

**Gemeenschappelijke vergadering
van het Adviescomité voor de
Europese Aangelegenheden, de
commissie voor de
Landsverdediging en de
commissie voor de Buitenlandse
Betrekkingen van de Kamer en
van de commissie voor de
Buitenlandse Betrekkingen en
voor de Landsverdediging van de
Senaat**

van

DINSDAG 25 NOVEMBER 2008

Voormiddag

**Réunion commune du Comité
d'avis chargé des Questions
européennes, de la commission
de la Défense nationale, et de la
commission des Relations
extérieures de la Chambre et de la
commission des Relations
extérieures et de la Défense du
Sénat**

du

MARDI 25 NOVEMBRE 2008

Matin

01 Hoorzitting met de heer Javier Solana, Hoge Vertegenwoordiger voor het Gemeenschappelijk Buitenlands en Veiligheidsbeleid (GBVB) van de Europese Unie

01 Audition de M. Javier Solana, Haut Représentant pour la politique étrangère et de sécurité commune (PESC) de l'Union européenne

(De vergadering wordt geopend om 10.40 uur)

(La séance est ouverte à 10.40 heures)

01.01 **Anne Delvaux**, sénatrice, coprésidente: Je remercie M. Solana d'avoir accepté notre invitation à ce comité d'avis exceptionnel. Même si vous n'êtes absolument pas un inconnu, je tenais à rappeler votre parcours à l'attention de mes collègues. Après une carrière de physicien, vous êtes devenu ministre dans votre pays natal, l'Espagne. Pendant treize ans, vous avez été successivement chargé de la culture, de l'éducation, puis des affaires étrangères.

Vous avez ensuite exercé la fonction de secrétaire général de l'OTAN. Depuis 1999, vous êtes le Haut Représentant pour la politique étrangère et de sécurité commune de l'Union européenne et le secrétaire général du conseil de l'Union européenne et de l'Union européenne occidentale. En tant que diplomate en chef de l'Union européenne, vous assistez le conseil pour les questions de politique étrangère et vous agissez, à ses côtés, dans la conduite des dialogues politiques avec les pays tiers. Nous ne pouvons que nous réjouir de votre participation à notre réunion et vous remercier à nouveau de nous faire profiter de votre grande expertise en matière de politique étrangère, de sécurité et de défense européenne.

01.02 **Javier Solana**: I shall try to keep this discussion short to be able to get quickly to the question and answer period. Let me begin by saying that being here in this parliament is indeed a great pleasure. I would like to say to you all publicly, that the relationship I have had all this time in my present position with your country has been very solid and fundamental. Therefore, I would like to thank you, members of the Parliament and the Belgian Government.

Presently we are living in a very complicated international moment, in which the backdrop we are experiencing now will seriously influence the coming future. Obviously we are emerged in a very complicated economic global crisis that has spread at an incredible speed and which will impact economically on our lives, on the distribution of world power and on foreign affairs; problems that we will have to tackle at the

European and International level. There is no doubt that the balance between markets and governments will have to be re-thought. It is true that globalisation will indeed continue and the question posed by our citizens and the international community is, how to manage this globalisation better? The crisis we are living highlights the need for stronger global institutions, on the financial side it is obvious but also beyond the financial sector. Think about the other problems that we have that will have fundamental consequences and repercussions on the international agenda: climate change, energy and migration. Therefore, we need global solutions and to bring new powers to the table. Without a doubt the West needs the new powers and needs to get used to sharing with these powers, which in itself is a fundamental change of mindset. If we do not learn this, then we will not be able to tackle the solutions to the complicated questions ahead.

The European Union has a very important role to play. It has to act as a united front and to also act with generosity, because the way in which we treat the new countries in the new global system going up, will impact on the way they will deal with us when they arrive at the top. Think of the Emerging countries which are moving very fast demographically, and economically. It will be very important how we deal with them in this process for the stability of the world in the future.

The second element of the backdrop is the US elections. The result of the elections are probably going to allow us to have a better and more solid transatlantic relationship and as Europeans we have to try to solve together the important issues we have in our agenda. Probably as I said earlier, even a solid bilateral relationship between the European Union and the US will not be enough. It has to be united with other members of the international community, emerging countries like Russia, China, Mexico and South Africa that have to play an important role in political and economic affairs.

Let me move on now to the most important topic which is Africa. In Africa we have important problems, one of which as you know is the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is a real human tragedy that continues to occur. Over the years the European Union has rightly invested a lot in the peace and stability of the DRC, which as a country has an overall importance to the stability within Africa. We have to still continue in being engaged to be able to stabilise the DRC and that of the Great Lake region. Belgium has done a lot, your minister of Foreign Affairs and Commissioner Louis Michel to whom I give recognition to their work. I have been recently in touch with the most important key players such as the Secretary General of the United Nations, the President of the African Union Mr Ping who is a very important player and personality, and President Kabila. I think that the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union together with the European Union and the decision taken not long ago to give Obassanjo the capacity to be the interlocutor in this complicated issue have been decisive. The work Obassanjo is doing is becoming effective and he deserves the support of the international community as a whole and of ourselves. The humanitarian response has been fast with 45 million Euros in extra aid contributed by the Commission and the member states of the European Union. However, we still have to see how we can cooperate with the security forces deployed by the United Nations (Monuc) and a new Euro security council resolution has been approved asking for 3000 more troops. Now it has to be seen how the European Community can contribute to that. For the moment no decision has been taken and the European Council continues to see possibilities to cooperate with the Monuc. We will also continue work as much as we can on the security sector of reform for the DRC. This is a very important programme in which Belgium has been very actively engaged. More efforts have to be made in that direction. Without security sector reform there will be no stability in the country. This issue is high in our agenda and in the Belgian agenda and therefore the cooperation between the EU and your governing parliament will continue for the moment.

