

BULGARIEN

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US POLICY TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN PROJECT OF COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE

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Patrick Keller:

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, thanks to my colleague Marco Arndt for the kind introduction and thanks to him and to the Diplomatic Institute and to all the other organizers involved in this event for inviting me and having me speak here, and also thanks to them for giving me the topic "The American position towards the European project of Common Security and Defense", because I think this is one of the greatest hits topics you can get as a speaker at a security policy conference. This is a topic people have been arguing about in the same way for 20 or more years, so I am delighted to be part of that tradition now. I think this issue of transatlantic security

policy, especially the relationship between NATO and the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), is rife with frustration but it is also central to Western security strategies as a whole, so I think it is worth exploring that relation as part of this seminar as well. What I plan on doing now are basically four things: First of all, I want to try outlining the key conflict that you can observe between the US and the EU when it comes to the European security project. Second of all, I want to discuss the inherent contradictions in each position because I think the EU as well as the US have certain contradictions within their basic policy. And the third point that I want to dwell on is the history of the US policy towards the CSDP. I will argue that one can see at least a gradual change within the US attitude from a skeptic to a more supportive role vis-à-vis the European project. I will try to do that not just descriptively but also analytically. In the end – that's item four – we will have a discussion. I am very much looking forward to your questions and ideas and how you react to the thesis that I want to present to you. I will leave most of the current issues for the debate because I think that it is useful to look at the history first. We will see that many of the debates that we have today are very much in parallel to those we had in the 1990's or within the first ten years of the 21st century.

So let us look at the first thing, the key conflict. To put it bluntly, the key conflict is that we have an existing system of collective defense for the transatlantic realm and that is NATO, ever since 1949. And then we have the upstart system of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) or since the Lisbon Treaty the CSDP by the European Union. In a sense there is always the necessity on the part of the Europeans to explain the additional value that this project can bring to the table vis-à-vis to the existing system of NATO. Of the 27 EU members six are not part of NATO and of the 28 NATO members seven are not part of the EU. Some argue that this is a significant overlap and that both institutions should have a lot in common because so many members are part of both institutions. But in reality we can see that it is a faultline between both institutions. If you look, for instance, at Turkey and the debates over Cyprus you can see that cooperation between both institutions is rife with conflict most of the time. In part that has to do with the pervasive problem in US-EU relations of the Americans being a unitary actor whereas the EU is more or less a supranational organization composed of individual sovereign nation states.

Especially on issues of defense and security, the EU is not a unitary actor. It is also very much dependant on the US security guarantee as at least most member states of the European Union recognize. Many if not most member states of the European Union are not willing to conceive of the European project as a kind of counterbalance to the US, whereas others might strive for greater independence from the US through further EU integration. This is one of the inherent conflicts in that partnership.

And that is my second point: the twin contradictions in the transatlantic security policy. The first contradiction is on the part of the US. Whenever American officials debate the role of Europe in transatlantic security, they say that they want the Europeans to share more of the burden in international security affairs, especially when it comes to military

missions. But on the other hand, American officials have shown to be quite reluctant when it comes to sharing political responsibility as well. They call for more European input but are unwilling to grant the additional political influence that should come with it. Instead, the US wants to maintain its political superiority within the transatlantic alliance.

This contradiction is mirrored on the part of the EU. On the one hand, the Europeans tend to want to have more influence on decision-making; that is, in essence, they want to have the possibility of a veto over US action in transatlantic security. But on the other hand, they are much more reluctant to actually do what is necessary to gain that political weight.

These twin imperatives have a direct impact on the Common Security and Defense Policy of the European Union. Both parties watch CSDP differently. The US sees CSDP mostly as a capability driver. They think that the whole project is a very good tool to make the Europeans spend more on defense capabilities in order to enable them to share more of the burden. For the EU it is just the other way around. The political project to most member states is front and center as a further step of the European integration. So in that sense we have a swinging pendulum between two extremes in the relationship between the US and the EU. It's swinging between wedlock, where both institutions try to move forward together, and deadlock, where nothing moves at all. But whatever we have, both institutions are always locked. Transatlantic security remains indivisible. There is no way out of this pendulum in the sense that neither part of the equation – be it the US or the Europeans – can achieve its security goals on its own.

