

# **Enlarged European Union and its Foreign Policy: Issues, Challenges, Perspectives**

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# **ENLARGING EU FOREIGN POLICY THE ROLE OF NEW EU MEMBER STATES AND CANDIDATE COUNTRIES\***

David Král

June 2005

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The accession of the states of Central and Eastern Europe to the EU in May 2004 was frequently perceived in the EU-15 as strengthening the Atlanticist element in Europe. The Atlanticism of the new member states is tempered by CEE governments who are trying to ensure that the EU and the US act together on the most important issues in international relations.
- The importance attached to the assumed Atlanticist dimension of the last wave of enlargement has been overestimated. The new member states have not proven to be the “Trojan horses of the US in Europe” as some senior political figures predicted prior to accession in May 2004. On the contrary, the new member states were instrumental in repairing the transatlantic rifts over Iraq.
- Poland is likely to remain the most committed Atlanticist, along with the Baltic countries. The smaller Central European countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia, are likely to voice their support for US policies more cautiously, giving greater regard to the opinion of the major EU players.
- The degree to which the foreign policy of the new member states will remain associated with idealistic goals is difficult to predict. But it can be assumed the longer the CEE countries are members of the EU, the more pragmatic their foreign policy will become.
- During the first year of membership, the new member states took some strong stances on foreign policy issues such as the Czech Republic on Cuba or in case of Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary on the issue of (not) opening the accession negotiations with Croatia.

- Poland and the Balts have had mixed results in their attempt to shape the EU's relationship with Russia. Their push for a more comprehensive EU-Russia policy is mainly driven by domestic considerations. However, such an assessment needs to be balanced with the fact that with no real EU-Russia policy Poland and the Balts have acted similarly to France, Germany or Italy who also tend to pursue national rather than European interest in this respect.
- Poland has played an important role in engaging the EU in Ukraine, especially during the electoral crisis in 2004. However, to what extent Poland remains committed to pushing the other member states to recognize Ukraine as a candidate country is not clear yet.
- The diversity of the EU's new neighbours implies that it is difficult for the new member states to agree on which third states should be prioritised in terms of CFSP and to set a common front. Such diversity makes it difficult for CEE member states to propose a convincing plan to its EU partners for dealing with these new neighbours.
- Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey are likely to have strong stakes at shaping the EU foreign policy in the future, particularly by getting the Black Sea region higher on the EU agenda.
- The main dividing line across "New Europe" is likely to run between Poland and the Baltic states on one hand and the smaller Central European Countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia) on the other, with the first group being more Atlanticist, more committed to push for a hard stance on Russia and recognition of the European aspirations of the countries in the EU near abroad. The second group is likely to keep a lower profile and "Europeanize" its foreign policy more quickly.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

A year has already passed since the ten countries of Central and Eastern Europe joined the European Union. This period allows us to make the first reflections as to how the new member states have been behaving as full-fledged EU members. While a lot of attention has been paid to the integration of the newcomers into the core policies of the Union, especially economically, what is often neglected is how the new members contributed to shaping the external relations of the enlarged EU.

This paper will look at the impact of the new member states in the area of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.<sup>1</sup> It will make reflections on the track record of those states in the period since they joined the Union. However, it will try to look beyond that and see what will be the likely path of their involvement in the domain of EU foreign policy in the future, with specific reference to the EUs “near neighbourhood” and the internal dynamics of the integration process. It will try to give a broader picture of the region, with particular emphasis on points and areas that are relevant in this respect. It will also try to reflect to some extent on the positions of countries that are currently not EU members but which might become members in the future (candidate countries) and whose contribution to the way the EU acts in the world should be discussed and acknowledged even at this early stage.

Prior to the “big bang” enlargement, Wolfgang Wessels suggested that three main scenarios could explain the behaviour of the new member states in the area of CFSP. The first scenario has been labelled as *neutral* where the newcomers would act passively and more or less follow the lead of the strongest players in foreign and security policies, i.e. EU-15 heavyweights such as France, Germany and the UK. Another scenario was labelled as *pessimistic*, suggesting that the newcomers will not behave constructively in CFSP and would in fact pursue their national interests, even if this meant damaging the internal cohesion of the EU. The third scenario, marked as *optimistic*, assumed a very active involvement of the CEE countries in the shaping of

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1) The notion of CFSP is for the purposes of this paper viewed in a very general sense and will include a wide range of EU external activities such as enlargement. On the other hand it will not focus too much on ESDP – a specific element of CFSP.

