



Around Europe

Quaker Council for European Affairs

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European Union Reverts to Militarism

In December 2013 the Council of the European Union (a meeting of Heads of Government from all EU Member States) met to look at the future of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The summit identified three priorities: to increase the effectiveness and visibility of EU security policy; to further develop military capabilities; and to strengthen Europe's defence industry. This focus is intended to "bring benefits in terms of growth, jobs and innovation to the broader European industrial sector" ([Conclusions from the European Council](#), 20 December 2013, p2).

Despite calls for a broader security policy [from QCEA](#) and others, the Council pushed forward with the development of military technologies such as [Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems \(drones\)](#) and air-to-air refuelling capacity needed to support airstrikes. Similarly, the Council called for the EU to agree defensive strategies on cyber and maritime security, evidence of a continued 'Fortress Europe' approach. The Council's 26-page concluding document dedicates only one sentence to the need to further develop civilian capabilities within CSDP.

This is particularly perverse given that the EU is currently undertaking 12 civilian missions and only four military operations. The EU also gives nearly 3 billion Euro in bilateral development aid to fragile countries. This scale of contribution deserves a security policy that complements it.

Growing the EU Defence Industry

The Council agreed that EU countries need to expand efforts to ensure EU citizens have the skills required by the defence industry. Following the economic crisis it is not surprising that EU states wish to grow their defence industries, but this should not happen by preparing for military conflict and trading in arms.

QCEA consistently argues that prioritising jobs and growth over all other considerations is repeating the economic mistakes of the past. All EU policy should contribute toward increasing human well-being. A policy of defence industry growth is inconsistent with the [notion of the EU as a peace project](#).

Alternatives to Militarism

Instead of militarisation and support for defence industries, the Council should focus on the root causes of conflict and on civilian peace-building. In 2011 the

European Commission published ['Agenda for Change'](#). This new policy identified the intertwined nature of security with development policy, peace-building, conflict prevention, human rights, and good governance. The Agenda argued that the EU should focus on security challenges in states which are fragile, conflict-affected, or in transition.

However, the conclusions from last December's Council show an almost single-minded focus on militarism. The document makes no reference to peace-building

capabilities such as transitional justice, police reform, or mediation programmes. Instead the



Photo Credit: LA (Phot) Jason Ballard, CC

Latvian troops taking part in a European Union Battle Group exercise, Salisbury Plain, United Kingdom, August 29th 2012

In this issue:

Militarisation in Europe	(p.1)
QCEA Study Tour	(p.2)
Press Freedoms in the West Bank	(p.3)
The TTIP Sunset Clause	(p.5)
QCEA's Action Alerts	(p.7)
Quaker House News	(p.7)
Don't Forget to Have Your Say at the EU	(p.8)



Photo Credit, Guerric, CC



A Neuron Drone at the 'Salon du Bourget' Paris Airshow, June 22nd 2011.

European Council ignored cost-effective prevention strategies, prioritising instead reactive capabilities to fight 'illegal migration, organised crime and terrorism'. These challenges are symptoms of underlying problems which can only be addressed through civilian capabilities rooted in a more sophisticated concept of security.

policy that reflects the challenges and interdependence of our world. Like Quakers in North America, QCEA advocates for [more integrated problem-solving approaches](#) that value human dignity and create a stronger basis for lasting peace and security.

The Road Ahead

On 27 March 2014 the EU's Defence Agency will hold its [annual conference](#), reviewing initial progress against the goals set by the December summit. [The Italian Government have promised that they will continue to prioritise defence when they take over the Presidency of the European Council next year.](#) They plan to hold another Heads of Government summit with a similarly militarist focus in June 2015.

Since the days of the first Quakers in the 17th century, we have testified that both war and the preparation for war are inconsistent with the spirit of Christ

['Human security' has been promoted by academics and NGOs](#) for many years as it focuses on developing political, economic, social and environmental structures that protect individuals and communities. This contrasts with traditional approaches to security that protect the nation-state through the threat or use of violence against perceived enemies.

Our world is too small for security to be anything other than an indivisible concept to which all people are entitled. We should continue to encourage our representatives to reflect on the self-defeating outcomes of fear-based policies and whether enhancing support for European arms manufacturers is either useful or consistent with stated European values.

