

# **Government confirms that the British Army will 'never' be part of a European Army from the press office of The Lord Stoddart of Swindon**

In a written reply to a question from independent Labour Peer Lord Stoddart of Swindon, the Government has confirmed that Britain will 'never sign up to a standing European army.'

Responding to Lord Stoddart's question about the reasons for the reduction of the army by 20,000 soldiers and whether this was due to the need to fit into a future European army, Lord Astor of Hever (Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Defence) said: 'Many but not all of the operations we wish to be involved with in the future are likely to be conducted with our allies, particularly those from NATO. The UK Government will continue to decide when and where they deploy their national forces, and have made it clear that they would never sign up to a standing European army.'

Commenting on the Government's response, Lord Stoddart said: "I am sure that many people, including the soldiers themselves, will breathe a huge sigh of relief at hearing this confirmation that our armed forces will never be deployed at the behest of the blundering, unelected European Commission. It should only be Her Majesty's Government which has the responsibility and authority for sending young men and women from our armed forces into danger."