CFSP, bringing in new impetus, visions and expectations and thus helping to enforce the external action of the European Union. This study will try to demonstrate that none of these scenarios can be applied to the group of new member states as such because in many aspects of foreign policy they simply do not act as a block. It will try to show that the elements of all the three scenarios can be traced in the behaviour of the new member states in EU foreign policy.

One characteristic often quoted in connection with the likely behaviour of the new member states in CFSP was that the May 2004 enlargement would be a strongly “Atlanticist” one. This assumption was further reiterated by the fact that five out of the ten countries that joined the EU in 2004 almost acceded to both the EU and NATO simultaneously. Not long prior to the signature of the treaties of accession, most of the soon-to-be members of the EU showed their commitment to the United States during the Iraq crisis, by signing the so called “Letter of Eight” (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) and the “Vilnius Letter”. This action was quoted to have caused very deep and serious splits in what was soon to become the enlarged European Union, giving ground to an infamous division of the continent into Old and New Europe.

This paper will argue that the importance attached to the assumed Atlanticist dimension of the last wave of enlargement has been grossly overestimated. The new member states did not prove to be the “Trojan horses of the US in Europe” as some politicians in the old-EU liked to put it. The question remains to what extent this has been due to the recent rapprochement between the EU and the US and to what extent it was the enlargement that caused this rapprochement. This paper will argue that the divisions evident during the Iraq crisis are not likely to be long lasting in nature. Furthermore, future divisions within the EU are probably not going to run between the old and the new member states but will emerge (or in fact are already emerging) *within* the New Europe as well as they are already evident within the *Old* Europe.

Another point that deserves attention is the motives of the new member states with regard to EU foreign policy. These are often typified as being idealistic rather than pragmatic. It is not unreasonable to expect that the new member states would place greater stress on the role of values such as human rights, democracy, rule of law, etc. when dealing with third parties through CFSP. The experience that the new members of the EU went through during communist times and also during the transformation period make them

more sensitive to these issues and their importance within EU foreign policy. Most of the countries we are referring to have direct experience of the strong impact of the EU's inclusion of democratic principles and conditionality in its foreign policy agenda. For this reason they do not underestimate the role of these instruments in precipitating internal policy changes in countries outside the EU. However, the question remains to what extent this phenomenon will prevail once the newcomers understand that EU member states often act pragmatically.

Commentators have also discussed the geographical scope of the activity of the new member states in CFSP. It was expected that the newcomers would not be equally interested in all aspects of CFSP, but that they would focus on the Eastern component of EU foreign policy. This has proved to be only partially true. This is because the new member states do not act as a unitary bloc. In fact, it is more appropriate to see each of the new members as having a foreign policy agenda in Eastern Europe that reflects a multitude of factors that are often specific to the history and aspirations of each state.

At this juncture it is necessary to highlight the point that the three elements (i.e. Atlanticism, idealism and geographical preferences) regarding CEE countries behaviour in CFSP cannot be treated in isolation but should be seen as being interlinked and complementary strategies and processes. In this respect, factors such as Atlanticism, idealism and the geographical focus of CFSP will be treated in this paper in an integrated manner where each of these factors is seen to condition the impact of the others.