Since the days of the first Quakers in the 17th century, we have testified that both war and the preparation for war are inconsistent with the spirit of Christ (or the Divine). Today Quakers in Europe seek an EU security

Andrew Lane

Find out more: [QCEA produced a briefing paper](#) on the growing militarism within the EU in advance of the December European Council.

Last Minute Places!

QCEA Study Tour 5th - 12th April 2014

Registration is still open for the QCEA study tour 5 - 12 April 2014. Join us for a special week! "The Study Tour is a remarkable opportunity to see and access the institutions and buildings in Brussels and Strasbourg", said one recent participant. Last date for registration is 24 February 2014. For more information, see <http://www.qcea.org/home/events/study-tours/> or contact studytour@qcea.org



Limiting Democratic Freedoms

Press Freedom in the Occupied Palestinian Territory of the West Bank

Freedom of expression, including press freedom, is an [essential component of democratic rights and freedoms](#). The Council of the European Union has identified [press freedom as an essential pillar](#) of democracy which both ensures transparency and facilitates public participation in democratic processes. A free media can empower citizens by [providing them with a civic forum](#) through which to hold democratic institutions to account. It is also important for voters to be exposed to a wide variety of political opinions and accurate information in order to make well-informed decisions. The international organisation Reporters without Borders estimates that [almost half of the world's population is currently denied freedom of expression and information](#). In the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) of the West Bank, press freedoms are restricted by the activities of [both the Palestinian Authority \(PA\) and the Israeli occupying authorities](#).



Ramallah in the West Bank, OPT. Photo Credit: Felix Abraham, CC

The Occupied Palestinian Territories

The OPT is divided into two parts: the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Since 2007, the Gaza Strip has been under the [de facto control of the Islamic organisation Hamas](#). Approximately [40 per cent of the West Bank is currently administered by the PA](#), which is run by the political party Fatah. The other 60 per cent remains under direct Israeli military and civilian control. Consequently, Palestinian citizens in some parts of the West Bank are [effectively subject to the dual administration](#) of both the PA and Israeli authorities. Activities which undermine press freedoms, such as [physical attacks on journalists and confiscation of equipment](#), have been documented as being perpetrated by both governing authorities in the West Bank. The Palestinian Center for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA) reported that [30 per cent of media freedom violations in the OPT](#) in 2012 were committed by the PA, whilst Israeli military actions accounted for the remaining 70 per cent.

Israeli Military Force

According to Reporters without Borders, Palestinian journalists are [extremely vulnerable to abuse](#) by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) in the West Bank. An example is the case of Palestinian journalist Amer Abu Arafa. Arafa was released from Israeli administrative detention in August 2013, after being held [without charge](#) for nearly two years. In March 2013, Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (Addameer) noted a sharp [increase in the numbers of Palestinian journalists being detained](#) by the IDF in the West Bank, compared to the same period in 2012. The routine use of administrative detention by Israel contravenes the [strict parameters established by international humanitarian law](#).

The language used to describe events in the West Bank can sometimes be as complicated as the situation itself. Here are some useful definitions:

Administrative detention

Administrative detention is implemented solely on the basis of an administrative order, without either indictment or trial. (['Administrative Detention', B'Tselem](#))

Arbitrary arrest and detention

Arrest and detention are arbitrary when:

1. It is clearly impossible to invoke any legal basis justifying the deprivation of liberty.
2. Deprivation of liberty results from the exercise of guaranteed rights or freedoms, such as freedom of expression.
3. International norms regarding the right to a fair trial are not observed.

([Fact Sheet No. 26, The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#))

Investigative journalism

Investigative journalism is 'the unveiling of matters that are concealed either deliberately, by someone in a position of power, or accidentally, behind a mass of facts and circumstances, and the analysis and exposure of all relevant facts to the public'. ([The Global Investigative Journalism Casebook, UNESCO](#))



"Every human being is a child of God with a measure of God's Light. War and other instruments of violence and oppression ignore this reality and violate our relation with God." Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Advices, III.

