



HOUSE OF LORDS

European Union Committee

32nd Report of Session 2006–07

**Current
Developments in
European Foreign
Policy: Kosovo**

Report with Evidence

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The Members of the Sub-Committee which carried out this inquiry (Foreign Affairs, Defence and Development Policy, Sub-Committee C) are:

Lord Anderson of Swansea	Lord Lea of Crondall
Lord Boyce	Lord Roper (Chairman)
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The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5791.

The Committee's email address is euclords@parliament.uk

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NOTE: References in the text of the report are as follows:
(Q) refers to a question in oral evidence

Current Developments in European Foreign Policy: Kosovo

REPORT

1. The Committee asked the Minister for Europe, Rt Hon Geoff Hoon MP, to give evidence on the most recent developments in Kosovo. We thank the Minister for his time.
2. In this Report we make available, for the information of the House, the oral evidence given to Sub-Committee C (Foreign Affairs, Defence and Development Policy) by the Minister for Europe, accompanied by Mr Michael Tatham, Co-ordinator Western Balkan Group, and Mr Martin Shearman, Head of CFSP Group, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, on 17 May 2007.
3. Key topics in the evidence are:
 - The EU's role in assisting to resolve the situation in Kosovo in the recent past and in the future (QQ 2, 6);
 - The status of Kosovo and the Ahtisaari plan (QQ 3, 7, 11);
 - The importance of the prospect of EU membership in the reform process in a number of countries in the Western Balkans (QQ 3, 4);
 - The International Community Representative, and EU Representation in Kosovo (QQ 10–12, 15–16);
 - The Serbian minority in Kosovo and community relations (QQ 11–12, 17–21);
 - The future of institutions and politics (QQ 17–20);
 - Education (Q 21);
 - The civilian European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) mission and training of personnel (QQ 22–27);
 - The NATO operation (QQ 28, 29);
 - The military presence of Serbia and Russia (QQ 30–33);
 - The Russian role (QQ 33–35);
 - Mission funding (Q 36–39).

APPENDIX 1: SUB-COMMITTEE C (FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY)

The Members of the Sub-Committee which conducted this Inquiry were:

Lord Anderson of Swansea
Lord Boyce
Lord Chidgey
Lord Crickhowell
Lord Hamilton of Epsom
Lord Hannay of Chiswick
Lord Lea of Crondall
Lord Roper (Chairman)
Lord Swinfen
Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
Lord Tomlinson

Declaration of Interests

A full list of Members' interest can be found in the Register of Lords Interests:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld/ldreg.htm>

APPENDIX 2: REPORTS

Recent Reports from the Select Committee

Evidence from the Minister for Europe on the Outcome of the December European Council (4th Report, Session 2006–07, HL Paper 31)

Government Responses: Session 2004–05 (6th Report, Session 2006–07, HL Paper 38)

The Commission's 2007 Legislative and Work Programme (7th Report, Session 2006–07, HL Paper 42)

Evidence from the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany on the German Presidency (10th Report, Session 2006–07, HL Paper 56)

The Commission's Annual Policy Strategy for 2008 (23rd Report, Session 2006–07, HL Paper 123)

Further Enlargement of the EU: Follow-up Report (24th Report, Session 2006–07, HL Paper 125)

Session 2006–2007 Reports prepared by Sub-Committee C

Current Developments in European Defence Policy (1st Report, HL Paper 17)

Current Developments in European Foreign Policy (16th Report, HL Paper 76)

Session 2005–2006 Reports prepared by Sub-Committee C

The European Union's Role at the Millennium Review Summit (11th Report, HL Paper 35)

Review of Scrutiny: Common Foreign and Security Policy (19th Report, HL Paper 100)

Current Developments in European Foreign Policy (26th Report, HL Paper 124)

Current Developments in European Defence Policy (27th Report, HL Paper 125)

Seventh Framework Programme for Research (33rd Report, HL Paper 182) (prepared jointly with Sub-Committee B)

The EU and Africa: Towards a Strategic Partnership (34th Report, HL Paper 206)

Current Developments in European Defence Policy (35th Report, HL Paper 209)

Current Developments in European Foreign Policy (43rd Report, HL Paper 228)

Europe in the World (48th Report, HL Paper 268)

The EU and Africa: Follow-up Report (49th Report, HL Paper 269)

Minutes of Evidence

TAKEN BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EUROPEAN UNION
(SUB-COMMITTEE C)

THURSDAY 17 MAY 2007

Present	Crickhowell, L	Roper, L (Chairman)
	Hamilton of Epsom, L	Swinfen, L
	Hannay of Chiswick, L	Tomlinson, L
	Lea of Crondall, L	

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: RT HON GEOFFREY HOON, a Member of the House of Commons, Minister for Europe, MR MICHAEL TATHAM, Co-ordinator Western Balkan Group, MR MARTIN SHEARMAN, Head of CFSP Group, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, examined.