We have in other places in Africa very acute problems such as in Somalia and its fight against piracy. The EU has taken an important decision to launch an ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) mission at the beginning of the summer. The mission is to solve the problems on the seas of Somalia with a very robust mandate, to prevent, protect and deter by all means, including the use of force. This is the first maritime mission of the EU, with headquarters in place in the UK and a newly appointed strategic commander. If all goes well at the Foreign and General Affairs Council on the 8th of December the operation will be launched. It will of course cooperate very closely with the United Nations to apply the resolution 1814 and 1816. It will also cooperate with other countries which are engaged in the region, with other institutions such as NATO and with other countries beginning to be deployed there such as USA, Russia and India. Let me again stress that this action against piracy cannot replace the support for the political process onshore to stabilise Somalia, it is something to be done offshore. The Somali transitional government still continues to block progress and the stabilisation of the country remains an issue. We do of course support the political process laid down by the United Nations. Now going beyond the African continent I would like to talk about the Balkan issue, particularly Kosovo. I can now tell you that the Secretary General of the United Nations has

sent the report of the Kosovo EULEX to the Security Council. It is agreed that there will be a debate on Wednesday 26th November in the Security Council.

Every party, Belgrade and Pristina, has assented to this debate, ending with a declaration by the President of the Security Council. If the debate is closed properly then at the beginning of December, the deployment of EULEX (European Rule of Law) will cover the whole territory of Kosovo. This will complete what had started several months ago. Moreover, it will close another important page and will further our collaboration and effort with the UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo). In time UNMIK will give all the capacity of rule of law to the EULEX mission and we will continue not only to stabilise Kosovo, but to obtain regional stabilisation. This is good news for everyone as it is the first time we have everything on the table and been able to formalise the report to be debated. I would like to thank you all, as Belgium has been a member of the Security Council all this time and your contribution has been very very important.

Now I would like to say a few words about Georgia and Russia. As you are well aware we are actively engaged diplomatically and on the ground in Georgia. The observation/monitoring mission continues to be very effective and I would also like to underline that the process of the Geneva agreement we signed with President Medvedev in the month of September, is going fairly well. Despite the first meeting ending up rather badly, the second has finished much better with the possibility of continuing the political debate with another date on the 17th and 18th of December. The co-chairs of that process are the EU, the UN, the OSCE which is a good umbrella to continue the development of the political situation in Georgia. On the ground our mission has been operating now for two months, leading to the withdrawal of the Russian forces from the adjacent areas and allowing the return of 35,000 displaced people. However, there are still problems that remain in the the Al Gori and Upper Kodori valleys and certain checkpoints that need to be resolved. We raise the question systematically with the Russians whenever we have a meeting with them. The situation is evolving politically a little faster in the Geneva process and things are moving in the right direction. Concerning Russia, I think it is very important that we maintain the dialogue. As you know we had a Summit on the 14th of this month in Nice, which was very fruitful and it was agreed to continue the negotiations on the PCA (Partnership Comprehension Agreement) One meeting has already been held and it went very well. We have to see now how this process will evolve in order to get the new PCA on the operational level. In parallel we are developing close relations with the eastern parts of Europe, as well as Georgia, the Ukraine. This Eastern partnership is a very important initiative for the European Union. I would like to look briefly at Afghanistan. There is certainly no doubt that this country will become one of the most important issues of the future. In itself Afghanistan will be an important theatre with its elections in 2009. The International community cannot fail on the electoral process, it has to be free and fair. It is the second electoral process in five years. Moreover, once the new administration of the US is in place the debate on Afghanistan will probably restart and it will be necessary to discuss news strategies. It is clear that we shall be under pressure from our American friends to get more engaged in the Afghanistan/ Pakistan theatre. In fact we have to be prepared not only to continue to be engaged from a military point of view as we are today, but be further engaged in the police and security front in combination with the economic and political aspects in preparation for the coming elections and post elections.

As you may be aware, we do have the EUPOL mission (EU Police Mission) deployed on the ground with 400 national policemen who are trying to cooperate with the local police forces in Afghanistan to see if we can get the security component beyond the military also in place. As far as Pakistan is concerned, this is going to be in of the most critical dossiers for the future. We have had some good news in the last few days, where the President of Pakistan has made a good offer to become more engaged with India. It seems the offer is going to be accepted thus giving Pakistan tighter security on the Afghanistan border and therefore contributing to greater stability in this particular zone.

Let me come to an end by mentioning one of the most important dossiers that we have on the agenda which is the Middle East Peace Process. We are approaching the end of the year 2008, and we are supposed to bring some sort of results on a final agreement, but unfortunately these will not be on the table. The electoral process in Israel will probably postpone things until late February or early March, but we do very much hope that the contact and the dialogue between the Palestinians and the Israelis will continue. We met in Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt last week with the two leaders of both countries and they have committed themselves to continue the process of negotiation despite the electoral process in Israel. However, as you can imagine, this will be very difficult during this period of time. Therefore, we will have to await the results of the elections in Israel and at the same time make all the efforts to prevent violence returning to Palestine or Israeli territories. The second important point is the process which is taking place under the umbrella of Egypt to find a solution to the Inter Palestinian negotiation with the objective to recuperate the sense of unity within the Palestinian

people and to try to solve the problem of the Gaza Strip, which is in a very dramatic situation from a humanitarian and political point of view. Two more things about the peace process: for us the process should be comprehensive, therefore, the Israeli /Syrian and Israeli/ Lebanese paths should both move in the right direction. The role of Syria will be fundamental for the stability of the region. So these are all the most important issues that we have on the table in the coming period of time. Nevertheless, as I said previously, we cannot forget that even with the economic situation we are in today, there are other important horizontal issues, such as climate change, the question of poverty and of disarmament; three important issues that we should keep working on. With the help of the new US administration we should get engaged in trying to solve these fundamental problems.

In parallel the issues within Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Middle East peace process remain fundamental to the European Union.

01.03 François Roelants du Vivier, sénateur (MR): I would like to address four different issues, the first one being the Middle East Process. You spoke of the meeting of the Quartet on 9 November with the hearing of Mr Abbass and Mrs Livni one year after the Annapolis process. Could you elaborate on the role of the Quartet and especially of Mr Blair as a mediator? What about the negotiations between Israel and Syria under the leadership of Turkey? What about the future conference in Moscow in 2009? My second question is about Central Africa. This may seem rather a naive question, but why was it not possible to organise an operation like the one in East Congo as this exposes the problem of the battle groups. Why have well trained battle groups within the European Union when it is impossible to deploy them, especially the last Franco German battle group we had, with Belgian, Luxembourg and Spanish troops, due to restrictions especially from Germany and the UK? Should we continue to organize these battle groups? What is their future? My third question is about Iran. Would you see this as a diplomatic issue more than a military operation, considering what we have been hearing for years within the Bush administration and from Israel. Would you say that today we will move towards a diplomatic conclusion?