That leads to my third point – the historical overview of how the US attitude towards CSDP evolved over time. I will start with the presidency of George Bush senior by describing his attitude towards the European security project as a "Yes, but" attitude. When the Maastricht Treaty with what then was called ESDP as the second pillar of the Union was enacted in 1992, the Bush administration reacted with what one observer called "active opposition within a cloud of positive rhetoric". Although that holds true for the Bush Sr. administration in particular, that is pretty much what it has been ever since. The Bush administration agreed it was a positive development that after the Cold War the Europeans were trying to integrate the Union further. But at the same time they were worried and they put conditions on that project. The Bush administration never explicated those conditions but if you take all of their statements together you can distill five "No's", five conditions they put on the European project.

The first "No" was no *decoupling*. That meant there should not be a decoupling of security provided by NATO from security provided by the EU. It basically entailed that NATO should be the organization of first resort. The second "No" was no *balancing*. The Bush administration said that the European project should not be used to (counter-) balance US influence in international matters, especially not in transatlantic affairs.

The third "No" was no *entrapment*. US sovereignty should be independent of any decision taken by the European partners at all times. EU decisions must not automatically lead to US action.

Fourth: no *duplication*. Something that sounds very familiar in today's debate: Europeans should try and do something about integrating and improving their own defense systems and security policy, but those efforts and investments must not merely replicate what the Europeans were already doing within NATO. ESDP, the US demanded, should bring a discernible benefit to NATO – and not build a (weak) alternative to it.

And the fifth point was no *discrimination*: no discrimination against European NATO members that are not part of the EU. Whatever the Europeans do in their security project, they should not leave those out that are not part of the EU, but part of NATO; it should be open to cooperation and collaboration with those European states not being members of the Alliance.

So all in all the Bush senior administration asked the Europeans not to decouple transatlantic security structures, not to counterbalance the US, not to entrap the Americans, not to duplicate the defense system of NATO through EU structures and finally not to discriminate against non-EU members.

All these clauses exemplify what I call the twin contradictions. That is most clearly illustrated by "no duplication": the US wants the EU to be a capability driver but at the same time does not want to weaken the capabilities that already exist within NATO. The EU, in turn, is eager to build political structures, but slow in developing actual and efficient military capabilities.

What were the reasons for Bush's policy? I would suggest four points. First, the Bush administration experienced an intense uncertainty regarding the new world order after the Cold War. Even in 1992, with the Cold War being over, the US had no idea what the world would really look like for the next ten to fifteen years. Thus, the Bush administration desired to preserve the status quo since the world looked pretty comfortable from the US perspective at that time. Remember for example the war for the liberation of Kuwait from Saddam Hussein's Iraq: The US led a broad coalition with a UN mandate. That was the kind of world order that Bush wanted to preserve. Thus he had no use for a strong Europe emerging as a possible competing actor.

The second point is that at the time NATO was particularly weak. NATO was designed in the minds of most observers to contain Soviet communism, to fight and win the Cold War, which it did without really fighting all that much. But after the end of the Cold War the question was what to do about NATO. Subsequently, that question was answered: NATO became an anchor of stability for the emerging free-market democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, mainly through enlargement. In doing so,

NATO created a Europe whole and free as Bush senior put it. But at the time, NATO seemed weak. And so it was not a good moment to come up with a competing security and defense system within Europe.

The third reason for the Bush position was the emerging conflict in the Balkans. That conflict underlined that there was still a substantial risk of fragility and instability in Europe. Given that situation, Bush thought that it was necessary to have an effective system of security; he was not so sure that the Europeans could really deliver on that part. So the Balkan wars were for him an additional sign to put further importance on a functioning NATO and a functioning established security system.

The fourth point was the emerging age of unipolarity, of unparalleled American power. At the time of the first Bush administration there was a first draft of a defense planning guidance in the Defense Department. That defense planning guidance said it should be the new strategy for the US to discourage any kind of peer competitor in the global power struggle in a post-Cold War world. The US should strive for superiority in all matters and in that sense further European integration with a security aspect was suspect, at least from the point of view of those American triumphalists.