Q1 Chairman: Minister, thank you very much indeed for coming to see us and for having suggested the idea that we should have this session on Kosovo, which obviously is of considerable topical importance. Perhaps you would like to introduce your colleagues.

Mr Hoon: Yes. First of all, could I say how grateful I am for this opportunity; I think it is a useful innovation that you have made. Could I introduce Michael Tatham, who is officially the Western Balkans Group Co-ordinator, but it is fair to say he has probably forgotten more about Kosovo than I know, so he is a very considerable expert on the subject, and Martin Shearman, who specialises, in particular, on ESDP questions, so when I am struggling on that I will ask him to assist.

Q2 Chairman: I wonder whether you would like to start with your own description of the European Union's general approach to the Kosovo question.

Mr Hoon: I think the first point is to say that this is self-evidently a European issue, and I think it is right that the EU has assumed a degree of responsibility for resolving the situation there. The Balkans is very much part of the Continent of Europe and it is right that we should try and deal with it. I think it is important, given the recent history of Kosovo, that we not only look to the way in which we have been able to help militarily, in terms of providing an administration, as well as now looking to the future in terms of status and rebuilding what was a pretty difficult area in the immediate aftermath of the entry of British and other soldiers. I think, financially, we will be looking to the European Union to provide significant help, and I think it is right that we accept that responsibility. Michael, I do not know if you want to add anything to that?

Mr Tatham: I would say, first of all, in big picture terms, the EU has a vision for the whole Western Balkan region which sees all these countries moving closer down the road towards European integration, and the vital part of achieving that is clearing away the unresolved legacy issues from the conflicts of the 1990s and so playing a leading role in taking the status process forward in Kosovo is an essential accompaniment to that vision. In terms of the EU's more specific posture, the EU has been giving consistent and full support to the UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari in his efforts to take this process forward and, as the Minister said, the EU is bound to take a leading role in settlement implementation and significant preparations are underway so that when the moment comes the EU is ready to meet those responsibilities.

Q3 Lord Lea of Crondall: Can I ask a supplementary to that, Lord Chairman? You mentioned European integration. You did not mention membership, but progress down the road towards movable integration and policy for the whole of the Western Balkans. Belgrade may not take the same view about independence. Do you think that trouble could be brewing again with knock-on effects on other parts if your target is greater European integration? Would there be differences around the Western Balkans in precisely—

Mr Hoon: Clearly Kosovo and its status is a significant issue, inevitably, in Serbian politics. It was an issue in the election and it will continue to be an issue for Serbian politicians, but progress on the European Union is not an issue. I know the President of Serbia quite well, Boris Tadić. He was the Defence Minister when I was the Defence Minister and I keep in touch with him, and, by chance, I spoke to him yesterday because, after many months of very difficult negotiations, they have formed a

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government and it is the prospect of EU membership, ultimately, that continues to drive the reform process, not only in Serbia but in other parts of the Western Balkans. We see that, obviously, in Croatia. The transformation in Macedonia is quite remarkable. I think Paddy Ashdown has said that the only thing holding Bosnia together is the prospect of European integration. So, this is a significant driving force in the politics of the area but, crucially, from our perspective, it drives reform and change—legislative change. Bosnia is changing some of the attitudes, we hope, towards policing and security, and in Serbia, historically, Belgrade was the most European city in that part of Europe and we want Serbia to make the changes that allow it to reach a level that would permit practical steps towards membership of the European Union. So, it is a huge issue and I would not underestimate the significance of it for the politics in places like—

Q4 Lord Lea of Crondall: I am sorry, I totally and absolutely accept that, and I am sure everybody does, but, Kosovan independence, could that throw a rock into the pool in that connection?