Finally my last question will be about Georgia. Would you elaborate more on what the 200 observers from the European Union should do? Should we at the Conference of Donors influence in the best way possible, financial aid to Georgia?

01.04 Dirk Van der Maelen (sp.a+VI.Pro): Mr Secretary General, just a simple question. Next spring NATO will organise a review of its doctrine of 99 and my question is whether Europe is preparing this debate and do we have the intention with the EU, to make progress towards a NATO with a European pillar?

01.05 Georges Dallemagne (cdH): Que pense M. Solana de l'architecture qui semble se dessiner en matière économique et financière au niveau du G20, G22, où une série de pays européens, dont la Belgique, sont absents? Comment l'Europe organise-t-elle sa représentation, ses idées et ses opinions sur la nouvelle architecture mondiale?

Bien sûr un G22 est préférable à un G8 mais nous savons qu'un tiers du PIB de l'humanité n'y est pas représenté alors que les conséquences pour les pays les plus pauvres seront probablement très brutales. Comment organise-t-on les opinions des pays qui ne sont pas européens ou qui n'appartiennent pas à ce club, pour mieux régler l'organisation du monde? L'Assemblée générale des Nations unies est depuis longtemps en crise sur ses possibilités de peser dans les grands débats internationaux. Comment réconcilier ce qui se passe au niveau du G20, G22, avec ce qui pourrait se passer avec l'ensemble de la communauté des nations?

Nous assistons à une "somalisation" de l'Est du Congo avec un émiettement des milices, une brutalité croissante, des viols de femmes et d'enfants. Pas plus tard qu'hier, un camp de réfugiés a été pillé et saccagé par l'armée congolaise. Je sais que M. Solana fait partie de ceux qui cherchent à ce que l'Europe puisse contribuer de manière plus solide, plus massive, là-bas. Il s'agit d'une question importante pour l'Europe. La discussion relative à l'envoi d'une force sur place est-elle close? La France et la Belgique sont les seuls pays à avoir montré leur disponibilité. Malheureusement, ces pays ne peuvent prendre le *leadership* d'une telle contribution. Par contre, l'Espagne, l'Allemagne, les Pays-Bas et d'autres pays qui n'ont pas d'histoire coloniale dans cette région du monde pourraient peut-être intervenir de manière plus solide. Qu'en pense M. Solana?

Il y a un grand débat sur l'avenir de l'OTAN. À ce sujet, des divergences d'opinion se manifestent des deux

côtés de l'Atlantique. Les Américains verraient bien l'OTAN devenir une organisation politique globale alors que les Européens souhaitent qu'elle reste une organisation de défense régionale. Comment s'organise cette discussion? Quelles sont les limites de l'OTAN? La Russie s'inquiète de voir l'OTAN s'agrandir de plus en plus, contrairement aux déclarations qui avaient été faites à l'origine. Quel est l'état de la discussion à l'échelon européen sur cette question difficile? Où en sont nos relations avec la Russie? Les discussions sur un partenariat approfondi sont suspendues. Qu'en est-il des décisions qui devront être prises dans les prochaines semaines?

En ce qui concerne l'Afghanistan, les objectifs de guerre sont très peu clairs. Les Américains sont persuadés que leur sécurité se joue en Afghanistan. Par contre, pour les Européens, c'est extrêmement flou, raison pour laquelle nous voyons une série de *caveat* émerger. Il semblerait que la lutte contre Al-Qaïda soit le plus petit commun dénominateur. Or les bases d'Al-Qaïda se trouvent au Pakistan.

Quelle est l'attitude de l'Europe à l'égard de cette question difficile? Enfin, l'arrivée de M. Obama à la présidence des États-Unis entraînera-t-elle, comme on semble le pressentir, une demande des États-Unis pour que l'Europe s'implique davantage dans les affaires du monde? Comment voyez-vous cette discussion et l'éventualité d'un nouveau partenariat avec les États-Unis sur une série de questions?

01.06 Isabelle Durant, sénatrice (Ecolo): En ce qui concerne la République Démocratique du Congo, l'Union européenne pourrait-elle appuyer la force des Nations unies? Nous avons connaissance de l'intention louable d'augmenter le contingent de la Monuc de 17 à 20.000 hommes. Cela dit, l'Union européenne pourra-t-elle exercer une influence au sein des Nations unies, afin que soient revues les règles d'engagement? En effet, on ne peut se limiter à un renforcement du mandat de la Monuc, car il faut que les troupes puissent agir. Par ailleurs, monsieur le Haut représentant, vous avez dit tout à l'heure que le chapitre sur l'idée d'une force européenne n'était pas clos. L'Union européenne examine la possibilité d'utiliser un instrument extrêmement simple, l'envoi de *battle groups*, décision qui pourrait être prise en quinze jours. J'aimerais connaître votre avis à cet égard et surtout la stratégie à développer pour que cet instrument puisse être utilisé, sans quoi les possibilités d'action de l'Union européenne seront encore affaiblies dans la région. En effet, si je salue l'initiative du Commissaire européen Michel, je pense que la diplomatie ne pourra tout résoudre dans ce pays. Son action sera sans doute utile plus tard mais, dans l'immédiat, une force européenne doit venir renforcer la force onusienne. C'est d'ailleurs le contenu de l'appel de l'abbé Malu Malu, partenaire de l'Union européenne dans la dynamique électorale et que nous avons tous soutenu. Sans une intervention préalable sur le terrain, la diplomatie ne ferait que mettre en scène des belligérants qui n'ont pas le droit d'être assis autour d'une table parce qu'ils ont commis des crimes contre l'humanité.

Enfin, l'Union européenne compte-t-elle peser, d'une quelconque manière, sur la réactivation des mandats d'arrêt? Elle peut en effet soutenir certaines dynamiques qui pourraient, par exemple, amener le numéro deux de Laurent Nkunda à comparaître, en tant qu'accusé, devant la Cour pénale internationale car il n'a rien à faire à une table de négociation.