What happened under the Clinton administration from 1993 until 2001 then? I would argue that the position of the US was still a "Yes, but" attitude, however now it was the "yes" that was underlined and not the "but". It was a gradual change within the American administration towards the European project of security and defense. How did this position develop?

First of all, I would point to the Amsterdam Treaty of the European Union in 1997. That was the time when the EU gave itself and its Foreign and Security Policy a High Representative – Javier Solana, who was the first to take that job. Following the Amsterdam treaty, the meeting in Saint-Malo in 1998 was the real beginning of the European Security and Defense Policy at which the British and the French agreed to actually do something within the European context of security. It helped that the High Representative Javier Solana had been NATO Secretary General beforehand, so in that sense it was a good choice from a European perspective to alleviate American fears about too much independence.

But just three days after the Saint-Malo agreement, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright took pen to paper and published an op-ed in which she formulated the three "Ds". They are pretty much her version of the five "No's" of the Bush senior administration. The difference was that for the very first time an American administration spelled out their conditions regarding the European project of security and defense.

The three "Ds" were decoupling, duplication and discrimination, three of the five "Nos" I just elaborated on. No decoupling: European and transatlantic security remains indivisible, and NATO remains the institution of choice. No duplication: EU security

structures need not simply reproduce what NATO already has. No discrimination: EU security structures need not be established to the detriment of European NATO members which are not part of the EU. The three "Ds" are much more elegant than Bush's five "Nos" because they have the same effect in fewer words. If you stick to all the conditions of the three "Ds" you will be sure that there will not be any kind of balancing or entrapment of US policy taking place.

Overall, however, Albright's rhetoric was more accepting, even welcoming, towards ESDP than Bush's had been. After all, the uncertainty was gone. By then, people knew what the post-Cold War world would look like in an age of manifest American unipolarity. There was no longer that pronounced fear that the EU could engage in balancing. And at the same time, there was a strategic shift on the part of the US and NATO. Senator Lugar's slogan in 1993 saying: "NATO must go out of area or it will go out of business" was the new definition of security and defense for an age of globalization. It was not enough to just wait for an attack – conventional or otherwise – and then defend oneself. One had to go outside of NATO territory as well in order to establish security. That was the lesson of the Balkan wars. For those expeditionary missions NATO was of course the organization to be asked first. The EU was only to come into play if NATO declined – if at all. I think there are three main reasons for this shift under the Clinton administration.

The first is that Clinton's general policy was different from Bush's. Whereas Bush was a traditional great power realist who understood world politics as competition between major powers, Bill Clinton was much more a liberal internationalist. He believed in building international institutions – always with the US at their core and with the US interests in mind, but still being convinced of the utility of international institutions bringing cooperation and additional benefit to the international system. And in a way, he saw ESDP as part of that network.

The second point to keep in mind is that under Jacques Chirac in 1995 the French returned to NATO at least in part. The French president returned his country to the NATO military committee in 1995. So there was on the US side less fear of France seeing the European project as an effort in balancing against NATO. It seemed to be a visible commitment towards transatlantic security under a NATO roof.

And the third and most important point was the Kosovo war of 1999. The Americans were very reluctant to enter that war. They wanted to leave it to the Europeans. It was designed as a European project at first, as were the Balkan wars before. But it turned out that the Europeans were neither willing nor able to provide security in their own backyard. NATO, with the US in charge, had to solve that problem. Clinton resented to be dragged INTO European affairs like that and developed the view that it was time for the Europeans to be at least able to take care of conflicts in their immediate vicinity.

To illustrate the US administration's position at the time I will give you a quote from Bill Clinton's NATO ambassador Alexander Vershbow from 2000. In a speech he said: "It is right and natural that the increasingly integrated Europe seeks to develop its own

security and defense policy with a military capability to back it up. Let me be clear on America's position – we agree with this goal. Not grudgingly, not with resignation, but with wholehearted conviction." An act of opposition within a cloud of positive rhetoric was maybe not as much the case here anymore. If you look closely at the quote, I would underline the passage "with the military capability to back it up". The EU project as a capability driver, this is what the US was asking the Europeans to do.