Mr Hoon: It is an issue, and it is a sensitive issue for all politicians in Belgrade. I do not believe, though, that it is going to sidetrack the determination of democratic politicians in Belgrade to make progress, not only in relation to the status of Kosovo, but, crucially, in relation to their own European ambitions. It is not either/or.

Q5 Chairman: Could I go back to the initial question about the European Union? The views which you have expressed are certainly those that one has heard from the Presidency. One has heard reports that at some meetings of the Council there have been different accents expressed from different places and some Member States who are less enthusiastic about the approach which you have been outlining.

Mr Hoon: As of today there is unanimity and clear, strong unanimity, even in countries where the political debate perhaps has influenced those kinds of comments in the past. What has been really significant is, even where countries have had those kinds of issues—and I do not think our Spanish counterparts would mind if I mentioned Spain— independence in parts of Spain is a hugely sensitive political issue, they certainly have worried about it, but what has been remarkable about this is that actually overriding those domestic concerns only in one or two countries has been an absolute determination for the European Union to be united, and that has come through in a number of comments, particularly in New York where delegations from the European Union have made clear that this is the absolute agreed position of the European Union and, whatever the domestic politics, that is not going to

get in the way of a consistent approach by Europe, which is very encouraging actually.

Q6 Lord Tomlinson: But the 190 million euro that has been allocated for Kosovo for pre-accession assistance over the years 2007 to 2009 is meant to be a signal of assistance to their European ambitions. It is called pre-accession assistance, as I understand it. Do you think it is significantly different to that which they would have got from the European neighbourhood policy in any case?

Mr Hoon: I cannot really answer that question, because it is highly speculative, but I accept—and I first went to Kosovo in July 1999, and I have been there fairly regularly since in various different capacities—there is a remarkable change. Priština is a bustling city with lots of activity. I accept, if I can answer the question as best I can, that we would have had some continuing financial commitment to Kosovo given the events that had occurred before July 1999. We simply accept this, as I said right at the outset, as part of the European Continent and we have obligations as a result.

Q7 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: Minister, could you just give us a very brief view of the differences between the Ahtisaari plan and what is currently being considered by the Security Council? What changes have been, or are likely to be, made in the process of the negotiations there, or is it essentially the same plan? Could you comment a bit on the fairly complex institutional position of the civilian representative otherwise known as the EU Special Representative double-hatted, both in respect of the accountability of that person to the Kosovars, their Parliament, their elected President, and so on, and also the line of command between the EU Council and this person, who is, if one understands it properly, responsible to a wider audience and to you as well as to the EU?

Mr Hoon: I will deal with the more political questions that you ask at the outset and leave Michael to deal with the more technical ones on responsibilities. As far as the report is concerned, we broadly believe that it will be supported in New York in its entirety. We do not see any need for there to be a series of amendments or changes. On the other hand, we have always made clear, particularly (if I can say this) to Belgrade, that if there are aspects of the detail perhaps concerned with the position of Serb minorities, local government arrangements in particular areas, then we are not inflexible. We would look at those kinds of changes if it made it easier to accept the plan. So, broadly, we expect that this will remain. After all, it is a UN proposal, it is a UN sponsored document and we expect it to be debated by the UN in those terms.

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Q8 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: And approved?*Mr Hoon:* We hope so, yes.**Q9 Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** And the Russian attitude is mysterious!*Mr Hoon:* I have had regular conversations with Russian foreign ministers, as have a number of government ministers. Others are also engaging with Russia. No doubt the Russians have some reservations, but I think we are making progress with them. His Lordship will know even better than I that the Russian negotiating style is not one with which we might use the words flexibility and emollience, but they negotiate hard, and we are having those kinds of discussions with them.**Q10 Chairman:** Will it be discussed tomorrow in Samara?*Mr Hoon:* Yes. Michael, I will give you the difficult question rather than the easy one!*Mr Tatham:* I will try and answer the technical aspects, but let me know if you feel there are areas that I have not covered. The International Community Representative (the ICR as a shorthand) is also going to be the EU Special Representative, so it is a rather complicated arrangement. In his ICR capacity—I would slightly turn round the premise of your question—his accountability is not so much to the people or the Parliament or Government of Kosovo, in actual fact he is overseeing the conduct of those institutions, so it will be a bit weird for him to be accountable to them. He will be accountable to an international steering group which would be established underneath the Ahtisaari proposals, which would consist of essentially those countries and institutions which are currently members of the Contact Group—the US, Russia, France, Germany, the UK, Italy, the EU and NATO. In his capacity as EUSR he would be reporting to the General Affairs Council.**Q11 Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** Could I follow that up a little bit. What will his relationship be to the Commission Delegation in Priština, which will be, presumably, disbursing very substantial sums, 190 million, or whatever it is, and to what extent does he have overall co-ordinating authority over them? As you know, this Committee in an earlier manifestation suggested that the double-hatting that took place in Macedonia had been a great success and that one should be prepared to consider it elsewhere, because it is really important to avoid a situation where you have turf fighting and disagreement about that. Secondly, you did a little bit brush aside the problem of accountability to the Kosovar institutions. It is, surely, rather different from Bosnia, where at the time of the establishment of the International Representative there were not any really properly

