

## Toespraak bij ondertekening EGF-verdrag

Ladies and gentlemen, the moment has finally come: the official signing of the Treaty. As I said earlier, the people of the Legal Sub Group have had an incredible amount of work in drafting this Treaty. I would like to thank them for their work, through the chairwoman and chairman that are present here today. Thank you all, you must be very relieved today.

Dear colleagues, the EGF is still a relatively recent arrival on the international scene. This helps to explain some of the difficulties it encounters. But even so, its development has been remarkable. The signing of the Treaty comes just in time for the start of the first EGF-mission to Bosnia. A milestone for the EGF.

I am informed that the planning process for the mission has seen some initial starting problems. In my view, these problems occurred because both EGF and the EU had to adjust to the new situation, where suddenly, the EGF wanted a role in an ESDP-mission. To solve the problems, the EGF has to win trust from the EU. To win trust, the EGF has to deliver. It is that simple.

As I see it, the first test was the EGF force generation process. This process was organised quickly and smoothly by the Headquarters. I would like to thank Commander Truglio (spr: Troellio) for the work he has done in this respect. And I would like to thank everybody for working in a constructive manner. Through this speedy process, the EGF showed the EU that it can deliver. Rapidly if necessary.

The second test will come in the operational theatre itself. There again, the EGF has to prove that it can deliver and that it is a reliable partner. Let me assure you. I am confident that the EGF will deliver. And I am confident that the EU will ask the EGF next time to deploy to a new mission!

The EU is unique in the many different instruments at its disposal for crisis management. And now, the EGF is one of these instruments. By gaining trust, we can make sure that the EGF will become an important instrument that will be asked to participate.

But, besides gaining trust from the EU, we need to gain the trust of our fellow EU-countries. As the EGF-Presidency, we have tried to strengthen the dialogue with many EU-countries, based on CIMIN-instructions.

Not all countries seek cooperation with the EGF, but all countries will play a role in missions, and a role in the EU- or NATO-decision making process.

It is therefore in the interest of the EGF to keep an open character, and continue dialogue with third countries. In other words, the EGF-partnership and observership serve a purpose. It means getting broad support for the EGF and its activities.

Today, I therefore want to plea strongly for a solution of the current problems that have risen concerning the Romanian and Turkish applications. The EGF simply cannot afford alienating these important gendarmerie countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, with these personal remarks, I would like to conclude my speech. Let us now turn to the official signing of the Treaty.