## 2. SETTING THE STAGE

### *New Member States during Accession Negotiations, Convention and Intergovernmental Conference*

Let us start with some general considerations relating to the involvement of the new member states in EU foreign policy. The first consideration is the negotiation of the CFSP chapter during the accession negotiations. It is hardly surprising that this chapter was usually among the first ones to be closed. This occurred for two main reasons. First, a relatively low portion of the *acquis* is devoted to the CFSP domain, which did not require an extensive process of adoption into domestic legislation. The most notable examples where the candidate countries had to adapt to EU requirements were related to the creation of political directors and European correspondents in foreign ministries, or putting a mechanism in place that would enable a swift imposition of sanctions *vis-à-vis* third parties. The other reason for relatively swift progress in negotiations was that since 1995 the candidate countries were often invited to join EU common positions and demarches, although their choice seemed at times rather arbitrary.<sup>2</sup> The few examples of non-alignment with EU common positions mainly related to problems of a technical nature (for instance Poland in the case of the EU's declaration on land mines could not subscribe to a common stance as it had not ratified the Ottawa Convention), or in cases where the issue at stake were more sensitive because it concerned an area of particular interest,<sup>3</sup> or it concerned other candidate countries.<sup>4</sup> Hungary was the only candidate country that supported all EU common positions, statements and demarches without reservations.

All the new member states (or earlier with the status of candidates or later acceding countries) had a chance to participate substantively in the discus-

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- 2) The candidate countries were not invited to subscribe to EU common positions on the Middle East, the former Soviet Union or former Yugoslavia.
  - 3) For example, Poland did not condemn the government of Belarus in 1998 after it had expelled EU diplomats as it was holding the OSCE Presidency at that time (see 'Bigger EU, wider CFSP, stronger ESDP', Institute for Security Studies, April 2002).
  - 4) Some candidate countries did not support EU statements on OSCE missions and the state of Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia.
-

sions on how the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy will be framed in the future, including the work of the Convention and subsequently the Intergovernmental Conference. It can be argued that this particular area was of a strong interest to most of the new member states. Their positions on CFSP were not determined by the necessity of a detailed knowledge of the *acquis* and EU decision-making procedures. Although the representatives of most of the new member states kept a rather low profile in the Convention deliberations, it was in the area of CFSP and defence that they made their voices heard most.

This can be explained by several motives. One of the most important was certainly the preoccupation of the accession countries with ensuring a strong transatlantic link especially in the area of security and defence, ensuring the compatibility between ESDP and NATO, and ensuring that the USA as the major ally will get involved in any future debates relating to the shaping of European security. The relations between ESDP and NATO were one of the focal points and posed a serious problem especially for those countries that were about to join NATO after the invitation issued by the Prague summit of the North Atlantic Council in November 2002, just as the Convention was starting to debate these issues. Their representatives looked rather suspiciously at attempts to put NATO aside and enhance the role of the EU in the defence arena. The representatives of the then candidate countries showed a rather reserved approach to some of the progressive arrangements suggested in course of the Convention deliberations, such as inclusion of a mutual defence clause in the Constitutional Treaty. There were even greater reservations in candidate countries about the Convention's Presidium proposals for structured co-operation. This was perceived by many as a strategy for creating a European *avant-garde* in the area of security and defence. A self-constituted group of countries to be included in an additional protocol attached to the Treaty with an unclear guarantee of who could be admitted at a later stage caused much concern in Central and Eastern European capitals at the time. Such unease related to the fact that participation in structured co-operation would not allow most CEE countries to participate, because their military capacities were not sufficient and in many cases undergoing major restructuring. This led to frequently expressed fears that the CEE states could be left out of the core areas of further integration.

Equally, one must not forget that the Convention debates coincided with the escalation of the Iraq conflict which demonstrated deep and damaging cleavages in the EU, putting the EU candidate countries in a particularly

uncomfortable position. Most of the candidate countries sided – at least rhetorically – with the US and its “coalition of the willing” which was strongly opposed by many important EU players, notably France and Germany. For this they earned some very critical remarks not only from Jacques Chirac but also from Commission President Prodi.<sup>5</sup> From the perspective of the candidate countries, many clauses as suggested in the draft text of the Constitutional Treaty seemed to be aimed at institutionalising the divorce of Europe from the US in the security and defence fields, underlining the fact that the two sides of the Atlantic are likely to take different paths in the future. This was something that Central Europeans wanted to avert at any cost. However, they did not have enough power to do so, not least because according to the Convention rules of procedure they did not enjoy the same rights as the member states, in a sense they could not block the consensus among the existing EU members. They, however, found very strong supporters amongst the more Atlanticist members, namely the UK. Together they made a strong push at the IGC and achieved important amendments to the draft treaty which made the final draft of the mutual defence clause less “competitive” with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and “structured co-operation” more inclusive and NATO interconnected. But in this sense, it could be argued that the crucial point was the British “yes” to the proposal for structured co-operation. The positions of the candidate countries were seen to be less important.