functioning national institutions in Kosovo. You have got a Parliament and a President. Do you really not think that saying that this guy or this lady has absolutely no accountability to these institutions is a recipe for some considerable friction further down the line?

Mr Hoon: If I deal with that political point and Michael can deal with the double-hatting point. Clearly, we would ideally like the ICR not to have ever to exercise his or her powers, on the basis that the administration, the Government, in Kosovo implements the Ahtisaari proposals, and there is no difficulty; but in a sense the issue is not accountability as far as Kosovars are concerned, it is really to provide a long-stop, a degree of security for all of the people of Kosovo, in particular the Serbian minority, that the complex balance that Ahtisaari has set out is maintained in practice as well as in theory. I think that the role will be important in allowing people to recognise that there is somewhere else to go if the Government of Kosovo does not, in practice, fulfil the arrangements set out by Ahtisaari; so it is the other way round in a sense.**Q12 Lord Hannay of Chiswick:** I think the word “accountability” was wrong. I am sorry. I can understand why your feeling is not positive towards that?*Mr Hoon:* These jobs really work on the basis of personal style and personal relationships, and I think it is important (and I think it is recognised in Ahtisaari’s proposals) that there is a real recognition of the sensitivity of the importance of the Serbs believing that they have a role and a place in Kosovan society. My experience whenever I have I visited is, by and large, British troops have been co-located with Serbian communities, because they still remain, I am sure, to this day somewhat nervous about their future situation. In a sense we are now trying to move away from that military guarantee, although it still will be there (there will still be large numbers of soldiers in Kosovo) to something that is more constitutional. I think the aftermath will be fulfilling that role, at least in the transitional period. Michael, do you want to do the double-hatting?*Mr Tatham:* Yes. Can I just add to what the Minister said. You referred to the high rep in Bosnia, and I think there is an awareness that this is a different role and that it is very much a sort of backseat role in respect of day-to-day government. The expectation would be that that would be taken forward by the Kosovo Government with the ICR having no role. His responsibility would purely be for settlement and implementation, and even there, if the Kosovo Government was carrying forward all its commitments under the Ahtisaari proposals, he would be taking a back seat. His powers to remedy breaches would only be used *in extremis*, where

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necessary, to uphold the settlement. You asked about the Commission Office and the relationship between the ICR, EUSR and the Commission Office. At the minute it is envisaged that the Commission Office will be a separate office with a separate head. I think the thinking there is that, if you were, in effect, to triple-hat this position so that it was both ICR, EUSR and a Commission head, that would be risking a degree of overload in addition to the big responsibilities for overseeing settlement implementation. You would be having significant responsibilities in respect of the 200 million Euros which Lord Tomlinson referred to earlier; so I think the feeling is that it makes sense to keep the two roles separate for now. However, the point you are making about co-ordination is recognised and the ICR, EUSR is clearly designated in the Ahtisaari proposals as the co-ordinator of all the international presences in Kosovo—the Commission, the OSCE, NATO—and a committee is foreseen in the proposals, which the ICR would head, which would allow that co-ordination to take place in a systematic way.

