

<http://lipietz.net/How-to-reconcile-the-politics-of-defence-and-the-environment>

# How to reconcile the politics of defence and the environment?

- Député européen (Verts, France) - Mes initiatives - Sécurité collective et environnement -



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# 1. Presentation

Global warming and sustainable development are matters which filter down into all levels and all spheres of society with considerable effects. Many studies, reports and environmental catastrophes every day reveal the urgency to change our daily habits in all sector of activity, but equally to take real measures to protect the environment in a durable way.

Taking account of effective development by defence politicians is recent and the environmental preoccupations are, little by little, being accepted in the military world. The military have become conscious of ecological decline for military manoeuvres in times of peace and in time of war. The army is also subjected to constraints in environmental protection.

Europe, in what concerns the PESC and the PESD is always sensitive to positive and lasting development. Since the Brundtland Report and in the face of climatic changes, Europe has started to include the problems of environmental protection in its policies of collective security and defence. The pressure exercised by this conscious understanding engenders a multitude of reflections and analysis and has resulted in reglementary texts and standards by the authorities of the European Union (ENMOD Convention, REACH Directive, MARPOL...).

The exemptions from which the army benefits have put back into question not only the need to protect the planet in the face of inherited pollution but also the desire to leave a viable environment for future generations.

The army remains the actor of primary aid to population victims of environmental and natural catastrophes which constitute major menaces to collective security.

In fact, the environment plays a role in security policy itself.

At the last European council, 13th - 14th march 2008 in Brussels, dedicated to climatic changes, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Javier Solana produced a report on the dangers linked to the climatic changes, and their consequences to international security, from which came the necessity of coordinating the action of member states in this matter.

Various menaces push Europe to react (The ever reducing availability of resources, the loss of territories and border disputes, but equally the migrations due to climatic changes and the pressure which makes itself felt in terms of international governance).

The multilateralism of the EU in the prevention of conflicts, of crisis management and the reconstructions after conflict, gives it a key role in face of diverse situations at stake.

In addition, the difficulty of access to natural resources and the degradation of ecosystems intensifying constitute environmental sources of conflict. Resources remain the main geopolitical concerns, re-enforcing the importance of sustainable development and environmental security. How do we guarantee political stability without sustainable development?

The United Nations council equally underlines the implications of climatic changes on international security. They have constituted, during 2007, the greatest majority of reasons for urgent calls to humanitarian aid.

Also, international conventions multiply, from classic Geneva conventions on War laws, to defining protection of climatic refugees and their environment from the lasting consequences of a conflict: furthermore aiming to prohibit irreversible modifications of the environment as a habitat.

## 2. Themes:

The themes of the conference will be treated in two ways:

- a. The impact of the environmental factors on collective security
  - i. The effects of climatic changes as a multiplier of dangers to international security
  - ii. The defence of populations and the logic of profound civil needs:
    - 1. Energy
    - 2. Water
    - 3. Food
- b. The impact of new armaments and new forms of military conflict on the environment.
  - i. Prevention of conflicts
  - ii. Post-conflict management

## 3. Participants

From this statement, it is proposed not to hold one colloquium but to hold several, bringing together the ecologists, the military and specialists in international relations to treat the question of relations between collective security and the environmental crisis.

Concerning the participants, 10 people have to be contacted. Alain Lipietz and Angelika Beer (Two parliamentary deputies of the Green Group), will welcome this reunion in the name of the green group at the European Parliament. The European Institute of internal relations (EIIR) will be present as an independent think tank.

The repartition of the participants is as follows:

- ▶ 3 military personnel
- ▶ 1 industrial
- ▶ 2 Experts
- ▶ 2 NGO Chiefs

This colloquium will take the form of two round tables for half a day, the 12th of June at the European Parliament at 2.00 pm.

In addition, it is probable that the treaty of Lisbon will be ratified by the first of January 2009. From this date onwards, the exterior defence and common security politics will take a new dimension, more identifiable, more dynamic, and hopefully more democratic.

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It is, therefore, time to open a large debate about this theme, on a European scale.