On the other hand, the candidate countries showed relatively strong support for some other progressive measures in CFSP, including the creation of the post of EU foreign minister as well as the European External Action Service. These two initiatives can be considered major improvements in the Constitutional Treaty in enhancing the coherence and efficacy of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. The objections of the candidate countries, if there were any, did not concern the concept of an EU foreign minister as such but rather his or her job description. After the draft Constitutional Treaty was adopted, some representatives claimed that the role of the foreign minister should be clarified, especially in relation to the President of the European Council and the College of Commissioners where he/she would act as one of the Vice-Presidents. The intergovernmental conference subsequently made major improvements in terms of clarifying these points.

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5) Arguably, Prodi's remarks were even more damaging, especially for the political elites of the acceding countries as the Commission was often perceived as the best friend of the candidates unlike many of the EU-governments.

The motives of candidate countries for supporting this move may be explained by different considerations. The fact that most of the candidate states are small or at best middle-sized countries means they are not likely to view EU foreign policy as a way of projecting their own interests and ambitions. On the contrary – a stronger CFSP with a European foreign minister and its own diplomatic service might give them internally more influence over the way Europe acts on the world stage than they would have as separate actors in international relations, through the possibility of pulling together with more important players. The rather low profile of the candidate countries on many issues of international relations would allow them even to sacrifice more unanimity for QMV in EU foreign policy, because their stakes in many issues are not so strong and they do not necessarily want to keep their “red lines” like some of the major players. This assumption, however, proved somewhat disputable in the first year of EU membership, as will be explained later. A similar consideration would apply to the “anchoring” of the new post of EU foreign minister. Not surprisingly, many new member states would like to see this post attached more to the Commission rather than to the Council. The Commission provides for a much better way of influencing the policy processes by small and middle sized countries than the Council where there is a much greater risk of these countries being bullied by the larger member states. The truth is that the Constitutional Treaty does not yet provide for a definite answer as to whether the EU foreign minister will be acting more under the hat of the Council, being commanded by the member states, or in the Commission, acting more in the interest of the Union and being influenced by fellow commissioners. If the current political deal is that Solana would become the first EU foreign minister, the first scenario is more likely to prevail. Solana has been anchored in the Council for many years now and his way of running EU foreign and security policy will probably not change too much in the first years after the creation of the new post.

For similar reasons the new member states are supportive of the European External Action Service. As many of the diplomatic services of the new member states are under strong pressure from finance ministries to cut down their political representation in third countries, especially where there are no particular ties, the European Foreign Service might turn out to be an attractive alternative. Especially because it is supposed to recruit its employees from the Commission, the Council and also from the member states’ diplomatic services, which would enable the European foreign service to utilize the expertise of certain diplomats and maintain existing links. A European for-

eign service may give CEE countries a greater opportunity to set the agenda than is the case at the moment in the Council, because of its scarce resources and the less pro-active role of the current High Commissioner for CFSP who does not enjoy the right of initiative.

But an important consideration will apply to where the future EU diplomatic service is anchored. At the moment, no definite scenario is on the table either – it could be under the Council, under the Commission, under both of them or it could be totally independent. The viewpoints of the new member states on this issue are not yet known, but it is certainly one of the things that politicians and foreign ministries in Central and East European capitals should start addressing very soon.



### **3. NEW EUROPE'S ATLANTICISM: AN EVER LASTING LOVE?**

As suggested earlier, the accession of the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe to the EU has often been perceived in the EU-15 as the one that will ultimately strengthen the Atlanticist element in Europe. Although it is difficult to provide a generally accepted definition of Atlanticism, in this paper it is perceived as foreign policy that tends to act in line with the position of the United States. In relation to membership in the EU Atlanticists prefer the EU and the US acting together in international relations rather than the EU adopting a different policy or acting on its own.