Mr Shearman: I just wanted to add on double-hatting that I think Lord Hannay is quite right, the arrangements in Macedonia have worked very well, but the circumstances are quite different in that you have the bulk of the responsibility for implementation of EU policy taken on by the Commission. There was still a residual security concern, which meant it made sense to maintain an EU special rep, but also to bring them together on the grounds that that residual foreign security policy concern was probably not great enough to justify the continued employment of a dedicated special representative. In the case of Kosovo, in addition to the co-ordinating committee on the ground that Michael has talked about, you will also have the co-ordination of Brussels that would be ensured by Solana, to whom the special representative will report, and by Ollie Rehn, to whom the Head of the Commission Delegation will report. So those arrangements—we will see how they work—should be quite robust and should ensure the co-ordination between the community and the CFSP activity that we need to see on the ground.

Q13 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: Perhaps we could just express a note of scepticism about your confidence on that. Of course, presumably this is a purely transitional arrangement, if one assumes that some kind of institutional changes in the foreign policy sector are going to come about in the next two or three years, in which case they will almost certainly bring about the triple-hatting and the unification of the Brussels machinery. That is what is likely to be proposed.

Mr Hoon: I would not get too far down that particular road, if I were you. I know what you are referring to!

Q14 Chairman: Lord Hannay, that is outside the scope of today's meeting which is discussing Kosovo as it is.

Mr Hoon: I think Lord Hannay is planning for a career in journalism!

Q15 Chairman: While we are on this group of questions, may I ask one thing. There has been a certain amount of discussion of the possible name of the ICR, and a senior Netherlands diplomat has been referred to. Is that yet public?

Mr Hoon: I do not think it is public, but it is certainly well discussed.

Mr Tatham: I think, again, I am going to resort to technicalities here. Under the terms of the Ahtisaari proposals it is the International Steering Group which appoints the ICR. So, until the settlement implementation begins, you cannot start that procedure. The Ahtisaari proposals also say that the International Steering Group will make this appointment after consultation with the EU, and, you are absolutely right, there has been a certain amount of discussion within the EU and I think there is broad measure of consensus around an individual who is a Netherlands diplomat, as you said, but you cannot really go much further than that because of the stage we are at in this process.

Q16 Chairman: How similar to the PIC will this new structure be, this international group of countries? Will it have the same composition?

Mr Tatham: No. I think it will be quite similar in its role, but it will be much smaller. Like I said, Ahtisaari's recommendation is that it should be restricted to broadly what is now the membership of the Contact Group, which would mean that it is a tighter body.

Chairman: Thank you very much.

Q17 Lord Lea of Crondall: This is question five, in case you do not know where we are. What worries some of us, Minister, is that there could be repercussions. We do not quite know whether there would be repercussions around Serbia, or even *Republika Srpska*, possibly on the edge of Macedonia, with people still murmuring about greater Albania. How do you think that community relations could be assisted in some way? This is not a question of accountability, it is a question of the role in hearts and minds *à la* Northern Ireland, or wherever, and here you have two ways of looking at it, I suppose. One is that some people think it is a bit Albanian and other people think that it cauterises the Albanian dimension. Could you comment on that

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and the spill over into the sensitivities, if not paranoia, in some parts of Serbia that here we have been told that the federal system in Bosnia is being strengthened following Dayton, you have got independence for Montenegro and, bit by bit, you are creating some discontent that it could have political consequences?

Mr Hoon: I accept that this process is an exercise of the international community's judgment about the best way forward for what has been a very difficult part of Europe in the very recent past, but there are necessarily implications for that course of action, I accept. I must say, stating the obvious, there are necessarily implications in not taking action and, in trying to weigh the balance, we are trying to move in a direction that avoids the kinds of awful conflicts that we have seen very recently in that part of the world, conflicts, incidentally, in my own experience, of course, that have spilled over beyond the borders of Kosovo. I have recently been again to Macedonia. My previous visit to Macedonia was with British groups engaged in ensuring the trouble there did not get out of hand. So, there are necessarily consequences of what we do. I believe that perhaps the key to this, and it is at the heart of Marti Ahtisaari's proposals, is a real guarantee for the Serbian minority in Kosovo that politically, constitutionally and legally they will be treated in an entirely even-handed way, albeit by an administration inevitably dominated by Kosovar Albanians. I think that is a part of it, and if we can get that right, then I think that this is the right way forward.

Q18 Lord Lea of Crondall: You do not think that the politics will be purely ethnic politics in the new country?