And what happened under George W. Bush? I would say, to put it bluntly, it was pretty much a "whatever" kind of policy. The George W. Bush junior administration acted with benign neglect towards European efforts. Why so? Because 9/11 and "the war on terror" were the overarching priorities of that administration, especially in the first term. The Europeans were conceived as not being able to contribute very much to that, at least not in military terms.

And what did the EU do at this particular time? From the US point of view the EU's first missions in the Balkans or in Africa did not matter much strategically in regard to the "war on terror". Accordingly, the Common Security and Defense Policy was not even mentioned in Bush's National Security Strategy of 2006. And in its first National Security Strategy from 2002, the Bush administration dedicated just one line to CSDP stating that the US was supportive of the European defense project as long as it was within the framework of NATO.

Still, I think that one could see a slow stabilization of CSDP at the time and that the US did very little to stop that; it even encouraged it a bit. For one thing there was a more formalized relationship between NATO and EU for the first time. In 2002 and 2003 NATO and the EU signed the "Berlin plus agreement" stating that the EU in its military missions may use NATO capabilities and structures.

Second, as I already mentioned, there were the first European missions conducted within CSDP: the Concordia mission in Macedonia or the Althea mission in Bosnia. Although American interests were not at stake in these missions, one might argue that they served as an effort at burden sharing, allowing the US to reduce commitment to the Balkans.

Another positive development from the American point of view was the European Security Strategy in 2003. For the first time the EU gave itself such a document. It was a reaction to the intense debates over the Iraq war that split Europe. It was an effort to bring together the continent on strategic questions of security and defense. And in fact the 2003 strategy is still "in play" today. Just a year ago there was a new effort to revise the strategy. The result was that it should not be reworked and that we should stick with the strategy that we had devised back then in 2003 instead. In brackets I would add: because we did not believe that we could come up with such a congruent position again.

Another factor influencing the US view of CSDP was that in 2004, the EU added ten members at a stroke, mostly Central and Eastern European countries which were

almost all very much in favor of US policies as evidenced in debates over the Iraq war. So from the point of view of Washington you could see there was less balancing taking place. The European project was a different project now than the project of the Western States had been at the beginning.

As a final point the military difficulties in Iraq and Afghanistan gave the US some understanding that it might be useful indeed to have European allies in all kinds of missions within NATO or European structures. It did not matter all that much in which framework the Europeans would engage as long as there were some kind of capabilities available, some kind of legitimacy granted and some kind of support guaranteed that the US could gain from its allies in Europe. As Bush's NATO ambassador Victoria Nuland said in Paris in 2008: "We agree with France – Europe needs, the United States needs, NATO needs, the democratic world needs – a stronger, more capable European defense capacity. An ESDP with only soft power is not enough. As we look to the French presidency of the EU this summer, we hope France will lead an effort to strengthen European defense spending, upgrade European military capabilities with badly needed investment in helicopters, UAVs, special forces, interoperable communications and counterinsurgency trained soldiers and civilians. Because president Sarkozy is right – 'NATO cannot be everywhere'. And because we also know that if Europeans will invest in their own defense, they will also be stronger and more capable when we deploy together."

So there is a lot of continuity with the first Bush and the Clinton presidency, but there is still a new emphasis, especially for an administration, which was very dismissive of Europe in its first term. So what is the situation today after the Lisbon treaty?

First of all the name has changed – now we have the CSDP instead of the ESDP; we also have a new role for our High Representative, Lady Ashton – a new authority, at least on paper. Plus we have the instrument of Permanent Structured Cooperation, the possibility of an avant-garde within military planning in the framework of the European Union.

And how does the Obama administration react to that today? I would say pretty much like the Bush administration with benign neglect and lukewarm support, but support nonetheless. I think the US has lost a lot of faith in Europeans to actually get their act together and have a project that can actually be a capability driver.

What you can also see from what I have told you about the Bush senior, Clinton and Bush junior presidencies is that the relationship between the US and the EU on security matters always reflects the broader strategic debate, questions of unipolarity, other missions abroad and the definition of security at large. And what is the current strategic discourse in transatlantic security and beyond? I think it is mostly about us being in a bind. We have less and less money, our defense budgets are shrinking on both sides of the Atlantic and we talk about things like Smart Defense within NATO or Pooling and Sharing within the European Union in order to retain a certain degree of military efficiency. I think this whole debate is going in a

problematic direction because it is driven by budget considerations – and not security considerations as it should be.