The main reason for the alleged Atlanticism of the new EU member states prior to accession demonstrated itself during the course of the Iraq crisis when most CEE governments sided with the Bush administration. Firstly, there were the leaders of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic who put their signatures along with representatives of the UK, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Denmark to the so-called “Letter of Eight” that appeared in the Wall Street Journal. Only later, did a similar initiative of the so-called Vilnius 10 group,<sup>6</sup> (i.e. new members of NATO and/or states hoping to join the NATO in the CEE region) make a similar move. This made some EU leaders think that these countries will act as committed Atlanticists even after their accession to the EU (given the proximity of EU accession), putting good relations with Washington first and acting in support of the US no matter what the other EU governments think. It would be premature to assess only one year after accession the accuracy of this judgement. However, what is certain is that the picture in Central and Eastern Europe is much more complex than this simple assumption of committed Atlanticism. Here one may identify two key reasons for expecting a more complex reality.

Firstly, it would be wrong to assume that the alignment with US foreign policy is absolutely unconditional and non-contested in the new EU member

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6) The Vilnius Group consisted of the following countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

states. Nonetheless, all the CEE countries that recently acceded to the EU can be labelled at least as “instinctive Atlanticists”<sup>7</sup>, meaning that they strongly believe in the value of the transatlantic partnership and any situation which forces them to make a choice between Washington and Brussels puts them in a very uncomfortable position.

Secondly, the “instinctive” Atlanticism of the new member states derives mainly from their historical experience. The Central and Eastern Europe region has been for centuries dominated by different great powers. To a considerable extent all the countries in the region (with the exception of Hungary or Bulgaria), tend to view themselves as victims of the “concert of powers” up to World War I as well as of Western European pacifism prior to the outbreak of World War II. On the other hand, the United States is historically viewed very positively firstly as the champion of independent states in Central Europe (thanks to US President Wilson’s stance at the Versailles conference in 1919), and secondly because the United States honoured their commitments in the region, contributing to the defeat of communism leading to the end of the Cold War as well as supporting CEE countries joining NATO.

Nonetheless, despite the undoubted importance of these two key factors the degree of Atlanticism varies significantly across Central and Eastern Europe, depending on factors other than those that underpin “instinctive Atlanticism”. It would thus be a mistake to view the new EU member states of Central and Eastern Europe as a compact block who will always act in a unified manner in CFSP negotiations on the issue of future US-EU relations.

### **3.1 Security Considerations and Atlanticism**

Much of the evidence presented thus far supports the contention that differing perception of security threats determines the degree of each country’s Atlanticism. It has been suggested and demonstrated with regard to the involvement of candidate countries in the Convention that all the CEE countries see the USA and NATO as the best guarantees of their security. But the threat assessment arising from various international risks (i.e. “hard” or “soft” security threats) varies significantly across the region. For the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary, the perception of external threats is much less intense than that of the Baltic states or Poland, and most likely also for Romania and Bulgaria after their accession. For this reason it is easy

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7) A term used by the authors of “The Economist”



to understand that the perceived importance for hard security in the Baltic region (including Poland) is much stronger than in Central Europe.

For the Baltic states (or Balts) this has to do with their complicated relationship with Russia that is still perceived as a threat for various reasons. Here brief mention may be made of recent moves towards authoritarianism, Russia's self-appointment as advocate of the rights of Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia, economic and political pressure or soft security threats such as environmental hazards or trans-border crime. The recent developments show very little evidence that the EU could at the moment provide the Balts with strong leverage on Russia. Firstly, there is no consistent EU policy towards Russia and Putin deals with the major EU players separately. Often, some EU leaders even initiate these separate dealings, as a summit in March 2004 of France, Germany, Spain and Russia summoned by Mr Chirac demonstrates. Secondly, the perceptions on how to deal with Russia between the old-EU member states and the Baltic countries often diverge, a topic that will be treated in more detail in the next section. The old member states, and the big players in particular, hardly ever share the Balts' fears and concerns of Russia as a suspicious neighbour not to be trusted. Thirdly, the Balts do not have enough international weight to deal with Russia on their own – for Putin they are simply not partners. So they have to look to other states to get them on board when dealing with the Russian government. In this respect, from the Baltic perspective the US at the moment is seen to be a more reliable partner than the EU. Consequently, the Baltic states rely more on the US than on the EU in dealing with Russia. Unless EU policy towards Russia changes considerably in the coming years, one may expect an enduring Atlanticism in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The Russian question also plays a key role in Polish Atlanticism as well. A long-term motivation for Polish support of US military presence in Europe has been to counterbalance the Russian influence in the region and also because of the historical experience of Poles being sandwiched between the competing ambitions of Germany and Russia.

