions, think tanks, and private funds. Membership offers unique advantages for lobbying and networking – one of these being discussions with 'NATO and EU officials, parliamentarians, government representatives, industry leaders, academics, journalists, NGOs and think-tanks to stimulate discussion on the future of European and transatlantic defence and security policies. Common to events of all formats is the emphasis on lively and innovative topical debate, enabling SDA members to voice their opinions on a range of topics and issues'. Lunch and dinner events offer the unique opportunity to discuss key issues with the relevant decision-makers'.²¹ A company can sponsor events in order to open up discussion with invited policy makers. This way, companies buy a podium for their message.

SDA is the icing on the cake for company leaders who want to influence policy and policymaking. Expensive dinners and receptions create the environment for discussions about all kinds of social issues. Immigration, health care, privacy and the Internet – everything can and will be presented as a security problem for which there is a technological solution. SDA plays a key role in bringing together the economic and political elite of Europe. It is at this type of event that policy makers and business representatives develop and cultivate their mantras and dogmas. It is a 'we-know-each-other' club. Simple tricks keep critical voices away from so-called public events organized by the SDA.

Vredesactie and the SDA

On 29 May 2013, the Security and Defence Agenda (SDA) organized a roundtable discussion titled: 'Safeguarding Defence Technologies.' "Europe's armies must defend their technology base or risk becoming irrelevant" reads the announcement, which goes on to say, "As the economic crisis eats into defence budgets, research and development becomes an all-too-easy target for spending cuts. However, austerity can be used to the benefit of both the civilian and defence industries if nations use their military needs as a driving force to develop dual-use technologies." Vredesactie sent a colleague to the discussion to learn more about what the members and financiers of the think tank thought of it.

'There were no problems with registration. Ten days before the SDA meeting, I received an e-mail about the location of the event: The European Defence Agency. That's interesting. The think tank of the arms industry can hold its activities in an EU building! One day before the round table, I received another e-mail: 'Ensure that you arrive on time. There are more participants than there are places in the hall and who arrives first will be allowed to enter first'. Upon my arrival, a lady holding a list of participants approached me. Some names on the list were in a blue rectangle while others were in a white rectangle. 'Who are you?', she asked. I gave her my name and before she walked away she replied that I should wait where I am.

While I was standing around, a number of people walked by and immediately went to the table with the name cards. Obviously, there were different kinds of participants.

After a while someone else came up to me. 'You have to go through security,' he said. Could they tell that I was a peace activist? I'd even registered with a different email address. I was one of the few who had to go through the security procedure. The others were apparently well-known. Once through security, I was allowed to go to the registration table.

'Who are you?' Again I identified myself. 'Ah, sorry, the hall is already full'. I was completely confounded and at a loss for words. I stammered something about poor organization. But then, next to me, I saw one of the organizers walk up to a man. 'But, Sir, you aren't registered', I heard. 'Oh, oh', he said, 'I thought I was. One of my colleagues must have messed up'. 'No problem', came the reply, 'we'll arrange something'.

4. Privileged access of the arms industry to the EU, the consequences

THE EU SUBSIDIZES THE ARMS INDUSTRY

Thus far, the development of military technologies cannot be financed with European research subsidies. At least not on paper. In reality, the only thing that large arms companies had to do to get their hands on European subsidies was to wrap their projects in a civilian package. They have dipped into the pocket of the European Research programme for Security, also called the FP7 Security, for some 1.4 billion euros as well as into the budget made available for space technology, again for a sum amounting to 1.4 billion Euros.

We can only guess what exactly these millions of euros were spent on as there is little public information about research projects of this nature. But time and again, it is the arms companies who rake in the money from subsidies. In one project, OPARUS²², a specific element was developed for the use in unmanned airplanes or drones. This project, costing up to 1 million euros, was conducted by a consortium of the largest European and Israeli arms manufacturers²³. In another project, INDECT, technology was developed for the mass surveillance of public spaces²⁴. The results of this research (which received more than 10 million euros in European subsidies) include the automatic detection of suspicious behaviour such as standing still for too long in one place. This project led to controversy following a video message broadcast by the hacker collective Anonymous but it was deemed by the Commission to be a showpiece of security research. Yet another project, TALOS²⁵ (more than 19 million euros) was dedicated to the development of a robot for military border control.