Monsieur le Haut représentant, comme je connais la complexité des rapports de force entre la Belgique, la France, l'Allemagne, l'Espagne, etc., j'aimerais surtout avoir des informations sur votre propre calendrier.

01.07 François-Xavier de Donnea (MR): Je tiens à remercier M. Solana d'être parmi nous aujourd'hui. Je voudrais d'abord évoquer l'Iran. On sait que ce pays influence fortement le comportement du Hamas et du Hezbollah. À mon sens, il n'y aura pas de normalisation de la situation au Liban et dans le dossier israélo-palestinien sans une normalisation des rapports de l'Europe et des États-Unis avec l'Iran, notamment dans le dossier nucléaire. Sans une solution sur ce plan, ne doit-on pas craindre de voir, tôt ou tard, des frappes israéliennes s'abattre sur l'Iran, ce qui compliquerait encore la situation sur place et pourrait créer de graves troubles dans nos pays européens, notamment par le terrorisme?

Ma deuxième réflexion concerne le Congo. J'estime utile de renforcer la Monuc et peut-être de prendre d'autres initiatives militaires pour protéger les populations civiles d'un véritable massacre indigne de l'humanité. Cela dit, je pense que la solution au Congo ne sera jamais militaire mais qu'elle consiste à mettre sur pied une union économique regroupant le Congo, l'Ouganda, le Rwanda et le Burundi de façon à assurer un partage équitable des ressources. C'est en effet la convoitise pour diverses ressources qui explique les conflits actuels.

Il est clair que l'Europe seule est probablement fort impuissante. Sans une pression importante des États-

Unis sur certains pays de la région, une solution sera impossible. En outre, aucune solution ne pourra être dégagée si nous n'impliquons pas plus les Africains eux-mêmes, davantage que cela n'a été fait jusqu'à présent avec MM. Bansanjo et Ping.

La solution au conflit régional doit venir des Africains, avec les pressions occidentales nécessaires, et surtout américaines. Tant que le problème de l'exploitation et de la commercialisation des ressources minières ne sera pas réglé, cette région ne connaîtra pas la paix.

01.08 Josy Dubié, sénateur (Ecolo): Monsieur Solana, en terminant votre exposé, vous avez signalé que nous étions confrontés à trois problèmes transversaux: les changements climatiques, la pauvreté et le désarmement. Vous avez, à mon sens, tout à fait raison mais il me semble que les deux derniers problèmes sont liés et constitueront donc l'axe de mes deux questions, l'une concernant la Géorgie, l'autre l'Afghanistan. Depuis la guerre en Géorgie au mois d'août, on constate une remontée des "tensions de guerre froide". En effet, les États-Unis ont envoyé leur flotte dans la mer Noire, les Russes ont riposté en envoyant leur flotte et leur navire amiral au Venezuela et dans les Caraïbes. Dans la foulée, les Américains ont obtenu des Polonais le déploiement des fameux missiles antimissiles. Les Russes réagissent en annonçant le déploiement de missiles à Kaliningrad. On sent incontestablement un regain de tension de guerre froide.

Pour tenter de privilégier, comme vous le préconisez, une collaboration critique avec la Russie plutôt qu'une confrontation, ne pensez-vous pas qu'il serait malvenu d'accepter l'entrée de la Géorgie dans l'Otan? Cette adhésion a été annoncée par le vice-président américain *Dick Cheney en Azerbaïdjan et sera sans doute abordée lors* de la réunion de l'Otan en décembre. Comme il est aujourd'hui évident que ce n'est pas la Russie qui a attaqué la Géorgie mais l'inverse, il me semble utile, pour désamorcer cette crise, de prendre une position prudente et de dire à la Géorgie que le moment de son entrée dans l'Otan n'est pas encore venu. Qu'en pensez-vous?

Quant à l'Afghanistan, Barak Obama a annoncé tout au long de la campagne pour les élections présidentielles qu'il voulait désengager les troupes américaines en Irak pour les envoyer en Afghanistan. Or tous les spécialistes et les chefs d'état-major américains, britanniques et français affirment qu'il n'y a pas de solution militaire en Afghanistan. Le général français Georgelin a même déclaré que "l'Afghanistan devenait un merdier ingérable et qu'il ne fallait pas s'y impliquer davantage". Comment résoudre cette divergence de vues entre Obama et les responsables militaires?

Nombreux sont ceux qui affirment que la solution sera politique et non militaire. Quelle action l'Union européenne mène-t-elle dans ce domaine politique? Par ailleurs, si presque tous les talibans sont des Pachtoune, tous les Pachtoune ne sont pas des talibans. Loin de là. De plus, les Pachtoune sont très peu représentés au sein du gouvernement afghan, alors qu'ils représentent 40% de la population. L'Union européenne ne doit-elle donc pas travailler avec les Pachtoune qui ne sont pas talibans pour parvenir à dégager une solution politique?

Enfin, le problème est aussi pakistanais. Il est clair que les bases d'Al Qaida ne se trouvent pas en Afghanistan. Que doivent faire concrètement les Européens pour amener le Pakistan à jouer son rôle dans la recherche d'une solution politique?

01.09 Hilde Vautmans (Open Vld): I would like to congratulate you on succeeding in giving a real face to the European policy of security and defence, which is a major step forward. But I think to really have a European policy on security and defence, two things are necessary. First of all, I feel we need a formal meeting of the Ministers of Defence in the European Union and not an informal approach. If we really want the EU to have a European Policy on defence we need this formal meeting. What are your steps in putting this on the agenda and do you think you can succeed in getting this done?

Secondly, Europe carried out a lot of surveys asking people what they thought about a European army. Most people favour the idea, believing that the budget of the national army could be less. Therefore, do you think we will ever succeed in having this army, as I believe it is really necessary. Looking at the budgets spent on defence matters of the different parliaments and countries and at the efficiency of the outcome of that then we need to take serious measures in getting this European army. I know that basically every country agrees provided less is spent on defence matters, but in a first step even more will need to be spent in setting up this army and then to reduce the budget. What are you doing towards achieving this, are discussions going

on? Do you have an agenda on this? I would also like to ask you about the mission in Chad as you did not mention this. I think this is an important operation, as Belgian soldiers are there. What is your vision about that?