Mr Hoon: I think so soon after the kind of violence that we sadly saw there, there is going to be a degree of ethnically determined politics—that is true, incidentally, next door in Macedonia—but in establishing a degree of political stability, that allows the opportunity for the development perhaps of ideologically-based parties rather than ethnically-based parties, and I am reasonably confident that that will happen. Your Lordship mentioned Northern Ireland. What we have achieved in Northern Ireland is not a solution, what we have achieved in Northern Ireland is a process, but in that process young people have grown up in Northern Ireland no longer subject to the kinds of traditions that affected their previous generations and they have been able to get on with their lives in the way that young people in other parts of the United Kingdom have got on with their lives.

Q19 Lord Lea of Crondall: Will we be promoting integrated education, something like that?

Mr Hoon: I think we need to find ways of allowing actually the population in Kosovo to do that for themselves, and the whole point of this is to go from very recent conflict to a situation where we stabilise the situation in security terms and then start to allow the institutions to develop, I would hope, on a non-ethnic basis. It will take time. It will take time for mutual self-confidence to develop. Certainly on my visits there, there is still a degree of concern, anxiety and suspicion, particularly amongst the Serbian minority, but do not assume that the Serbian minority is consistent in its view. There are people who realise that they have a future in Kosovo and want to work very closely with Kosovan dominated administration.

Q20 Lord Lea of Crondall: You do not think what I call ethnic politics is actually religious politics?

Mr Hoon: There is inevitably an element of that, yes, and one of the issues for the Serbian minority is the preservation of the monasteries and places of worship that are hugely sensitive to them. On my very first visit to Kosovo I met a Serbian leader who said to me that I needed to bear in mind that his family had been in Kosovo for 600 years. It is not something I have ever forgotten. The Serbian population have rights, have status, have a future and we have to try and assist in the creation of institutions that allow them to participate in the future of their country.

Q21 Chairman: On the education point that was raised by Lord Lea, apart from the problem of two different languages, which does make it rather difficult, would it still be the case that quite a lot of the Serbian education will continue to be financed by Belgrade?

Mr Tatham: If I may, I will answer that question and Lord Lea's at the same time. I think that the integrated education is a very good aspiration for the future. Right now I think that the concern would be that that would actually unsettle the Kosovo Serbs, because what they really want at the minute is reassurance that they will be able to keep their Serb identity under Kosovo's new status, and what the Ahtisaari proposals include is, in Serb dominated municipalities, there is provision for those municipalities to have a measure of responsibility over education, in some cases higher education as well, and, yes, Lord Roper, there is provision under the Ahtisaari proposals for continuing funding, continuing links between Belgrade and these municipalities in areas such as education and health. Obviously, those links need to be regulated and transparent and declared, but, yes, Ahtisaari has been very alive to the importance of keeping those links.

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Q22 Lord Tomlinson: Minister, I would like to turn to the ESDP mission. What do you think will be the main characteristics, the objective structures and activities of the ESDP mission currently being planned for deployment in Kosovo? How long do you think it will take for that mission to deploy once the Council adopts the joint action which it is proposed will establish it?

Mr Hoon: The plan, dealing with the last point first, is for the mission to build up during our 120-day transition period after the Security Council Resolution is passed, assuming that it is, and the Planning Team are making the preparations for that already. The characteristics of the civilian ESDP mission is concerned with rule of law—something like 60% police, 20% involved in the administration of justice, a small element dealing with Customs issues, there will also be a crowd and riot control policing capacity. If I can go back, it is actually pretty consistent with what has been required in Kosovo for some long time, because one of the things that I think was often overlooked in the early days of the troops arriving there was that we needed a civilian administration because most of the administration had gone. There were some very practical problems about law enforcement. Those problems are different now, but, nevertheless, the ambition is to develop an independent, multi-ethnic legal system, police and customs service that is free from political interference and adopts the standards that we see elsewhere in Europe. It is an important part of the transition, and building those institutions, again, I think it vitally important to all people in Kosovo. Do you want to add something to that? My expert is here.

Mr Shearman: No, I have very little to add to that. The role of the mission is to support implementation of the status settlement and, obviously, the rule of law under which the ESDP mission is operated is crucial to providing certainty and security for all Kosovo's inhabitants. So, this will be a major important part of the international community effort to ensure that the implementation of the process works well and works smoothly.