And the key challenges, which have always accompanied the EU security project and the transatlantic debate at large, remain pretty much the same. We still have no workable agreement on either Turkey or Cyprus. We have an increasing aloofness of the United Kingdom, the country without which we cannot organize European security in any effective sense. But as the debate about the common European operational headquarters illustrated: the Brits are very unlikely to take any initiative on further steps towards integration in European security policy at the moment.

I also think that we have a lack of unity in strategic outlook. Maybe we can talk about that at greater length in the discussion, but I think that the various members of the EU have a very different threat perception. And then again that perception differs from that of the United States, and it is increasingly difficult to get unity and common strategy.

At the same time with the much discussed US decline in international affairs and its strategic turn towards Asia, I think the European Union will be required to do more for its own security, to do more in its own backyard even within the framework of NATO. It does not really matter what framework it is. The Libya mission illustrated the fact that the US is very much ready to concede some of the initiatives to the Europeans when it comes to securing their own geographic area. So I think that the EU needs to be pushed to do more on security and defense in whatever structure. If the Europeans would get their act together and do more on that front it would be in everyone's interest.

I thank you very much for your attention and I am very much looking forward to the debate!

Questions:

Q1: Thank you very much and I very much appreciate your explanation of what the US position has been over the last years and your way of looking ahead. The US was probably fine with the EU military capability development as long as it was under US control and in line with its interests. But coming back to the EU – one thing I really do not agree with is the necessity of having the UK on board. Admittedly, the UK has a strong army, currently they probably have the greatest capabilities, but inclusiveness is the excuse for doing nothing. Thank you!

Q2: You said that the EU will be pushed to be more active. Where do you see positive scenarios in which the EU could be pushed into by the US? Thank you!

Q3: My question is also concerning the UK position, especially the treaty of Saint-Malo and the cooperation declaration with France in 2010. Do you see parallels looking at those arrangements the UK was and still is involved in?

Patrick Keller:

I would like to start with the last question about the Anglo-French agreement reached almost a year and a half ago. When it comes to closer military cooperation between these two countries I would not compare that to the Saint-Malo initiative, because the 2010 Anglo-French cooperation was and still is not directed at a greater efficiency within Europe and within the European Security and Defense Policy.

I remember a conversation I had with a person from the Foreign Office in London just last week. I told him that the UK-France agreement in my view could pretty much qualify as part of the Permanent Structured Cooperation under the Lisbon treaty. He was appalled at that and replied: "No, we never wanted, we never intended that to be the case and we are surprised that you could interpret it that way because we wanted it to be strictly bilateral." And I think if you look closely at the agreement that was reached between Cameron and Sarkozy, you can see that it is very much focused on nuclear issues, and in that sense it is very much a unique agreement for the two nuclear powers in Europe. And even regarding the agreement one could argue that now with more than a year gone by very little has actually happened on that cooperation when it comes to tangible benefits and effects. So I would not rank it like Saint-Malo, which to me was a breakthrough in the UK attitude towards the European project. But then again David Cameron is no Tony Blair, so maybe that is the difference.

I think that it would be suitable now to pick up the question on the necessity of having the UK taking part in CSDP.

I would agree with you that it is not necessary to have all member states from the beginning. I think it is important to be open and inclusive and not to shut anyone out, but to move ahead among those who want to. And I think it is even possible to do that without the UK right now – maybe just to show on a symbolic level to the UK that we are really determined to achieve deeper integration on the security front as continental Europeans. But at the same time I am convinced that whatever we do – without the UK it will not matter much in the grand scheme of things ultimately. When it comes to deployability, when it comes to legitimacy within NATO or within the UN Council, all the bodies that matter – I think the European project is not complete if we leave the UK out, and especially on the security side it will not be effective without the British impact.