In addition to a large fund for research and development, the arms industry also received subsidies from the European Defence Agency. Recently, a separate budget of 100 million euros was announced for the development of a European fighter drone - a killer robot that can autonomously make decisions about life and death.

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www.oparus.eu
<http://www.vredesactie.be/nl/campagnes/ctrl-alt-eu/campaignnews/1791>
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/security/indect/index_en.htm
<http://www.talos-border.eu/>



“The arms industry is working on the Brave New World of tomorrow.”

lobby into account. In the amended proposal that was presented to Parliament for approval, the exclusive focus on civilian applications was dropped and replaced with ‘primarily’ civilian applications²⁶. It looks as though the arms industry has its way and that the development of military technology will be funded by Europe even without there being a civilian twist to it.

The new budget line for the European funding programme ‘Horizon 2020’ runs from 2014 to 2020. The European Commission originally stated explicitly that military projects would be excluded from Horizon 2020. But it did not take the arms

26 Het geamendeerde voorstel: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&mode=XML&reference=A7-2012-427&language=EN>

THE ARMS INDUSTRY DETERMINES MILITARY EXPENDITURES

On 1 December 2012, the nEUROn made a successful test flight in Istres in France. The nEUROn is a prototype for a killer drone which a consortium of arms manufacturers has been working on since 2003 under the leadership of French Dassault-Aviation. In military-speak, it's called a UCAV, an Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle. In practice, this is a flying robot with the capacities of a fighter plane which operates almost completely autonomously. These robots no longer need to be controlled from a distance but can fly independently to a predetermined location anywhere in the world. Only the firing of rockets requires someone of flesh and blood to physically press a button. The nEUROn will be able to fire air-land rockets and is being developed as a stealth aircraft which is as good as invisible to radars. The total cost of this project is some 405 million euros²⁷ of which the French state is covering about 200 million euros. The possibility that drones will one day be able to engage in air combat with other drones or even with manned fighter aircraft is the wet dream of high-tech war fans. For the time being this remains nothing more than a dream, but it is certainly the direction which European arms manufacturers and their financiers are heading in with this demonstration project. The European arms manufacturers have ambitions of playing a leading role in the development of this next generation of drones. In addition to being a technological demonstration project, the nEUROn is presented as a successful example of European cooperation and was specifically mentioned at the annual conference of the European Defence Agency (EDA) in March 2013.

One would expect that there is a security analysis which backs up the supposed need for such a development programme. This is far from true. The question of the military and strategic usefulness of this fighter drone was simply not asked. At the start of the nEUROn programme, Yves Robins, Vice-President of the French arms producer, said frankly: 'Everybody knows that the answer is the [fighter drone], but nobody knows what the question is'. There was no military need or demand for the fighter drone, the decision to develop it was still made.

This is a dangerous strategy: when arms manufacturers develop new weapon technology, it is with the full intention to earn money with it. They will stop at nothing to get governments worldwide to buy these new drones. Meanwhile, drones have become the new 'must-have item' for armies all over the world. The question is; how much of this is the result of a successful marketing campaign by the arms industry, and to what extent does this meet the real needs of a security policy.



This is a prime example of the European military-industrial complex in practice. It is often unclear whether policy decisions are driven by a military logic or an economic one. More often than not, no effort is even made to conceal the economic motive behind policy decisions.

MORE ARMS EXPORTS

On 8 December 2008, the European council approved the Common European Position on Arms Exports. This sounds more groundbreaking than it really was. Approving or refusing arms-export licenses remains the competence of national governments, and they do so through their own procedures. Arms export is considered an essential component of foreign policy by many European countries and since no unified vision of a European foreign policy exists, Member States will never be keen to hand their power over arms-export licenses over to the EU. The European joint position becomes, therefore, an exercise in determining the greatest common denominator.