Q23 Lord Tomlinson: Lord Chairman, I took note of those figures: about 60% for police, 20% for rule of law, others for the customs services. Can you give us an indication of 60%, 20% of what? What will be the numbers?

Mr Hoon: My apologies, about 1500.

Q24 Lord Crickhowell: You have described the mission. Are you confident that sufficient properly qualified and trained people will be provided by the Member States and that they will have the competence, and so on, to do their job?

Mr Hoon: It is a fair question, because we have struggled sometimes in the past to get the right kinds of people. I think we have actually had quite a lot of experience since those days, in the sense that I well recall large numbers of soldiers being there and occasionally looking for some of their civilian skills to supplement their military ones, but we have had a lot of experience since 1999 of finding the right kinds of administrative legal skills. It actually affords quite an opportunity often for younger civil servants from different countries to see some perhaps sharper end activity than they might get back home. I think we are rather better at it than we were in 1999.

Mr Shearman: Yes, it is a very good question. This will be the biggest skill in the ESDP mission. The EU has built up quite a good track record of running missions in the policing and rule of law area. It has built up quite a good track record on the identification of the right skills, the training of the personnel and so on, but in quantitative terms this will be an order above. I think we are pretty confident we will get the numbers. We will then need to ensure, of course, or the Union as a whole will need to ensure, that the quality is also there, but the ground work has been done and done very well, I think, through the development of the ESDP capacity over the last decade or so. I understand the concern, but I think we should be cautiously optimistic about the EU's ability to do this and do it well.

Q25 Lord Crickhowell: I have this nice picture of your brightest young civil servants being despatched to Kosovo. Not all of them will be language specialists. In particular, are there going to be arrangements for language teaching, and so on, to assist?

Mr Shearman: I think getting up to fluent Albanian quickly could be a big challenge. There will obviously be a need for local support, particularly on language skills and so on. There is provision in the planning permission for local recruitment of some skills as well, such as interpretation, I think.

Mr Hoon: I might add, the UK envisages contributing 85 civilians to this mission. The process is for Member States to submit individual applications for consideration, and that ensures, we hope, that each individual will have the right skills. There is then a question about ensuring that they have the right induction training, and that means we have completed a training needs assessment to look at how we design that induction training to get the right people with the right skills. So there is a quite lot of planning gone into this already, but it is a perfectly proper and fair question, given the history of this, to ensure that we do get it right.

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Q26 Chairman: The UK has had rather senior people in the unmixed structure in the police and in some of the other fields and sometimes a senior person. Will there be senior UK personnel involved in the EU structures?

Mr Tatham: The process of making these senior level appointments is on-going at the minute, and we are certainly working hard to try and ensure that the UK is well represented at all levels.

Q27 Chairman: Will there be any of the people who have been working, as I say, policing for the OSCE or the UN moving over to the EU if they come from EU Member States?

Mr Tatham: There will be a certain amount of that, yes. I think there is a balance to be got here, and it is sensible to include elements and have a certain element of continuity. Also, I think it is important, in terms of local presentation, that this is seen as a new operation and a new start, but, yes, that is under consideration.

Q28 Chairman: Perhaps I could go on from that to say (and, Minister, you have already referred to this to some extent) that on this whole question the military operation will continue to be a NATO operation, OSCE will have rather reduced functions but will continue acting out those functions. I wonder whether you feel there are going to be satisfactory arrangements. You mentioned in this committee working under the ICR, who will co-ordinate it. Do you feel that is likely to work or do you feel there could be stresses?

Mr Hoon: It is obviously important that it does work, and a great deal of thought and a lot of planning has gone into dealing with the immediate aftermath of the consequences of what we are discussing. Lord Lea pointed out the risks, and there are obvious concerns. With some 17,000 troops on the ground, it ought to be possible to deal with any threats to security and, as I say, that has been planned for some time. Thereafter, it is important that we maintain the co-ordination, as has been described earlier, and I am confident that we can get that right, not least because there have been some very significant improvements in the way in which the military mission operates, far fewer national reservations and a recognition that actually this is a single force for Kosovo that has a job right across the area, and I think that is a big improvement on where we were in 1999 and 2000.

Q29 Chairman: Some of the caveats which existed at that time have been withdrawn, have they?