Fourthly, the Commission of Foreign Affairs has just come back from a visit to the United Nations and we got excellent briefings on the weight Europe has within the UN. Europe is indeed very important there. But people do not know this. What can we do to highlight this, that Europe speaks with one voice, especially in the Security Council. Belgium had been a member of the Security Council for two years and we did a great job there. We started up discussions between the members of the Security Council and I would like to know if this will continue?

Lastly the most important question for my country and this commission. You know Belgium was in favour of sending European troops to Congo. Our Minister of Foreign Affairs was in favour of that, but unfortunately Europe did not make that decision. Will there again be steps taken to put this on the agenda again? I think Congo needs European troops as sexual genocide is occurring and we cannot turn a blind eye. Can you assure us that the discussion will continue within Europe so that we can save women and children in the Congo.

01.10 Javier Solana: In response to the four questions posed by Roelants du Vivier. The first on the Middle East Peace Process with three sub items, one being the role of Mr Blair. He was appointed by the Quartet as its special representative for the economic development of Palestine. He does not have a formal mandate that goes beyond this. In this respect he cooperates closely with the EU and remains an important economic key player among the Palestinians not only in the reconstruction, institution building, but particularly now in security. We have now a very important mission to cooperate with Prime Minister Fayyad and President Abbas to get a security structure in place. So we have the economic aspect, the reconstruction and humanitarian component, the institution building and the security part. This is what we coordinate with Tony Blair and he attends all the meetings we have with the Quartet.

Maybe the most important thing done on the economic side was the Bethlehem Conference, which included regional partners and Palestinian entrepreneurs. This created a certain positive momentum but we cannot cheat ourselves out of the reality that the situation remains very bad from the economic development viewpoint, although some progress has been made in security thanks to the EU. The fact that the Security forces now use Hebrew is quite an important achievement.

To the second sub-question on the role of Syria with Israel. This is a very important path. Turkey has done a good job but there has been no fundamental discussions as yet between Syria and Israel. I would like to draw your attention to the last statement of Prime Minister Olmert, where he strongly advocates the Israeli Syrian path. Indeed there is a growing consensus within Israeli society and security forces which strongly supports this. The role of Syria for the future of this region is crucial to the regional stability. Syria has recuperated relations with the Lebanon, the changes in the embargo and diplomatic relations are in place, with a change of Ambassadors probably before the end of this year. This will help in moving forward the Israeli Syrian path.

The elections in Lebanon are critical and if they are free and fair without external interference we will make a very important step in the right direction for the track Lebanon Israel.

On your third question about the Moscow Conference. Originally, the idea of the Conference was to take stock of the situation at the end of the year and to seek out good moves collectively for the beginning of 2009. But due to the delays in the Israeli electoral process this idea has been reported till after these elections and the present government will continue until the summer of 2009. However, the idea continues to remain on the agenda and the Quartet with the Arab countries and the various parties will get together probably in March or April. This is something that the Russians have accepted.

Referring to your question about Central Africa, it is true that considering the level of engagements we have had on ESP missions, Artemis/ DRC, why not now? There are several reasons why not. Now we have MONUC, which is the most important UN operation ever, with 17,000 troops. It is unfair to think that the EU is going to do something without the cooperation of MONUC. An operation alone by the EU would not make any sense, and certainly would not be accepted by the UN. With the resolution of the Security Council asking for 3000 more troops in cooperation with all the member states within the UN, and MANUC this underlines

the overall willingness to collaborate mutually. Nonetheless, I do not think the situation is mature enough at this point to send forces alone under the umbrella of a UN operation.

There is an open cooperation with MANUC and it is constantly under review weekly to decide on possible actions to be taken on intelligence, on issues that are materially important to them, but not with forces on the ground.

The question on the humanitarian aspects is on the agenda every day. It is not only about money but making sure that the food gets to the people concerned.

It has been considered to do something on the ground at some of the airports, cities etc, but this has always to be done in association with MANUC. We have a lot of contacts with the DPKO leaders (Department of Peace keeping Operations) and a debate is currently taking place in New York. Without a doubt it is important to keep in contact with the UN to lead this process.

The other question you have placed on Battle groups. This, as you know, is a very important debate which is taking place in the European Union. The Battle Group is a force which has a rapidity of deployment, which has a size of 1,500 people and is multinational. These are the three elements. The debate was about the usual Battle Group as a reserve or as a rapid reaction force. This debate continues to take place in the European Union. There are countries that think much more of it as a reserve force and others that think it has to be used when it is needed. But in any case, this debate was very intense in the last Ministerial Defence meeting under the French president has not been completely resolved. It is true that a big question is 'if we do not use it now, when?'. What circumstances will require rapid reaction, not a big force, a more sophisticated force, that is one of the forces that is deployed already by the United Nations. This is a big debate which is taking place now and which has not been finished. It requires that, and you know the Battle Group 'Rotate', they are the leading Battle Group that rotate from countries to countries. There are countries that have been much more inclined to use one of the models and there are countries that are more inclined to use the second model, the Model of Reserve. The Battle Group which are at our disposal now belong to countries that are in general more on their Reserve Mode than on the other mode. I had a meeting with a Military Committee at the level of Chiefs of Military Staff not long ago and they continue to debate this but they think we have to come to a conclusion to this debate. Otherwise, countries that have made a tremendous effort to adapt their armour force to this model will develop not quite frustration but a sentiment that the resources that they have, have not been used properly. This requires clarification.

On the question of DRC participation it will have in any case to be performed within the context of the United Nations incorporated with MONUC. I don't think that any other operation outside this MONUC will be possible nor desirable because it would be to a certain extent to get out of the scheme of the United Nations which has now the most important operation on the ground ever.

The third question you put concerned Iran. This is a very important question and is one of the most important issues that we will be confronted with in the current period of time.

The position of the European Union now is that it is for a diplomatic solution and it defends the double-track approach. This means an approach that involves negotiation, with the hand extended always, another which is action in New York. The success of the doubletrack approach has not been 100%.

