

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

**THE EU NON-PROLIFERATION AND
DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE**

BRUSSELS

3-4 FEBRUARY 2012

**Third Plenary Session
EU Non-Proliferation Policy and Implementation
Q&A Session**

SATURDAY, 4 FEBRUARY 2012

Questions and Answers

Peter van Ham

We have heard a very broad overview of EU policies and their colleagues. I think the real bombshell came from Ambassador Bauwens when he said that effective multilateralism is outdated. I could not believe my ears, so I wrote it down. If this really is a new insight, then the EU has certainly fallen from its religion, which is a very tricky thing to do. We will now have a round of questions.

Anton Khlopkov, Center for Energy and Security Studies, Moscow

I was quite intrigued by all three presentations, which were mostly about internal discussions within the EU, improvements in communication and efficiency of budget use etc. Not one of the speakers addressed the real challenges that exist in the non-proliferation field. It was quite different from the discussion that we had yesterday afternoon, which was focused entirely on the challenges that we face these days. My question to all three speakers is: do you see any role for the EU in addressing nuclear safety and security challenges in Pakistan, first of all, and in addressing the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula?

Rogelo Pfirter, former Secretary General, OPCW

Like my predecessor, I would also like more specifics about certain key issues, including the Middle East and others. Let me say that I feel very reassured, listening to Mr Rivasseau, about the continued dedication of the EU to non-proliferation objectives, as well as the availability of human resources. As well as balanced reflections on the stage we are in, if I understood him correctly he is in no way suggesting a weakening of the commitment as expressed in the 2003 EU strategy.

As director general of the OPCW, I felt that we were direct beneficiaries of such a strategy, which played a key role, I would say, in strengthening the ability of the organisation to develop some key objectives, including universality, as well as providing international cooperation and assistance to its less prosperous member states. I can tell you that, through three joint actions, the EU really made a measured contribution on that front. For that reason too, I was somewhat concerned when I heard that the position that had been so much at the centre of all those contributions by the EU has not yet been filled, replaced or substituted. My question is: is the EU going to continue having a focal point that could be a reference for international organisations, since, again, that focal point has been so crucial to its success?

Lars-Erik Lundin, former EU Ambassador to UN Organizations in Vienna

I just left a job as EU ambassador in Vienna reporting from the floor and working with the political dialogue partners there. For instance, Ambassador Bauwens will know that, during the Belgian presidency, we worked together. We met over 60 ambassadors during the general conference in Vienna, having put in place the political-dialogue format after the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. I would say that the glass is half full, not half empty. I agree with Annalisa when she says that we should focus on the substance and do what we can do, focusing on the operational requirements and the real challenges that we face.

What does it mean? First, what I hear from my former colleagues in Vienna from all over the world is that they want to interact with the EU across all our instruments. I think Mr Rivasseau mentioned that we have a lot of different policies that are relevant here. They are interested in everything from technical cooperation to nuclear safety and security, so it is very important to have a full-scope dialogue with them on everything that is interesting to them and not just to us.

The second thing is that the Agency is trying to reach all the European institutions today. We had a

major visit by Dr ElBaradei in 2008, when he visited six different Commissioners and President Barroso. I have been trying to organise a new visit for Director General Amano to Brussels, which would be full-scope, fully engaging all the different services, including, of course, the new structures to be in the EEAS. There is an enormous interest in full-scope cooperation under the new system, which is very promising.

I am, then, very hopeful about effective multilateralism. I think we can do a lot together. We still have two treaties in force in the EU, of course – EURATOM and Lisbon – side by side, but if we work together, this can develop very well. For this, of course you need a strategic approach and I would like to end by just paying tribute to the work of Annalisa. I worked with her over many years when I was in Brussels. In terms of the strategic approach that Ambassador Bauwens mentioned, you need a way to keep this non-proliferation agenda on the radar for everybody. Thank you.

Joachim Krause, University of Kiel

I have two very short questions. The first is related to the effectiveness of multilateralism. Can the panellists give us a few tangible examples where EU multilateralism since 2003 has really made international multilateralism in the field of WMD more effective? It is simply a question of curiosity but Ambassador Bauwens brought this point up, so are there concrete, tangible examples?

The second question is for Ambassador Bauwens. You rightly said that we have to review the 2003 strategy. What do you think about disentangling the different categories of WMD? I find it somewhat awkward to lump together nuclear weapons of extremely strategic value, chemical weapons of second- if not third-rate strategic value, and biological weapons. Would it not be better to disassociate them?