Just like with the national policy for arms exports, there is a serious contradiction when it comes to this greatest common denominator. On the one hand, eight criteria intended to restrict arms exports are listed but on the other hand, one wants a strong arms industry, and for this increased arms exports are of critical importance.

According to the common position, commercial interests of the arms industry must not affect the application of the restrictive criteria. In practice, however, things happen a little differently. In 2011, at the height of the Arab Spring revolutions, the value of European export licenses to the region was 9 billion euros. This figure is 1 billion euro more than it was the preceding year and double as much as it was in 2007²⁸. Almost 40% percent of the Belgian arms export is destined directly for the Arabic countries and just short of half of all European arms and ammunition which goes to the Middle East originates from Belgium²⁹. Saudi Arabia buys so many light weapons from Belgium that 'Saudi soldiers would need five arms to be able to carry all those weapons'³⁰.

The granting of licenses by the Walloon government for the sale of FN weapons intended for the elite troops of Muammar Gadhafi is a prime example of how commercial interests carry more weight than ethical criteria. Even after the Walloon Conseil d'Etat suspended a previously granted export license and received several recommendations against doing so, the Walloon Minister-President Ruddy Demotte still gave a 'go ahead' for the arms deliveries in 2010. Although the conflict in Libya had not yet broken out in all its ferocity, the undemocratic policy and the

28 Vlaams Vredesinstituut, March 2013. 'Wapenexport naar de Arabische wereld Het Vlaams wapenexportbeleid in Europese context' http://www.vlaamsvredesinstituut.eu/images/manager/publicaties/onderzoeksrapporten/pdf/20130326_wapenexport_arabische_lente_rapport.pdf

29 De Standaard, 21/10/2013 'Helft Europese vuurwapens in Midden-Oosten komt uit België' http://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20131021_00801860

30 Lessons from MENA. Appraising EU transfers of Military and Security Equipment to the Middle East and North Africa. <http://www.psw.ugent.be/crg/publications/bb2withhyperlinks.pdf>

human rights violations taking place in the country had long been known. Both the FN management and the unions had placed pressure on Ruddy Demotte to take this decision. If this arms delivery could proceed, more contracts would soon be in the offing. If they did not, it meant a loss of jobs.

In Flanders, commercial considerations led to the Flemish parliament passing the new Flemish arms export law without a catch-all clause in June 2012. The inclusion of such a catch-all clause would mean that any goods with a military application would be subject to licensing, even if they were not listed on the military list as weapons. Without this clause nothing stands in the way of exports by the Flemish company Barco, producer of military image screens used in rocket installations. Due to the absence of this catch-all clause, the company has no licensing obligation for the export of its military technology.

8+1 criteria of the Common European Position on Arms Exports

In Article 2 of the Common European Position on Arms Exports, the following 8 criteria are described:

1. Respect for international obligations of the Member States.
2. Respect for human rights in the country of final destination.
3. The tensions or armed conflicts in the country of final destination.
4. The degree in which the arms delivery would influence peace and security in the region.
5. The national security of the Member States and their allies.
6. The behaviour of the buyer country with regard to the international community, its attitude towards terrorism, the nature of its alliances, and respect for international law.
7. The risk of diversion of the goods from within the country as well as the risk of re-export under undesirable conditions.
8. Compatibility of the arms exports with the technical and economic capacity of the recipient country (sustainable development).

Preceding this list, however, is a statement that says that the Member States acknowledge the joint desire to maintain a defence industry and that the strengthening of the European arms industry contributes to the European foreign and security policy. This means that the strengthening of the European arms industry is the important ninth criterion of this Common Position.

MILITARISATION OF OTHER POLICY DOMAINS

The arms industry wants to grow, sell more products and make more profit. To do this, they are constantly on the lookout for new markets. This can be achieved easily by exporting more weapons to countries outside the EU but also by framing as many social phenomena as possible as 'security problems' for which the arms industry has technological solutions.

The arms industry promotes this warped view of reality through every means at its disposal. It has an interest in creating a situation where policy makers approach every problem with a military logic: the world is divided into green zones and red zones; everywhere there are threats which must be neutralised; the public space must be permanently monitored with high-tech surveillance systems. The authorities need the technology and resources to be able to intervene rapidly always and everywhere.