4



Media freedoms are under threat in the West Bank.
Photo Credit: Olatz eta Leire, CC

Palestinian Authority

Whilst it is Israeli military forces in the West Bank who are responsible for the majority of violations of the rights of Palestinian journalists, the PA is also hindering freedom of expression. [Palestinian Basic Law and the 1995 Press and Publication Law](#) state that there should be no censorship of the press. However, the laws also specify that press activity can be restricted if it threatens 'national unity' or 'Palestinian values'. This condition allows leeway for the PA to restrict the press, often through arbitrary arrests and detentions. In November 2013 there were at least [three known instances](#) of arrest and detention amongst members of the media. For example, Palestinian security services arrested Radio Bethlehem 2000 manager [George Canawati on charges of slander after raiding his home](#). According to MADA, on 12 January 2014 members of the PA security services [temporarily detained Raya Media Agency photographers](#) outside a refugee camp in southern Ramallah, ordering them to destroy any footage they had filmed. MADA has expressed concerns that the continuing policy of arrests is resulting in [self-censorship of the press and a decline in independent investigative journalism](#). The weakening of investigative journalism is problematic as it threatens the freedom of expression which is central to any democracy.

The EU has a role to play in protecting freedom of expression for Palestinians

The Council of Europe [resolution regarding media freedoms in EU member states](#) demonstrates the importance of media freedoms to the promotion of democracy in Europe. The importance of these principles also holds for countries outside the EU.

The EU is an [outspoken supporter](#) of the creation of a [viable, democratic Palestinian state through a two-state solution](#). A free press is an essential component. Currently, direct military and civilian control by Israel in parts of the West Bank undoubtedly [undermines the rule of law and limits the ability of the PA](#) to take steps towards [independent statehood](#). The actions of both Israeli forces and the PA are negatively impacting freedom of expression through detentions of journalists and other abuses

The EU has a role to play in protecting freedom of expression for Palestinians and strengthening democracy in the West Bank. [Since 1994, the EU has provided more than €5.6 billion in assistance to the Palestinians](#). In 2013 alone, the EU supplied [€300 million for development and security sector, and €168 million in direct financial support](#). As the [largest single donor](#) to the PA, the EU has both the right and the responsibility to publicly insist on accountability for PA actions which limit democratic freedoms.

With regards to Israel, one way in which the Israeli governing authority violates press freedoms in the West Bank is the detention of Palestinian journalists. [The EU is obliged under international law to respond to Israeli failures to comply with laws regarding administrative detention](#). In challenging Israel's lack of compliance regarding detention, the EU can indirectly address the issue of abuses against press freedoms. An encouraging step was taken in March 2013 when the European Parliament passed a [resolution calling for a fact-finding mission to assess the current situation with regard to the detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention centres](#). It is important that in future policy, the EU is careful to consolidate this positive movement from verbal protests towards more concrete measures.

Rebecca Viney-Wood

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An Exit Strategy

A Sunset Clause for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

Photo Credit: HarshLight, CC



TTIP is currently being negotiated between the EU and USA.

Around the European Union (EU) institutions, there are always buzzwords that are used to represent contemporary policy ideas. 'Competitiveness', 'liberalisation', and 'harmonisation' are some standard expressions that are currently being used by EU leaders to symbolise the free trade policy pursued by the EU. Free trade is nothing new to the EU or its predecessors; in fact, it was part of the reason for establishing a formal European community in 1957. However, the scale and depth of free trade today is massive, with the EU negotiating 'Free Trade Agreements' (FTAs) with nations across the globe in an attempt to boost economic growth in Europe.

TTIP

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), currently being negotiated between the EU and the United States of America (US), is set to become one of the largest FTAs ever, covering over 50 per cent of the world's gross domestic product. Those in favour of the deal say that unnecessary costs will be eliminated by removing (the few remaining) tariff barriers and by harmonising regulation - for example, standardising the safety protocols for cars to prevent duplication of regulatory costs. It is hoped that these savings can then be passed on to the consumer, or reinvested in the economy, creating jobs. The aerospace, automotive, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries are areas earmarked to gain significantly. Negotiators have stated that some sectors will be excluded from the deal, but stakeholders don't know which, as the talks are confidential. The Centre for Economic Policy Research estimates that the deal could be worth up to €119 billion for the EU economy and €95 billion for the US. The same report (produced independently for the European Commission) predicts that wider global trade will be boosted by this increased interaction between the world's two biggest economic areas.

Opposition

TTIP has encountered significant criticism and opposition. Concerns have been raised by specific economic sectors worried about the impact of the deal on their businesses. For example, EU pig farmers have argued that food standards will be lowered and their businesses negatively impacted by cheaper US produce. The potential environmental impact has led some to oppose TTIP, particularly as it could establish rules facilitating increased import of crude oil from tar sands into the EU. Following the revelations made by Edward Snowden around the NSA surveillance scandal, others have questioned the viability of placing trust in the US.