Kamil Zwolski, Manchester Metropolitan University

I have a question for Ms Giannella. You mentioned the challenge of ensuring coherence between member states. My question concerns coherence between EU institutions. Before the Lisbon Treaty, we had two frameworks: assistance programmes, developed largely by the European Commission; and the Council, in charge of more diplomatic and policy-oriented developments. Following the Lisbon Treaty, we have the EEAS. In your view, does the EEAS offer an opportunity to overcome this challenge of coherence between these two institutional frameworks; in other words, can the former Commission officials now be involved in more diplomatic activities and in programming assistance programmes such as the Instrument for Stability?

Peter van Ham

Thank you very much. I think the panellists can choose which questions they feel they have to and can answer, so I will start with Ms Giannella.

Annalisa Giannella

First of all, on the question from the colleague in the first row, I did not, in my intervention, focus on internal cuisine but rather on the need to address the real proliferation challenges. I ended my intervention by saying that the EU should include a non-proliferation dimension in all its strategic papers concerning Arab countries. I said that the EU should be very active on the Middle East issue, as well as South Asia, which includes, of course, Pakistan. I can tell you that, before I left, in any case, we had started quite a difficult discussion within the EU on whether it was possible to interact with Pakistan in the area of nuclear security, taking into account, however, the fact that Pakistan is not party to the NPT.

There are, then, a number of political and legal obstacles to that. I totally agree with you that we have to work on substance and this would really be my preferred approach.

To Ambassador Pfirter, first of all thank you very much for the acknowledgement of our support to the OPCW. I am a firm believer in giving support to effective multilateralism. I think that this is still our guideline, so I hope that, if the Council's decision in support of the CWC has not yet been replaced, this is just a delay for technical reasons. I do not think that there has been a modification in the political line.

Concerning the comment made by Lars-Erik Lundin, I agree that we have to continue to develop our full-scope cooperation with the IAEA. I also know that several developing third countries are interested in benefiting from EU assistance programmes that can be funded with our different instruments. I believe that the EU should resort to all the different instruments at its disposal. However, what I said in my intervention is that assistance programmes can achieve really meaningful results only if they are put in the context of political cooperation. I think that the EU should not just become a sort of bank lending money. If we finance assistance programmes, we should also make sure that the country benefiting from the programme comes closer to international norms. These assistance programmes should aim not only at giving some advantages to the third countries but also to make sure that, ultimately, the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime is reinforced. The assistance programmes have to be put into context and accompanied by continuous political dialogue.

I also think that our policy should not have so many important exceptions. To be entirely explicit, I do not think it is acceptable that, for the second time, we have a negotiating mandate for India that totally excludes the non-proliferation dimension. I do not think that the EU has to have different approaches according to the wishes of the counterparts. We need a consistent approach that applies to each and every country in the world.

There are many examples of EU support to effective multilateralism. For instance, we have supported the CWC and, thanks to a series of EU joint actions, the number of countries that have ratified the CWC increased significantly. In addition, countries have been assisted in complying with the CWC. This is also true for the BWC and the Additional Protocol because, thanks to our joint actions, the IAEA, for instance, has made a lot of programmes that have expanded the number of countries that have an Additional Protocol with the IAEA and which are put in a position to fully implement the Additional Protocol.

I would also like to mention the HCOC on missiles, because, when we started to support the HCOC, it was almost on the verge of disappearing or becoming irrelevant, because of the lack of implementation of its provisions by a major player. I would like to say that, thanks to our continuous support and dialogue, we are now in a situation where the HCOC has once again become relevant. Its membership is also expanding.

Finally, in terms of coherence between European institutions, it is crucial and is something that is not yet happening as much as we would like. For instance, the EEAS does not entirely address all the questions concerning financial instruments.

François Rivasseau

Due to a lack of time, and because Annalisa has answered most of the others, I will focus on the first question. In terms of Pakistan and the Korean peninsula, if there is one group of states that has a magic recipe to solve both of these issues, I would be extremely happy to hear about it. It is not the first point of application of EU priorities in non-proliferation, for very obvious reasons. The EU is not part of the Six-Party Talks. If I had to say what might be the regional point of application of most interest to the EU, it would be the Middle East, where Lady Ashton is both a member of the Quartet

and responsible for EU3+3 discussions with Jalili. Although, in a global approach, it is absolutely key, and we are totally committed to do what we can to make a small difference, we do not pretend to have a magic recipe or to define what the international priorities of the global community should be.

In terms of what we are doing, we are working hard with IAEA, spending a lot of money on strengthening ways of cooperating with Pakistan. We developed, as a post-Lisbon Treaty action, centres of excellence to mitigate risk. It is interesting in the post-Lisbon context because it is an action that associates different institutions, which was not the case. We are creating eight regional centres of excellence, which will try to diffuse good practice in security and nuclear safety. We hope to be able to help make a small difference. We do not pretend to be leaders in that respect.

