

**ESF Exploratory Workshop - Social Sciences (SCSS)**

## **Managing crises in the European Union: A first assessment**

**Convened by R. Arjen Boin (NL), Mark Rhinard (NL) and Bengt Sundelius (SE)**

**Location :St Maxime, France, 24 - 27 June 2005**

### **Unconventional Crises and the European Union**

#### **Contributing to an International Audit of European Capacities**

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The organizers of the seminar have circulated a fruitful text. One way to go on is to add some comments to it. I suggest here another way. A kind of “simulation” between us.

Let’s consider the following situation.

#### **Situation**

“ A very serious, multi-dimensional crisis has just happened in Europe, or outside Europe but with Europeans involved (for example, we have to fly back thousands of wounded victims to Europe: we could cure them in our hospitals, but we do not have a flight capacity). Due to the difficulties pinpointed by the media and the families from many countries, the outcry is so severe, the threat so high to the credibility and legitimacy of the European institutions, that the EU Parliament has decided to take a bold initiative. The decision has been taken to launch a large, independent, open, and international inquiry into the preparation, capacity, needs at the European levels to address the issue of severe unconventional crises.

Very rapidly, the Parliament has decided to ask experts to bring their expertise to help the Enquiry Commission, which has been set up yesterday evening...and to help to respond to the crisis.

#### **Experts directly involved**

The experts, those who are meeting in Ste Maxime, receive three questions. The request is made public.

### Three Questions

The EU Parliament requires the group of experts:

1. To identify the questions the Inquiry Commission should consider to evaluate the real degree of preparation of the Europeans and European Institutions to the crises as they are developing today (not the last century type of crises) <sup>1</sup>
2. To write down a short draft clarifying, at least tentatively, the structural weaknesses to address as soon as possible, even before the Enquiry Commission has been able to write his own detailed report
3. To clarify some key and specific initiatives to launch immediately to secure an innovative, collaborative dynamics in Europe in terms of crisis management and crisis strategic intelligence of the issue

Due to the pressure of time, the EU Commission will ask you to participate into a press conference on the subject, Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> of June at 1300, and to be fully prepared to play your own role of expert on this occasion.

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<sup>1</sup> The EU Parliament do take into consideration the seminal lessons of the 9/11 American official report  «We believe that the 9/11 attacks revealed four kinds of failure: in imagination, policy, capabilities, and management ». (p. 339)