Let me remind you of the latest part, at the end of June/early July we presented a new proposal upgrading the one that had been presented two years before in 2006. It is an excellent proposal. It is a proposal that is read carefully, it contains a lot of content.

The second thing we agreed is that if in the case that they do not move there we will continue with the actions in New York. We had a meeting in New York in the margin of the General Assembly and the resolution was approved, this was a very important resolution. It did not go into new sanctions but it repeated the whole content of sanctions signed by every country of the six countries, there are five permanent members plus Germany plus the European Union.

This was very important because that meeting took place after the Georgian crisis. Many people thought at that point that it would be impossible to maintain the unity of the six countries, including Russia and China. This was achieved, which is very important.

What do we expect now?

There was a meeting during my trip to Tehran before the Summer, a meeting in July in Geneva with Dr. Jalily and myself. We were not satisfied with all of the responses we got to the questions we put. They put some questions which have now been responded to. There has been an exchange of letters from September to today, there may be a meeting before the end of the year in 2008, first with our deputies and then maybe with Dr. Jalily and myself and we have to wait now for the position of the new administration in the United States.

The statements of the President Elect, Obama is clear in that he wants to get more engaged. We appreciate this statement hugely, more engagement from the United States.

We would like to maintain the format because it is very important to maintain in the scheme other countries, not only European countries but also China and Russia. Without engagement from China and Russia it would be very difficult to resolve these problems. The problem is that a new nuclear power should not be allowed in that part of the world. This does not mean that Iran would not have the right to produce electricity, this is something that nobody questions. It is one thing to produce energy but it is another to go beyond. What does 'beyond' mean and why are we so controlled?

Why is there more control today than a month ago? A few days ago, the last report from the Agency of Vienna was published. The number of centrifuges that are being put in place increases, the level of low and rich uranium in kg increases, it is now around 450 kg, which is not enough to produce an engine but we are reaching levels that are rather uncomfortable. It is very important to maintain this position in order to keep the negotiations or the double-track alive. If the double-track does not maintain life, this means unity of the six countries, etc, the possibilities are others, possibilities that go against what we have as a global strategy which is to solve this question by diplomacy. This will be on the agenda in a very intense and strong manner in the months ahead. Elections in Tehran will take place from 2009. We have to be intelligent to see how we will handle the electoral process in Tehran and the increased pressure on the double-track approach which must be maintained.

On Georgia, the EUMM are there. They are doing a very good job. The mission in Georgia is a very, very important mission. Sometimes things that are done bottom-up are not appreciated because the bottom-up actions are less known and make less news than the top-down. The bottom-up approaches in this particular mission have been fundamental.

The Georgian Government are satisfied with how things have been carried out, discretely, in good co-operation with everybody, obtaining what was hoped to obtain in this phase in a very subtle manner. Very good and sophisticated people were deployed on the ground very rapidly. In two weeks people were on the ground, with all the equipment which is quite an important achievement of co-ordination among the member states of the European Union. The Russian forces withdrew before the withdrawal date arrived and all of the check points had disappeared.

We have to recognise ourselves that we are doing a very good, discrete job. If you put this together with the Geneva Conference which is moving, for the first time the Georgians and the Russians have been at the same table talking.

Have all the problems been solved? No, but a couple of months ago it could never have been imagined that this would have taken place. Not everything is resolved but the mechanism to begin to resolve this very complicated problem that will be present for many years in the future has been put in place. It is better to have this problem controlled; to have it in the political scheme around the table than not.

There will be a NATO summit in 2009. This will be an important summit taking place in Europe. It will be the first summit of NATO with the new President participating. The revision of the strategic concept of NATO will probably not be finished by this summit.

There will probably be an interim document but it will not be the final, new, strategic concept of NATO, this will be done later down the road. It will be an important summit because it will take place in Europe. Important decisions will be taken before this summit in particular one which will affect very importantly the essence of Europe. France will probably be back on the military structure before the summit.

Important decisions will have to be taken about regional issues, and how to evolve the EAPC, or the Partnership for Peace Schemes in NATO and therefore also the relationship between NATO and the European Union. It cannot be expected that the full new, strategic concept of NATO will be finalised in that summit.

As far as what you call the European Pillar, there are things that have to be said and others that have to be done. There is nothing that prevents European countries from taking decisions on issues that pertain to security. It would be more difficult to put a tag and say here are two pillars. Nothing prevents the European countries to co-ordinate better their actions. Before we look for tags, lets take actions.

La question de la réunion du G-group à Washington est très importante. Le fait que la première réunion postérieure à la crise se soit tenue au-delà du G8 est très significatif pour nous-mêmes et pour le monde. Il est tout à fait fondamental de mettre autour de la table la Chine, l'Inde et d'autres pays.

En outre, la préparation de la prochaine réunion, qui aura lieu fin avril, sera assurée par trois pays: la Corée du sud, le Royaume-Uni et le Brésil. Ainsi, pour la première fois, le sommet qui réglera la question des finances du monde sera préparé par ces trois pays, dont deux sont émergents. C'est un changement de mentalité très important.

Comment faire à l'avenir sur le plan de la géométrie? Je ne crois pas que le G20 pourrait remplacer le G7 ou le G8 dans tous les domaines de la vie collective. Je ne sais toutefois pas si le G20 sera la dimension adéquate pour régler les problèmes de terrorisme, de changement climatique, etc. En tout cas, pour ce qui est de la crise financière, ce sont ces pays qui devront être convoqués en vue de régler les choses.

Comment faire pour l'Union? Celle-ci a deux options: soit celle de continuer à parler avec le G8+ ou le G7+, avec la pression d'autres pays qui aimeraient faire partie de ce cercle, soit celle de commencer à penser sérieusement à la possibilité de se présenter sur la scène internationale avec la voix de l'Union. Ce sera éventuellement nécessaire.

Je crois que les pays tiers auront tendance à dire aux Européens qu'ils sont surreprésentés. On constate d'ailleurs que cette pression commence à s'exercer très clairement. Il faut réfléchir à la manière d'avoir plus de poids sans avoir plus de membres. Les autres États membres et les pays émergents n'accepteront plus une représentation du monde occidental aussi nombreuse.