I see your point that it is only the excuse to do nothing, but then again I feel there are many examples you could give, which illustrate that the Europeans, even the continental Europeans, might not be as willing to do something anyway. If you look for instance at the fate of the German-Swedish 2010 Ghent initiative directed at Pooling and Sharing possibilities and the subsequent results of it, I feel that Europeans can maybe agree on Pooling and Sharing when it comes to training and education, to pooling staff colleges or helicopter pilot training and things like that. But when it comes to full spectrum capability not much has been offered so far. And that in my view had

little to do with the UK not wanting to be part of it. So it is very easy to always point to the UK saying the rest of Europe is not moving forward because of them. I think this is part of our reluctance as well.

And now we come to the question on where the European Union could actually be more active in terms of scenarios, in which the US might actually push the Europeans to do something. It is always very difficult to look into the crystal ball and make any prediction like that. But I think that if you extrapolate from what has been happening in the Balkans and in Libya, you can see that there is a greater willingness to leave the Europeans at least on their continent and its immediate geographic vicinity in charge of missions. Just look at KFOR in Kosovo for instance. It is of course a NATO-led operation but it is mainly being done by Germans. And I think that could be a model for future missions like that in other regions and in other parts of our neighborhood that might prove to be unstable.

Speaking as a representative of the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation whose head of office in Egypt was detained because the new government felt that the Foundation was violating laws of the country and who could just return to Germany last week after posing bail, I think that we are very far from having a stable environment on the borders of Europe. The Mediterranean area is very insecure at this point and it is very open which way these countries may go in the future. And I think it is quite likely from a strategic point of view to say there is going to be another upheaval and maybe the necessity for a military intervention again, be it as responsibility to protect or as a European mission reacting to, say, streams of migration, boarder insecurity and things like that. The US is very much willing to only lead from behind on these issues as one of Obama's advisers put it.

Q4: I am a German diplomat working for the European External Action Service (EEAS). You mentioned at one point that the European Security Strategy was not reopened because an agreement seemed not feasible at that time. Do you judge the situation differently now?

Q5: Recently a letter was sent to the High Representative just ahead of the informal Gymnich Meeting of the EU foreign ministers taking place at the end of this week proposing the European Security Strategy should not any longer be focused on threats, but rather on European values. I would like to have your opinion on that. Thank you.

Q6: Thank you for your exhaustive and comprehensive presentation on the EU-US relations. I have a question on Smart Defense and its equivalent in the European Union, Pooling and Sharing. Do you see any kind of competition in the future between these two initiatives? I think this is more or less inevitable, but can we reconcile both initiatives in order to avoid any frictions to achieve the maximum capability? Thank you.

Patrick Keller:

First of all I think the 2003 European Security Strategy is based on values, goals and objectives as well, especially on values. As in every European document we start with what is actually at stake and with what we want to defend. But then, you are right, in a very traditional sense it focuses on the threats that Europe faces and has to guard against. I think one of the reasons why some suggest a more "values-driven" security strategy is that this might sound more positive than a gloomy enumeration of dangers. We want to achieve more prosperity and freedom around the globe. I think the reason people head in that direction and stick to this mindset is that it is easier to put this to paper because it is less controversial. Everyone agrees to aim at world peace and prosperity. Especially at times when it is not possible to agree on a common threat analysis it is easier to emphasize the lofty talk on what you want to achieve.

In my view you have to have a coherent analysis of threats and risks in order to have a working security and defense strategy since it is necessary to know what you want to prevent and what you want to guard against. The problem with that is, and that answers the German colleague's question from the "Extremely Exciting Ashton Service", that you cannot come up with a common threat perception. Asking people in the EU what they perceive as a threat and why their country is in NATO you will receive very different answers in Riga than in Rome, or in Paris, or in London. In Berlin I would wager that it is almost impossible that your question is answered at all. But nevertheless you can be sure of getting very different answers and I do not need to outline the various possibilities.

I think given this variety it is difficult to come up with a concise paper that everyone can subscribe to. So I think this is the reason the European Security Strategy is not rewritten right now. And to be honest the current strategy is really good after all. It is a strategy that really covers all the major points. Maybe from today's perspective there is too much emphasis on international terrorism and maybe it should be more on weapons of mass destruction and the proliferation of those and regional instability in the Mediterranean. But this is really just a question of emphasis; when it comes to the substance of the paper and to the ambition of the European Union to play a role as a global actor, a global security provider with a special focus on its neighborhood, then I think it is right on. The European Union cannot define itself as a continent removed from the rest of the world. We are too much interconnected through trade and other things. We are morally invested as well. We cannot turn our backs to the rest of the globe.