There have been suggestions that the EU and US research figures showing economic benefits are either miscalculations or over-estimations. The calculations themselves have been difficult to obtain, and the results have been described as too precise to be plausible. It has also been noted that these studies are based entirely on financial gains and give very little thought to the all-round well-being of citizens.

The most consistent and repeated criticisms, though, have focused on the undemocratic nature of the TTIP talks. All negotiations are totally confidential, which prevents public scrutiny and has heightened public suspicion. One of the few known aspects of the deal is the plan to include a controversial Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), which will give corporations the ability to take governments to international arbitration courts over regulations that they do not agree with. Newspapers (for example the Guardian, Le Liberation, and the Independent), NGOs (Corporate



German protest against TTIP, Berlin, 2014.
Photo Credit: Emma Rothaar, CC.



[Europe Observatory](#)), trade unions ([European Trade Union Confederation](#)), and many other groups have argued that including an ISDS clause will negatively impact on democracy. ISDS could create a situation in which law-making is impeded by fear of financial losses and corporate powers are given an exaggerated role in the legislative process.



EU-US Trade meeting, June 2013. Photo Credit: President of the European Council, CC.

Responding to TTIP

Quakers and others may want to oppose TTIP completely, but that is unlikely to have much of an impact. Large businesses (which have a powerful lobby industry at their disposal) are actively supportive of TTIP. The deal is especially attractive to companies in those sectors earmarked by negotiators. [The EU Commission also remains a strong supporter of TTIP. It has said that it recognises that this is an 'ambitious' deal but has responded to criticisms with repeated statements saying an agreement is essential for EU economic growth.](#)

Currently, this deal does not have an 'exit strategy', should the projections about the benefits prove inaccurate or concerns prove to be correct. There is a simple way to protect European and American citizens from potential problems: a set date at which TTIP ceases to be legally binding.

A Sunset Clause

Sunset clauses, or sunset provisions, have had a long history and have served many purposes. However, the fundamental idea has always been the same: a specific end date for a piece of legislation, law, or treaty. QCEA is proposing that TTIP includes a specific date when the sun sets on TTIP. It would specify a time at which renegotiations could be carried out to correct imbalances that may have emerged. The review would take place at a mutually agreed time - after five, ten,

or 20 years - and, of course, a mutual agreement to simply renew the current agreement is never impossible.

Sunset clauses are not common in trade deals, but they have previously been used in a wide range of situations, from agreements about the [ending of apartheid in South Africa](#), to regular use in [Germany at the federal and state \(Länder\) levels as a tool for developing high quality and efficient legislation](#). Sunset clauses offer a form of protection and a method for achieving an equitable trade deal. If difficulties arise, it would be in the interests of both parties to negotiate a workable solution. Otherwise, at the specified date, one partner could refuse to renew and the entire deal would end. If there are major problems that are ultimately beyond negotiation, either partner can exit the agreement.

Those in favour of TTIP (particularly corporations) would perhaps argue that the defined time limits of a sunset clause would put off investors because it creates a sense of insecurity. They might say that this instability could reduce the impact of TTIP (as insecurity puts off investors) or even doom the deal to failure before it has even begun, as the anticipated investment never materialises.

The response to such an argument is simple. Firstly, governments should not be held hostage by corporate interests who are unwilling to negotiate a deal that takes into consideration the legitimate apprehensions of wider society. The range and depth of concern expressed by civil society indicate the high level of public anxiety around TTIP, and those raising concerns have a democratic right to have their viewpoint taken into account. Secondly, democracy, economic stability, and the wellbeing of people must not be put at risk, especially not for a trade deal which is far from certain to deliver tangible benefits. It is simple common sense that locking oneself into an endless agreement is very risky. Even if this deal were to be successful, would it really be wise to give corporations more power for an indeterminate period?

Advocating a sunset clause does not imply support for TTIP, but it is a way of ensuring that, whatever form the deal takes when stakeholders finally see the outcome of the negotiations, there is at least an exit strategy. This deal and other FTAs like it should be questioned and their consequences examined to determine their impact on society beyond financial gain. However, a sunset clause for TTIP and other FTAs could be a form of insurance, a form of review that reduces the potential harm from these deals. A sunset clause would allow the deal itself to be refined over time, ensuring a more equitable deal, maximising benefits and minimising risk.