Mr Hoon: There is a much better understanding of the nature of the responsibility, and I hope that it will not be necessary for British troops to go out from London to deal with problems in parts of Kosovo when there are rather a large number of troops from

other countries sitting not terribly far away. I had to take that decision. I would prefer if my successor does not face the same problem.

Q30 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: I apologise for being out of the room; I had to ask a question before the House. This may have been covered, but when the initial peace process started in Kosovo Serbian troops were playing quite a serious role, were they not, in policing the area? Are there still Serbian troops in Kosovo?

Mr Tatham: No, there are no Serbian troops in Kosovo now.

Q31 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: But there were initially, were there not?

Mr Tatham: No, I think they withdrew in 1999.

Mr Hoon: That is part of the settlement.

Q32 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: Was it, but there are not any there now?

Mr Tatham: You are right, Lord Hamilton, actually that under UNSCR 1244, which was passed in 1999, there was provision for Serb police and possibly military, I am not sure, to come back, but in practice that part of 1244 has not been operationalised.

Mr Hoon: But I remember there was some very useful co-ordination along the borders. Part of the point I was making to Lord Lea earlier is that this is not simply a problem for Kosovo, the concern we have always had is the risk of this spilling over into other countries in that area, and there was some really very good co-ordination with the Serbian military in Serbian areas across the border, and that was very helpful.

Q33 Lord Lea of Crondall: Are the Russians part of this force?

Mr Tatham: The Russians are not part of the international military presence in Kosovo. They used to be, BUT they withdrew—I am not sure when—a few years ago.

Q34 Lord Lea of Crondall: Under OSCE they could, if they wanted, say, “We would like to be involved”?

Mr Tatham: I am talking about the military presence. Russia is obviously a member of OSCE. I imagine, though I do not know this for a fact, that there are Russian nationals included in the OSCE presence in Kosovo.

Mr Hoon: We have not quite extended NATO that far yet.

Q35 Chairman: We have, of course, had Russia playing an important part in Bosnia, I thought?

Mr Hoon: Actually, despite the (how shall I put it) surprise at their arrival at the airport in Priština they actually played quite a positive and constructive role

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and there was very good co-ordination, ultimately, between the various forces there. It presented an interesting and extra dimension to what we were doing.

Q36 Lord Crickhowell: We have had a reference to past funding, and Lord Tomlinson always has the numbers at his finger tips, which I do not. They are supported now by the 2008 budget. There are reports that, not surprisingly, it may be under strain from various competing pressures. Do you have a view as to what the funding both for the mission and for other support might be?

Mr Hoon: If I set out the details, I hope that will be to the assistance of the Committee. The ESDP mission is funded from the CFSP budget and the mission's running costs in 2008 are likely to be around 80 million euros. The Commission's proposal for the 2008 CFSP budget is 200 million euros, an increase of 41 million euros, or around 26%. We judge that that should be sufficient, with the 44 million already committed in 2007, for the final stages of preparation for the mission. The European Commission plans to contribute some 50% of the funding for the ICO, the US 25%, with the remaining 25% split between other donors, including the United Kingdom, but the European Committees are working on Berkel sharing arrangements for Member States based on the OHR model. So, actually, we are reasonably confident that that should be a sound basis financially for the operations that we plan to conduct.

Q37 Lord Tomlinson: One small detail on the reply. Have I understood it correctly that some of the money that is needed will be financed from the community budget and the other will be intergovernmental?

Mr Hoon: Yes.

Mr Shearman: Perhaps I could clarify. The funding of the ESDP mission will come from the CFSP budget chapter of the community budget.

Q38 Lord Tomlinson: The community budget?

Mr Shearman: Yes.

Q39 Lord Tomlinson: And the rest will be intergovernmental contributions?

Mr Shearman: The funding of the ICO, as I understand it—

Mr Hoon: 50%.

Mr Shearman: ---50% will come from the Commission but from a separate budget heading, and, of course, Member States contributing to the ESDP mission will bear the costs of their own staff.

Q40 Chairman: Minister, thank you very much indeed, and to Mr Tatham and Mr Shearman for giving us for what has been very useful information. I hope you feel this idea of having a session concentrating on one topical item is valuable as well as the other more general ones after the half-yearly report.

Mr Hoon: I think it is extremely useful. I am grateful for the thoughtful questions that we have received.

Chairman: We will let you escape in time for other duties. Thank you very much indeed.