Voici un exemple: au Fonds monétaire international, huit directeurs émanent de nos pays. Il faut faire un peu de place pour la Chine, l'Inde ou le Brésil. Qui le fera? Nous devons réfléchir à cela entre nous, mais la discussion sera difficile.

Vous avez demandé comment s'effectuera la relation entre les G22, 20, 18, 17 ou 16 et les Nations unies. Je ne crois pas que la géométrie G puisse englober toutes les responsabilités de la communauté internationale. Certains éléments figurent dans les traités de nature internationale. Il est impensable que des pays n'ayant pas de relations juridiques entre eux puissent prendre des décisions dans des domaines impliquant la paix, l'action militaire ou la gestion de crises, du moins dans l'immédiat. Nous pouvons éventuellement l'envisager dans le cadre du Conseil de sécurité élargi, mais la relation contractuelle des Nations unies est tout à fait fondamentale et il faut la maintenir.

Comment travailler entre nous? Il existe plusieurs manière de coopérer à la formation de la conscience collective de l'Union. L'Eurogroupe et le Conseil européen se réuniront avant le deuxième sommet. Nous travaillons dans cette direction qui est selon moi la bonne. Nous devons en effet organiser des réunions afin que tout le monde se sente vraiment impliqué dans les décisions qui seront prises par certains pays de l'Union dans les enceintes de réflexion. Nous devons continuer à réfléchir et nous demander comment gérer la géométrie variable et les dossiers de la vie internationale. Je ne crois pas qu'il seront traités selon la même géométrie. Il est toutefois difficile de dire quelle sera la solution mais nous devons au moins y réfléchir.

J'en viens à la question relative à la proposition du président Medvedev visant à l'adoption d'un nouveau traité sur la sécurité en Europe. Il s'agit d'une question encore très vague. Nous avons toutefois accepté de commencer à en parler, tout d'abord de manière informelle. Une réunion de l'OSCE aura lieu au début de

décembre à Helsinki. Un premier échange d'idées y est prévu durant le déjeuner. Y prendront part les pays de l'Union européenne, les États-Unis, le Canada, la Russie et les pays d'Asie centrale. Ce sera donc un moment intéressant. Cela ne signifie pas que nous réglerons tous les problèmes ou que nous sommes d'accord avec toutes les initiatives de la Russie. Faire un geste et montrer que nous sommes prêts à discuter sont des démarches constructives. Nous verrons comment les choses se dérouleront. Il s'agit toutefois d'un premier geste positif vis-à-vis de la Russie. Néanmoins, les structures actuelles devront se maintenir. Nous ne voyons pas la nécessité de les modifier. Nous sommes toutefois ouverts à la discussion au sujet des autres idées russes éventuelles. Il est important que les Américains, les Canadiens et les pays d'Asie centrale y participent. L'OSCE est en tous cas le cadre le plus efficace pour une discussion de cette nature.

Nous devons réfléchir, en tant qu'Européens mais aussi en collaboration avec les États-Unis, à la question de l'Afghanistan. Primo, nous devons faire pression sur le gouvernement Karzaï qui devrait être plus efficace. Des élections devront avoir lieu en juin ou juillet 2009. Secundo, il convient d'engager les autres pays de la région. Je pense au Pakistan mais aussi aux autres. Nous convoquerons probablement une réunion avec l'Afghanistan et ses voisins. Tertio, la lutte contre la drogue est fondamentale car il est impossible de pacifier les *narcostates*. Quarto, il faut lutter contre le terrorisme et défendre la sécurité de l'Afghanistan.

Sur la question pachtoune, je crois que vous avez raison. Il faut mettre en oeuvre un processus plus "inclusif". J'étais à Ryad il y a deux semaines. J'y ai eu de longues et franches conversations avec le roi d'Arabie saoudite. Comme vous le savez, c'est le pays qui manifeste le plus de bonne volonté à l'égard de ce type de négociation et de conversation. L'Arabie est disposée à aller dans cette direction. Mais ce pays voudrait avoir des éclaircissements sur les objectifs des Pachtoune et des talibans. Mais je crois qu'il faut travailler de cette manière. Toutes les autorités militaires de tous les pays, y compris celles de l'Otan, ont dit clairement que la solution doit être trouvée par la politique. Néanmoins, la sécurité reste en tout cas un élément tout à fait fondamental. Il faut donc trouver un équilibre entre la priorité de la sécurité et le déroulement de l'action politique.

Je suis presque sûr qu'il y aura des mouvements dans cette direction, qu'il y aura des contacts, des négociations entre talibans modérés, entre Pachtoune. Lorsque j'étais dans cette région, j'ai passé des heures avec des hommes politiques pachtoune laïques, élus aux dernières élections. Ils ne se sentent pas à l'aise non plus. Il faut les associer à la discussion. Les Pachtoune aimeraient qu'il y ait une solution pacifique, diplomatique. Depuis les dernières élections au Pakistan, il y a au parlement une représentation des pachtoune laïques de la frontière.

01.11 Josy Dubié, sénateur (Ecolo): Ils ont gagné les élections.

01.12 Javier Solana: C'est probablement le résultat le plus important de ces élections. Il faut les incorporer dans les discussions. J'ai donc un petit peu d'espoir en raison de la volonté d'engagement de pays tiers comme l'Arabie saoudite. Mais c'est à ces pays et aux Pachtoune à faire des démarches. Ce n'est pas notre rôle. Si nous commençons à le faire, nous nous tromperons très probablement. Il faut créer les conditions de la négociation mais ce n'est pas à nous de trouver les solutions. Lorsque je dis "nous", je parle de l'ensemble des pays de l'Union. Certains d'entre eux sont davantage enclins à faire des démarches. Je crois que ce serait une grande erreur. La discussion doit se dérouler entre Afghans.

À Mme Durant, je rappelle notre position sur le tribunal pénal international: nous faisons tout ce que nous pouvons pour le soutenir non seulement dans le dossier de la RDC mais aussi pour le Soudan, etc. C'est difficile. Comment contribuer à la pacification? C'est une question théorique qui reste ouverte. Mais je crois que tout le monde travaille dans la bonne direction dans les meilleures intentions.