Chris Diskin



"'Politics' cannot be relegated to some outer place, but must be recognised as one side of life, which is as much the concern of religious people and of a religious body as any other part of life." Lucy F Morland, 1919

7

QCEA's Action Alerts

Sign up to participate in calls to action on EU policy. QCEA operates a system of action alerts, in which we send out e-mails to Friends and others who have signed up, on the following topics;



**Peace
Palestine/Israel
Criminal Justice
Sustainability and Energy
Other topics as they arise.**



How does it work?

When QCEA identifies an advocacy point on which the input of European citizens and residents may help bring the point forward, we will let you know. These take different forms: they can be a call to send a letter or e-mail to specific policy-makers, to write to your MEP, or to respond to a call for consultation responses from the public. To help you, we will send a model letter or a series of model answers on the topic, so the background research is prepared for you. You may, of course, use this model letter or send a different one of your own devising. What is important is that EU citizens are participating in the making of policy!

To sign up

To sign up for action alerts, send an e-mail with your name, country of residence, and citizenship to Gordon at office@qcea.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

More information: <http://www.qcea.org/home/involved/action-alerts/>

QUAKER HOUSE NEWS

18 December: QCEA hosted an evening reception of the Human Rights and Democracy Network in Quaker House.

January: We welcomed additions to our team: Deputy Representative Andrew Lane and Office Manager/ Friendly Presence Gordon Matthews.

9 January: Alexandra and Andrew met with staff at the European Commission's Justice Directorate.

11 January: Quaker House was the location for a fun and useful 'inspiration' workshop led by Dutch Quakers.

14 January: Chris attended a dialogue with the European Commission's Trade Directorate about the TTIP trade negotiations.

17 January: Quaker House received a visit from 50 Belgian students for a discussion of Quaker testimonies.

24-26: January: Alexandra discussed the work of QCEA at East German Quarterly Meeting (see <http://quaeker-berlin.de/>).

28-31 January: Alexandra represented QCEA at the Council of Europe INGO Forum and observed the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE). (Come to the study tour to observe the PACE for yourself!)



Andrew Lane discussing Quaker testimonies with Belgian students

Photo Credit: Chris Diskin



Don't Forget to Have Your Say at the European Union



This May, there will be elections for the European Parliament. Hoohum, you might say. It was certainly that way when I lived in Ireland, when the European Parliament was considered a bit of a joke compared to the national parliament. But things have changed quite a bit since then, with the Lisbon Treaty. Today, the European Parliament has more law-making powers than before. It is involved in final negotiations on laws with the two other institutions of the EU: the European Council (of heads of government of all the EU Member States) and the European Commission. The European Parliament ratifies the results of negotiations with other nations, such as TTIP (see this issue, p5). The EU as a whole is taking a greater role in international bodies like the United Nations, and the European Parliament and your national ministers are the politicians framing these contributions.

Don't forget, even if you have a personal skepticism of the European Union, it is a major shaper of our lives. It will continue to exist for at least some years to come, and it will continue to influence the lives of those people living in Member States and those outside. The elections in May 2014 are your opportunity to affect one of the major EU institutions. The 751 Members of European Parliament represent 500 million citizens, so their collective voice should be quite loud!

Did you know?

- The European Parliament has a much more important role since the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. Here are some of the things they can do: legislate in areas such as energy security, immigration, and justice; agree the budget for the European Union; and elect the President of the Commission.

- It is predicted that the 2014 election will be an election of extremes, when especially far-right and Eurosceptic parties may become strong in the Parliament. For example, France's Front National recently came top in a national poll of how people will vote in May. This makes it all the more important for centre and left voters to turn out to cast their votes.

- If you are a UK voter and do not normally have proportional representation, your vote in the European Parliament elections is more likely to count, particularly with regards to supporting smaller parties like the Greens.

- Now is the time to engage with candidates on those issues which are important to you, such as the environment or arms control. You can support human rights as QCEA does, by asking all the candidates in your area to pledge to support human rights at www.stand4humanrights.eu.

When I was 19 and moping about perhaps not voting because it didn't really count, a friend pointed out to me that democratic participation is a right for which many people give their lives. It is our Europe: let's encourage our friends and neighbours to vote!



Are you confused by the complex field of candidates? You can look online or contact your local parties to find out about the candidates and their views. Websites like www.MyVote2014.eu and www.votewatch.eu/en/votematch.html can help you find the party that is the best fit for your view.



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