

we keep contact up, with both formal and informal negotiation. There have been attempts at rapprochement but there are still problems.

Permanent structured cooperation exists to some extent between Greece and Cyprus and between the Netherlands and Belgium, or even in the form of OCCAR.

EDD: *You do not think it is time to place these things which exist in isolation within one and the same political framework?*

E.V. Our next agenda!

EDD: *And if we were to imagine that all these tools are given concrete substance ...*

E.V.: Listen. I have to be realistic. Solidarity works when it comes to police checks at borders because Frontex, which is very useful European agency, plays a crucial role in Greece. But in the field of capabilities, we have already spoken of the defence agency, and the Military Committee plays a very limited role, because there is only one set of capabilities. That is why the main question is still the relationship between the European Union and NATO. Over the past century, European security has always been an American-European problem. First of all, there was American intervention during the First World War, then the conditions laid out by President Wilson, then US intervention during the Second World War (...)

EDD: *But, as the NATO secretary general has said, if European capabilities shrink because there is less money to spend on defence, the United States could turn away from Europe, in a world where the centre of gravity is moved to Asia.*

E.V. There is a geopolitical and strategic danger. But one should also remember that this pull on the United States by the Pacific goes back a long way. It is an internal debate in the United States that has lasted for two centuries. For US security, the Atlantic dimension remains no less decisive. No-one can neglect the Atlantic dimension in the United States. (...) European reality when it comes to security and defence still revolves around NATO. The development of common security and defence policy is still only embryonic. Military reality is the existence of NATO. We have an ageing organisation that needs to be renewed and an embryonic organisation that needs to grow!

EDD: *What are Greece's expectations of the Lisbon Summit?*

E.V.: This summit will be of particular importance for both the Alliance and its nations. Unlike other NATO summits in the past with specific thematic focus (for example on transformation), the Lisbon agenda is multidimensional, notwithstanding domination by the new strategic concept. The internal adaptation will provide for a leaner, more flexible command structure which, in combination with the agencies' reform, will result in cost savings in mid- and long-term and a more efficient Alliance. This is a very important message, for the taxpayers, amidst a difficult financial environment (...). Greece expects from the Lisbon Summit a visible demonstration of a modernised and strengthened alliance able to protect its own fundamental security interests, as well as those of individual allies. I believe that the new strategic concept is the tool to boost the Alliance into the future and to allow NATO's adaptation in a way to meet effectively the complex characteristics of today's, and future, global security challenges, while maintaining the equilibrium between ambition and capabilities. (...)

EDD: *Does Greece support the establishment of a territorial ballistic missile defence? Could this not become a kind of new "Ligne Maginot" as the French minister said? Do you see a risk if NATO puts the stress on BMD rather than on effective conventional forces?*

E.V.: The emerging threat posed by the ballistic missiles delivery systems and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is indeed a complex and, at the same time, sensitive issue for the international community. Greece will remain in the mainstream of the European allies who favour the establishment of the territorial ballistic missile defence (BMD) programme. The participation of Russia in this endeavour will be for the benefit of the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. Robust conventional forces or critical enablers and force multipliers are other paradigms of equal importance. I believe that the right mix of conventional forces with the appropriate nuclear capabilities empowers NATO with the necessary credible deterrent mode and provides the populations with visible assurance and a sense of security.

RUSSIA/INDUSTRY: *03/11/2010 (EDD)* – Russia could begin production of armoured vehicles under license from the Italian manufacturer, IVECO, in 2011, Russian Deputy Defence Minister Vladimir Popovkin states. Speaking during a visit to the Euronaval Fair in Bourget, Popovkin said the first vehicle could be produced at the end of the same year and that the share of Russian components would exceed 50%.