Most of our priorities in terms of substance were expressed yesterday by Mr Popowski, so we did not want to comment on what Mr Popowski said. Let me come back, for example, to one issue, which is a good characteristic of a post-Lisbon Treaty action that the EU is involved in, which is the space code of conduct. This is the kind of action where there is a strong EU consensus, and we are working today to see what we can do on it. I really think that, if this is to succeed, it will initially be an EU success. I would not dare call it an EU code of credit, because that would be counterproductive if we wanted it to be accepted by the global community, so I just say 'space code of conduct', but I hope that you, who know more than others, will be able to credit us for the initiative.

Finally, in terms of effective multilateralism, we have to revise all concepts while being assured that the need for consistency and currency will remain in the EU. If I might dare to make a prediction, there will be no huge surprises from the EU. In a rapidly changing world, being a pole of reference is a good card to be able to play. We could, for example, argue that, in terms of sanctions, such as those against Iran or other places, the EU has been trying to make a small difference in taking decisions that make multilateralism perhaps more effective. Trying to promote the Middle East zone free of WMD is also, in my view, an extraordinarily difficult issue. We know that and we will review that soon. It is also an area in which we could have some priorities.

Werner Bauwens

I believe that we should pay much more attention to the regional background of the proliferation challenges than was the case in our 2003 strategy, either in the Middle East, South Asia or North East Asia. When it comes to the Middle East, it is pretty obvious that we are present as the EU, and reference has been made to the role of Lady Ashton and the EU3+3 constellation. Reference has been made to the fact that we are, as the EU, absent in the context of the North Korean nuclear issue, which I regret. I do not accept, from a strategic point of view, that that is the case. I accept that it is the case, but I want to see a change. If the North Korean issue goes wrong, can you imagine what would happen to the economic and strategic interests of Europe in that region? In the same way, can you imagine what would happen in the region if they found a solution in the Six-Party Talks, where the EU is absent, and what the consequences of that would be on the EU's economic interests in the region, not having being considered a dealmaker?

One way or another, the EU will suffer from that situation, which is why I am deeply convinced that we should invest much more as the EU in dealing with the North Korean issue, and I very much applaud the fact that we are opening more and more embassies in Pyongyang and that EUDEL is going to deploy activities there too. We will get more firsthand information about the situation and open up more direct channels of communication with the regime than before. It is undoubtedly going to change in the coming years.

The second point I want to make is about EU commitment. I do not know if my good friend Ambassador Pfirter is still in the room, but I wanted to reassure him that there is no weakening, and

that is not what I said. There is going to be no weakening of commitment on the part of the EU. What I did say – and I am deeply convinced of this – is that there is a very strong weakening in the influence of the EU today in many environments, including the area of proliferation. We should have the intellectual courage to look at why this is the case and what we can do to remedy the situation. That would, indeed, involve also revisiting and reconsidering the types of financial commitments that we have with regard to certain organisations: what is the return on investment? I mentioned that term in my earlier remarks. Again, that is not meant in the sense of killing the relationship between the EU and those international organisations, but just reassessing the efficiency of our action.

That brings me to the third point. I quite applaud the fact that at least someone in the room seems to be in line with what I said: that effective multilateralism is also a notion that we should have the courage to have a fresh look at. We are very happy to see the CWC, the BWC and the NPT, which are near-universal instruments. We have the specific situation in which the CTBT is going through ratification problems that we are not going to get out of very soon. We have much lower types of instruments, like the HCOC, where we are very happy if, for example, Vanuatu joins the group of countries that support it, but is this really making the change in strategic terms? That is the question that we should look at.

Sometimes, we will have to show the courage to think outside of the box, which also involves thinking outside of the classic treaty-based environments. That is very much the case for the new players in the world – India, Pakistan and the Middle East, and certainly Israel. That is what we will need to cope with if we really want to make a strategic difference.

Finally, a specific question was raised with regard to revisiting the 2003 strategy and the possibility of disentangling the different WMD elements – nuclear from biological and chemical. I am very open-minded on this. I want to remark, however, that, in the case of the Middle East, we took the opposite decision. We come from a classic approach of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East to a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other WMD. That rather points to a much more integrated approach to the different elements and components of the WMD proliferation issue.

Peter van Ham

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much. With an eye on the clock, I would like to bring the session to a close. We have no time for any conclusions. As usual, the question was asked about whether, in terms of the EU non-proliferation policy, the glass is half empty or half full. I think we must be very careful to make sure that we have a glass at all; i.e. to keep the EU relevant and engaged and to have the right personnel in the right place. This is something that is an important prerequisite for the EU in terms of playing an important role.

Let me finish with a few words that my philosophy professor used to say after a very fruitful session: we are still confused but we are confused at a higher level of sophistication. I am sure that the confusion is good for academics, and certainly a consortium like this, so we have something to do, but all the sophistication, I am sure, comes from this panel, so I invite you to thank them very warmly.