On the question regarding Smart Defense versus Pooling and Sharing: whether there is a competition and how one could harmonize both is in a sense a million dollar question and one of the questions that might make the Chicago summit a failure, because we might not be able to come up with any kind of systematic approach to answering that question. But then again, I for one do not think there will be that much of a competition because Smart Defense and Pooling and Sharing to me are mostly slogans.

Maybe I am too harsh in my judgment but I feel that when it comes to tangible capabilities and efforts to actually pool and share capabilities there is not much on the horizon and we still have a very long way to go. So I think the question of how to harmonize both is relevant but more in theory than in practice right now. I would also say, speaking as a German, the last major NATO conflict in Libya has revealed that we have a long way to go when it comes to the trust that is necessary for an effective Pooling and Sharing arrangement. When I look at the German attitude towards the UN Security Council vote and the subsequent NATO mission and its reluctance to provide the assistance we were asked for and the solution that was found, then I think that maybe European states have a good reason to be not as trustful in the idea of Pooling and Sharing as would be necessary for that system to work.

Q7: I thank you for the lecture. It brought some reality in the debate and I am really thankful for your sincerity. When we come to the discussion of Smart Defense, it all boils down to the lack of capabilities, so it is not anymore a lack of political will but a lack of capabilities and means. I think that the solution to this problem should be found where it arises: at the level of national economic crises. So I wonder whether a strengthened EU-American transatlantic relationship may be helpful to tackle national financial restrictions, which almost every European state as well as the US has to deal with. I am also concerned with the rising powers in Asia, notably China, and how the US pacific shift affects the transatlantic relation. Thank you.

Q8: I would like to challenge you a bit about the French-British agreement. As I see it, this French-British cooperation from November 2010 may be pointing in the right direction seen from the US perspective. I think we have thirteen projects at least. We can also see that the exercises are coming up now. We can also see that the full operational capability within the combined-joint expeditionary force and the force headquarters has been put on paper now. So things are moving on and seen from a US perspective, looking towards Europe, one can see that France and the UK are ready to do the hard work. That might actually serve as an example for the rest of Europe. So I think the next three to five years will be very interesting to see how this work develops, also in the context with the Americans.

Q9: Thank you. I am a senior police officer working with the EEAS in the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability section. I was listening to your presentation very carefully and I missed one part. CSDP is not only about defense and military capabilities; it is also about civilian activities. So I am pretty sure you know that most of the European missions and/or operations were conducted by the civilian part and I am wondering whether there is a US policy towards this part of CSDP. Thank you.

Patrick Keller:

Let me start with the French-UK agreement, since it ties in with what we have been discussing before. I just have my doubts whether these thirteen elements are really all that relevant in the end. I would agree with you however that bilateral cooperation as those between the UK and France can serve as a model for the future. It does not have

to be bilateral, it can be multilateral as well, but I think it is indeed the right direction to think about moving ahead not with all the 27 members at once, but with smaller groups. I have been arguing for a while that Germany for instance could do more in becoming a leading nation when it comes to Pooling and Sharing efforts, for instance with countries in Central and Eastern Europe or with Belgium and the Netherlands. Maybe there is something that we could actually achieve by taking the initiative and building islands of cooperation under the EU roof. I think that is indeed the way to go. But as I said before, so far nothing much is happening or moving on that part.

I think a clear example of that national attitude – that is still prevalent – are the defense reforms that we are undertaking in pretty much every European country right now. As you know the Germans are pretty far ahead as well, they managed to do a lot in the last two years when it comes to reshaping their armed forces. What always bothers me about that and what is true not only for Germany but for pretty much every European country is that we do these reforms in a very national context. We are discussing which base to close and what part of domestic policy plays into that. We are discussing all kinds of political concerns on a national level, but we are not trying to figure out what our partners are doing in that field. We could start with Pooling and Sharing before we undertake the reforms or while we are conducting them. Instead most European countries are doing something by themselves and then come to the surprising conclusion that they could have done something together with their Allies. And I think that is not the right way to go but its very indicative of the mindset that is still at play and one of the reasons why I am skeptical when it comes to feasible Pooling and Sharing agreements.

