
Chapter 31 Screening

Foreign, Security and Defense Policy,
14 September 2006

**Policy Unit – Role, functions and interactions with
Member States**

(Chris Holtby, Council Secretariat)

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POLICY PLANNING AND EARLY WARNING UNIT

Declaration No. 6 annexed to the Amsterdam Treaty Final Act

The Conference agrees that:

1. A policy planning and early warning unit, shall be established in the General Secretariat of the Council under the responsibility of its Secretary-General. Appropriate cooperation shall be established with the Commission in order to ensure full coherence with the Union's external economic and development policies.
2. The tasks of the unit shall include the following:
 - (a) monitoring and analysing developments in areas relevant to the CFSP;
 - (b) providing assessments of the Union's foreign and security policy interests and identifying areas where the CFSP could focus in future;
 - (c) providing timely assessments and early warning of events or situations which may have significant repercussions for the Union's foreign and security policy, including potential political crises;
 - (d) producing, at the request of either the Council or the Presidency or on its own initiative, argued policy options papers to be presented under the responsibility of the Presidency as a contribution to policy formulation in the Council, and which may contain analyses, recommendations and strategies for the CFSP.
3. The unit shall consist of personnel drawn from the General Secretariat, the Member States, the Commission and the WEU.
4. Any Member State or the Commission may make suggestions to the unit for work to be undertaken.
5. Member States and the Commission shall assist the policy planning process by providing, to the fullest extent possible, relevant information, including confidential information.

ROLE AND ACTIONS IN PRACTICE

- Created with other new bodies in 1999, as means to strengthen Common Foreign and Security Policy, supporting the High Representative and Presidency/Political and Security Committee
- Personnel: one official from each Member State (plus officials of Secretariat, Commission and Western European Union)
- Role as liaison between Member States and High Representative as well as policy advice on specific foreign/security policy issues
- Many papers jointly with or with input from Commission, Presidency and others in Secretariat (eg EU Special Representatives, EUMS, SitCen, Civ-Mil Cell) to help ensure coherent EU approach. Recent examples: Afghanistan, Sudan, Ukraine, Democracy Promotion
- Summary of key CFSP objectives/concerns: EU Security Strategy, agreed December 2003, remains valid <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>