Concerning Lebanon, what happened on May 4th was extremely important in Lebanon. I was very happy to be there to see what happened physically when the President was elected. A President had not been elected for a long period of time. It was very impressive to see the Emir of Qatar chairing this meeting.

On one side of the corridor were the ambassadors of Saudi Arabia and Egypt and on the other side were the ambassadors of Iran and Syria. And there was the Emir of Qatar in Lebanon. During all the speeches it was fascinating to see the body language. When the Egyptians and the Saudis applauded the Iranians and Syrians did not applaud. It was very interesting. But at the end the President was elected and from then on

everything has gone ok.

He visited Syria and Saudi Arabia. The diplomatic relationships have been re-established. This is a very important change. Something to think about is that this was achieved with Qatar, a small country in the Gulf with a lot of money, oil and gas, that nobody expected would be able to capitalise that agreement.

The role of Iran is also important. It is true that Iran acts through proxies: it uses Hamas, it uses Hezbollah etc. but sometimes those organisations act autonomously. It is important to recognise the role of Iran in the region.

With Iran we will not get engaged until clarity has been given concerning the nuclear problem.

Secondly it cannot be forgotten that Iran has a conflict with the Sunni countries. The Sunni-Shia is a battle that goes back centuries. This complicates the issues in the region. In Sharm-el-Sheik I had a meeting with the Gulf countries plus Egypt plus Morocco and Jordan on the question of Iran. This was an important and interesting meeting because sometimes we have to really get engaged with them and explain our policies concerning Iran to them as they are very concerned that we will one day take decisions that do not take into consideration the interests of the countries on the Gulf with the Sunnis. The Sunni-Shia line is a very important line which needs to be taken into consideration.

Concerning DRC, the role of the African Union is very important. Every day the African Union plays a more important role. The leadership of the African Union of Dr. Ping is doing very well. The new Member of the Commission of the African Union in charge of security is an Algerian. He is very solid, knows the dossiers very well and is working very well.

The only problem is that sometimes with the Africans their excessive sentiment of ownership can make it difficult to co-operate. It is thought that as time goes by this sentiment may diminish and the co-operation will be more constructive. It is fundamental that a solid relationship exists with the African Union. There are two more issues, Somalia is one, which are extremely important.

Pour la Géorgie, je ne pense pas que nous puissions utiliser l'expression "guerre froide". Sans être d'accord avec elle, nous devons comprendre les sentiments de la Russie des années 1990. Des mesures significatives ont été prises. Des dossiers doivent être réglés en coopération avec la Russie: la sécurité régionale, la sécurité de la Russie, comme les *Missiles Defense*, et la coopération entre l'Union européenne et la Russie dans tous les domaines et pas seulement celui de l'énergie. Pour nous, la Russie est à la fois un voisin et un partenaire stratégique. Sans la Russie, aucun dossier mondial ne pourra être résolu. Il sera très difficile de faire avancer les choses sans elle.

La question du voisinage est difficile. L'Union européenne devrait se mettre d'accord pour équilibrer les relations de stratégie et de voisinage. Certains considèrent la Russie comme un voisin, d'autres ne la voient que comme un partenaire stratégique. Nous devons trouver l'équilibre entre les deux visions si nous voulons maintenir l'unité de l'Union européenne.

Le premier débat concernant l'Ukraine et la Géorgie aura lieu début décembre à la réunion ministérielle de l'Otan. Le deuxième se fera au sommet d'avril 2009. Il est peu probable que la situation dans les deux pays se soit améliorée entre-temps. Vous serez amenés à donner votre avis lors des Conseils de l'Otan.

Concerning Minister of Defence Meetings there are two every semester, one is with the Minister of Defence alone and the other is with the Minister of Defence with the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Crisis management is not only a military question, crisis management is something wider and therefore to have moments when the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs get together is important. The idea that there should be a formation of Ministers should be supported. This is contemplated in the Treaty and is a decision that may be taken before the Treaty. In the Treaty the spirit was eventually to have a Minister of Defence.

The Lisbon Treaty has to be put in place otherwise it is going to be difficult in many of the areas spoken about today, starting with the economy, trade and so on. The sooner the better the Lisbon Treaty is put in place.

I do not think I will see a European Army in my political life. It is important to move in the direction of better coordination every day. It is vital to have the Agency. The Defence Agency is now with us by chance. It is supposed to be in the Treaty but it was approved in the European Council and this was used to put it in place. This is a catalytic mechanism for moving in this direction.

The most important effort has to be performed in capabilities and putting capabilities in place in a coordinated manner. If this is done we will move in this direction and also in the direction of lowering the cost which is more important today than it was yesterday.

Therefore, the mentality of working on capabilities is required rapidly and moving in this direction as soon as possible.

Concerning Chad, you are well informed about the mission there. This has been a success. Let us hope that when the mission ends, there are no problems and that the Sudan-Darfur situation improves.

There is some hope here, the new negotiator is making some progress. It is interesting to see that Qatar is now engaged also in the Darfur-Sudan issue. They have taken an important responsibility here.

The same thing can be said concerning New York. There is no voice for the European Union in the Security Council. In any case, some progress is made when we work and act. Foreign Policy for the European Union is not only to spread our values or to try to spread our values but the way we do things is very important to know who we are. The more we act collectively outside, the more united we will be inside. This is one of the important values of the Common Foreign Security Policy, not only that you act outside but that what we believe are good values are spread, how we try to do so without imposing these on anybody but at the same time by acting together, we become closer, we have a clearer picture of who we are.

Therefore, it will be easier to get into the usual europeanisation of policies. This is an important thing that has to be maintained. If we spend time without acting in the world we lose part of our identity.

Before I finish, it is a pleasure to be here to have this kind of exchange of views. We have to move. When we talk about the situation in the world of today, it is a demand not only internally among our fellow citizens but a demand on the world for Europe to think, for Europe to act, for Europe to reunite. Let us try to do this. This is a tremendous challenge and the first real one is to get the Lisbon Treaty in place. This would be a fantastic step in the right direction and the opposite would probably be a step backwards.

De vergadering wordt gesloten om 12.20 uur.

La séance est levée à 12.20 heures.