Considering the question on the civilian activities within the CSDP: You are right; many of the European missions were not military missions, but civilian or police missions. Not all of them but many. That is an important part of CSDP, but I tried to give you a strategic perspective from the US point of view. And the strategic view of the US is, or at least was, for most of the time very much focused on the military side of things. There is a slight turnaround now after what happened in Afghanistan and the nation-building efforts in which one can see that military power alone does not deliver political results but that civilian endeavors matter as well instead. But then again I would say that the Europeans should be very careful not to brag about their civilian capacities, because when you look for instance at what the Europeans achieved in Afghanistan in regard to educating the police force and training them: we always fell way short of the commitments that we made initially. We did not provide the kind of police force that we said we would because it turned out that our great civilian capacity was not that great in the end – on that part more because of the missing political will than because of the lack of capabilities. So I think the civilian capacity is important, but it is not the first line of concern and I think it is troubled by similar problems as is the military side of things.

If you look at the NATO Strategic Concept from 2010 you can see that NATO is now starting to give itself a very minor and carefully designed civilian capability as well. One

can have a long discussion on whether it is the right way to go or not. But it gives you a sense of how NATO military and political officials feel that the civilian endeavor of operations cannot be done by anyone else, because it is obviously not working. Thus NATO is starting to give that kind of capability to itself. I am not so sure whether that is the right strategic direction for the alliance, but it is the way things seem to be moving anyhow.

The very first question was about the economic crisis as the driving force behind the problems we are discussing now with Smart Defense, our defense budgets and Pooling and Sharing. If I remember correctly, the question was what the transatlantic relationship can do in order to counter these developments. I think this is exactly the right way of looking at it. Because to me it is always baffling that we have this kind of security cooperation in NATO and that we have this transatlantic relationship of which everyone in every big speech says "It is the most important thing of all. We have common values, common interests etc." But still Europeans have free trade agreements and all kinds of interaction with other parts of the world that we do not have with the US. Where, for instance, is the free trade agreement that spans the Atlantic? To me this is something that is overdue for decades now and that can actually do something in order to tie us closer together economically in a good way. The financial crisis has demonstrated that we are already tied together through our financial markets and our respective economies. But I think we are not tied together as tightly as we should be. And that would be one way to go. I am not so sure whether the EU-US summits will be the right place to discuss that. I think that is the right place to sign it into being, but not to discuss it. When I think back to president Obama even refusing to travel to take part in an EU-US summit because he felt that it was just a discussion club where lots of words were spoken but nothing much was decided upon, that gives you a sense of how the Americans view those EU-US summits.

And I think you also asked in your statement about the role of Asia and China. And of course China is a raising strategic competitor to the US because of its economic strength. And in a way China is very much behaving like a classical great power in that it is turning its economic success into military strength as well. Just this morning on the way to the airport I read the headline that the Chinese decided to heighten their defense expenditures by more than eleven percent, now breaking through the one hundred billion dollar roof on defense spending. And these are just the official numbers. You can assume the actual spending to be maybe twice as much. You can see that China is actually on a very different trajectory than we are. Eleven percent rise in defense spending is something we can only dream about. Keeping in mind that NATO states agreed to spend at least two percent of their GDP on defense, it is only four or five countries at best which can currently match this criterion. Most do not, including Germany.

I can understand that the United States is worried about these dynamics. After all, the US is not just a transatlantic power, but the one country that provides stability for the liberal world order we all enjoy. Thus the Americans have to look to the Pacific and

demonstrate that they are invested there as well. I do not think that this means they turned their backs on the Europeans and that Europe does not matter any longer. But I think that we are seeing a continuation of a trend we have been observing ever since the end of the Cold War with the US having strategic interests and priorities beyond Europe. And I think that ties into what we have discussed before. Europe needs to be able and more capable to solve problems on its own and to make an actual contribution to the broader realm of security policy if it wants to remain relevant and safe.