Immigration, for example, is a social phenomenon with diverse social, political and economic aspects. For the arms industry, immigration is interesting only when it can sell products. From a military mindset, immigrants are viewed as intruders who form a threat and so have to be monitored, detected, controlled and, if necessary, neutralised or eliminated. In October 2013, the European Parliament approved the operating principles of 'Eurosur', the European system for border control. Within Eurosur, real-time images and data are exchanged between the EU Member States and Frontex, the European agency responsible for border control³¹. This data is compiled systematically and large-scale surveillance of the Mediterranean Sea is achieved by means of drones, ships and satellites. The primary task of Eurosur is to stop immigrants before they can enter the EU. Human rights organisations warn that the increasing militarisation of the European frontiers will lead only to more human trafficking and deaths such as the tragic incident of the 130 refugees who drowned when their boat sank off the coast of Lampedusa in October 2013³². The militarisation of immigrant policy is certainly good for the arms industry, but does not guarantee a humane and effective immigration policy. Quite the contrary, in fact.

If you take a look at the website of SDA, a military think tank, you can quickly learn which sectors the arms industry would like to become more active in. A lot is said about 'health security'. Health care is approached as a security problem. The health of the European citizens is threatened at the borders and any place where people come together. Immigrants, travellers and business people carry germs and therefore technology must be developed which, for example, uses sensors to detect



germs in a sample of breath. The arms industry is working on the Brave New World of tomorrow.

In the EU, commercial interests correspond with the vision of internal security. The report 'Neoconopticon'³³ includes a clear description of the insidious role of the European research projects in security. With their focus on the development of new technologies by security and arms companies, these projects place the military mindset at the centre of the EU's security analysis.



5. Conclusion: A safe Europe in a better world?

'A secure Europe in a better world', this is the title of the European security strategy which was approved by the European Council in December 2003³⁴. It recognizes that Europe is not independent from the rest of the world and that internal security and external security are linked inseparably. We also read that economic relations can be a source of conflict, violent or otherwise, and therefore a trade policy can be a powerful instrument for conflict prevention. Furthermore, the prevention of conflict 'cannot

“If we subcontract the European security policy to the arms industry, then very little of the European peace project will remain. It is for us to see to it that the public interest becomes the top priority on the political agenda.”



wait' and 'conflicts require political solutions'. These elements could come from a text published by Vredesactie.

The content of this dossier reveals that reality does not match this beautiful rhetoric. The economic objective of the EU stands head and shoulders above any other objective. Whenever there are contradictions in the policy, the matter is quickly settled. A democratic, social and humanitarian Europe is being overshadowed by economic interests. Things do not have to remain this way. On the contrary, this is a political choice which can be altered. The European Union must once again become a project for peace. When the European security policy is subcontracted to the arms industry, not much is left of the European peace project. In spite of this, international cooperation on a European level offers fantastic opportunities which we cannot allow the business world to destroy. It is up to us to see to it that public interest moves to the top of the political agenda.



Arms companies and their lobbyists have made themselves at home in the European institutions. Here they work together on policy, sell their weapons, and obtain subsidies for the development of new war technology. 'What is good for business is good for everyone' sounds the mantra of European policymakers. But a policy tailored to the arms industry does not ensure a safer world. Quite the contrary, in fact. Read all about it in this brochure.

It is time to react. Make yourself heard where the policy is being developed: amongst the lobbyists and the policymakers. Participate in the campaign Ctrl+Alt+EU: no military Europe of Vredesactie and Agir pour la Paix.

Vredesactie is a pluralistic peace movement that fights vociferously for a society in which conflicts are resolved without the use or threat of violence. Vredesactie is a motor for the development of non-violent action. With the NATO GAME OVER and Bombspotting campaigns, we challenge the nuclear weapons and the intervention policy of NATO. As a pacifist movement, we launch initiatives that make the dismantling of the arms industry possible.

Vredesactie is associated with War Resisters' International (WRI), a worldwide network of organizations, groups, and people who subscribe to the WRI declaration of principles: 'War is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war'.

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