

A doctrinal process : Towards a new organization of Command and Control within the German Army

During the last fifteen years, we have observed radical changes; we have also been particularly concerned by the upheavals of the international context. The security environment of Germany and its allies has changed radically. During the Cold War, Germany as a front-line state was prepared to face, on its own territory, a major offensive of the Warsaw Pact. The reaction to such an aggression had been planned for a long time, thoroughly and in co-ordination with our allies. At all levels, the national Command and Control organization had also been optimized for territorial defense.

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Following the fall of the Soviet Union and the German reunification at the beginning of the 90s, defense logics have changed. Following the collapse of multiethnic Yugoslavia and the intervention of the international community, the German security policy had to face new challenges. Conflicts, which until now had caused little interest, burst out of Europe, for

example in Somalia. These confrontations constituted a particular challenge for a middle size state like Germany, which had no recent colonial past.

As a consequence, the defense of the National Territory and the defense of the Alliance are no longer the primary missions of the German armed forces.

On the other hand, conflict prevention and crises management operations, including the fight against international terrorism have become of prime importance. For our armed forces, the operational context has changed since these events. Because of the nature, intensity, extent and duration of the current and future engagements, the Bundeswehr, and in particular its operational commands, must now

meet very diverse and increasingly tough requirements. Engagements are characterized by multinationality, since any Bundeswehr armed intervention - with the exception of potential evacuation and rescue operations - will be conducted in co-ordination with our allies and partners within the UN, NATO and European Union frameworks. Initiated by the federal government and already mostly implemented, the Bundeswehr fundamental reform takes into account this evolution. The Bundeswehr structures have been reduced and optimized in view of the operational use of the forces; a new Command and Control (C2) organization has already been implemented.

As for our partners, the German national C2 organization, which is subordinated to the political power is articulated around three levels of military responsibility : strategic, operative and tactical. In peace-time, the Federal Ministry of Defense who assumes the C2 capability makes the



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link with the political level. As of the creation of the Bundeswehr in the middle of the 50s, taking into account the lessons learnt from history, a role more significant than in the majority of the other States was allotted to the Parliament for everything that regards the German armed forces organization and employment. As a matter of fact, any engagement of the Bundeswehr is subordinated to a Parliament mandate. This key importance given to the Parliament collects a broad consensus. However, it becomes increasingly obvious that the current mechanisms envisaging the intervention of the Parliament before any engagement of the Bundeswehr are likely to interfere with any possibility of immediate response to an emerging threat. Nowadays, confronted by requirements for security, attempts aiming at finding a more flexible parliamentary procedure have been mostly unsuccessful.

Strategic level

In the field of general military strategy, the federal Ministry of Defense's operations Council is the highest consultation and coordination body regarding the missions that could be entrusted to the Bundeswehr in peacetime. Decisions are made by the ministry after receiving a proposal from the Bundeswehr's chief of staff. The operations Council, which is headed by the Bundeswehr's chief of staff, comprises the three services' chiefs of staff, their deputies and the senior civilian directors. The council prepares the main decisions regarding planning, preparation and execution of the Bundeswehr operations in peacetime ; it also coordinates the measures to be taken by the ministry and by the civilian and military organizational sectors.

Operative level

The first overseas operations carried out by the Bundeswehr were conducted at the operative level by

the operational commands of the appropriate services. It is obvious that depending on the nature of the missions and the number of committed soldiers, it is the land forces command which had to provide the main effort. However, it became increasingly difficult to combine the command and control of all the German Army elements with the increasing requirements of the missions to be achieved. Moreover, jointness had to be privileged through the creation of a joint HQ. This is why, in July 2001, the Bundeswehr operational Command HQ was created in Potsdam, close to Berlin. This HQ henceforth assumes all national tasks at operative level. It is in charge of planning and conducting the operations carried out by German armed forces abroad. It also issues orders and guidance to the commander of the German forces engaged on a theatre of operation. The Bundeswehr operational Command HQ is thus the only interlocutor of the force commander. All German units deployed in operations, from Afghanistan to the Horn of Africa, not to forget the Balkans and the Mediterranean, are placed under the Bundeswehr operational Command HQ's Command and control. These are units, which may belong to the Army, Air Force, Navy, medical corps and Joint Combat Service Support. These units are organized into an operational task force. This joint approach makes it possible to better focus and control the committed forces.

On a case by case basis operations of smaller scope can be led, as it occurred in the past, by any of the various services' operational staffs.

Tactical level

The tactical level comprises all contingents deployed in operations abroad, i.e. :

- The Contingent commander and his staff.
- The operational forces.
- The German components of the multinational staffs and HQs deployed on the theatre of operations.
- Combat support units under national command as well as liaison teams.

The Bundeswehr contingent commander is responsible at the tactical level. He employs the military assets and assumes the responsibility for the operational availability of the units he commands. If, following the transfer of authority (TOA), the commander of a multinational force is entitled to give orders and to entrust missions to the German operational forces which are subordinated for him, the commander of the German contingent continues - as for all other participating nations - to ensure the tasks that remain under national responsibility. He thus remains the only disciplinary authority for all soldiers and civilian members of the German contingent. On operation, the elements put under national command remain under the contingent commander's command and control. If necessary, he is granted authority over elements coming from the various services.

It can also assume tasks related to the operative level, provided that he is the highest ranking national military representative on the theatre of operation and consequently the interlocutor of the multinational force commander. He puts forward the Bundeswehr interests vis-à-vis the host nation and other participating nations. Moreover, he may also be dual-hatted if he is simultaneously the multinational force commander and the national contingent commander.

The German contingent commander exerts the disciplinary authority over the German elements belonging to multinational staffs or HQs by the intermediary of the highest ranking German officers present in these staffs or HQs.

In specific situations, it is possible to send into the theatre of operations a German military delegate, accompanied by his staff, in charge of supporting the German contingent commander and/or putting forward the interests of the federal Ministry of Defense at the international level.

National responsibilities within an international framework

Multinationality does not imply the abandonment of the national identity. Accordingly, the German contingent commander receives guidance which enables him to defend the German interests in the theatre of operation.

Certain tasks remain, however, under national responsibility, such as units' deployment and redeployment before and after the transfer of authority (TOA), C2 support to guarantee the permanence of the national command, Civil-Military Co-operation (CIMIC), operational service support, initial provisioning and replenishment.

National responsibility does not exclude the achievement of certain tasks in co-ordination with other

nations within the multinational framework.

In the event of an engagement of German troops within a multinational force, disciplinary and administrative authority remains always a national responsibility.

The future

For more than ten years, Germany, with its allies and partners, has taken part in operations carried out within NATO, EU and UN frameworks. In situations of conflict prevention and crises management, Germany plays an increasingly significant role and assumes a large responsibility within the international community. Nowadays, the Bundeswehr takes part in six operations in five different theatres. 8000 men and women are deployed in Afghanistan, the Balkans,

Georgia and the Mediterranean.

These last five years, a total of 100.000 German soldiers took part in overseas operations. The Bundeswehr command and control organization has been optimized for these missions, where, until now, it proved to be reliable. However, the world is in permanent change. Acting on a global scale, terrorism has become a worrying threat for which it is necessary to find adequate answers. The Heeresamt, which I command, analyzes the future challenges and exploits the lessons learnt during engagements in order to translate them into concepts and structures for the land forces. This is our contribution to ensure the success of future engagements.

1 CoFAT and CDEF equivalent.