The strong Atlanticism in the Baltic countries and Poland compared to the other Central European counterparts might be explained by regional geopolitics as well. The Baltic Sea region, which includes some older member states, such as Denmark, Finland and Sweden, can certainly be considered as inclined to align more closely with the US rather than with France and Germany (representing “autonomism” as a counter concept to “Atlanticism”) on many foreign policy and security issues. Denmark might be taken as a prime example, being a member of NATO but having an opt-out from ESDP and

not having participated in the West European Union. Denmark also strongly supported the accession of the Baltic states into NATO.<sup>8</sup> Although Finland and Sweden might adopt a low profile due to their non-alignment, it seems that both countries realize the importance of NATO for security in the region and most especially in the cases of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Given the very good relations between the Scandinavian and Baltic neighbours, strong Atlanticism is likely to prevail in the whole Baltic Sea region.

The Baltic states and Poland, unlike their Central European counterparts, border on potentially much more unstable and vulnerable regions and states, such as authoritarian and unpredictable Belarus, (and to some extent still the Ukraine); and in the cases of Bulgaria and Romania – the Black Sea region or Western Balkans. For countries that are exposed to these unstable regions, it is understandable that they prefer closer alignment with the US who is seen as the most reliable source of “hard security”. As long as the EU does not demonstrate a firm commitment to engaging (militarily if necessary) in the so-called “EU close neighbourhood,” these countries will probably prefer to keep a closer dialogue with Washington rather than relying on the EU’s rather toothless foreign policy. Consequently, very much will depend on how actively the enlarged EU is willing to be involved in its close neighbourhood through policies such as ENP (European Neighbourhood Policy) and to what extent it will be able to deploy its soft as well as possibly hard power to stabilise the regions surrounding it.

### 3.2 Political Elites and Atlanticism

The other point that has to be acknowledged in connection with the presumed Atlanticism of the new EU member states is that much will depend on the political constellation in the individual countries, namely the composition of the respective governments. In the CEE region there are countries, notably Poland and the Baltic states, where the pro-US orientation will not be questioned politically, at least not for the time being, regardless of who is in power. But looking at the other Central European countries (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia), the picture may change from government to government. A good illustration of this phenomenon is the case of the Czech Republic during the Iraq crisis, which witnessed deep

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8) For further reference see Evaldas Nekrašas: ‘EU enlargement and the Baltic Sea region,’ Swedish Institute of International Affairs Conference paper.

political divisions across the political spectrum as to how to respond to the proposed military strike and to what extent to engage in the US-led “coalition of the willing”, but also across the major ruling coalition party – the Social Democrats. As a result of complicated intra-governmental negotiations the Czech Republic eventually decided not to participate in the Iraqi Freedom operation. This decision was heavily criticised by the opposition Civic Democratic Party (ODS). It can be assumed that if the ODS were in power during the Iraqi crisis, the position of the Czech Republic would have been much more pro-American and thus Atlanticist.

A similar phenomenon could be observed in neighbouring Slovakia. An analysis by the Bratislava-based Institute for Public Affairs (IVO),<sup>9</sup> drawing on a number of interviews with high ranking Slovak politicians, shows that the Iraq crisis marked steep division between very strong pro-US support within the governing coalition, while the opposition parties such as SMER (centre-left) or the Slovak Communist party were strongly opposed. On the basis of this observation, IVO classifies the attitudes of Slovak political elites in terms of their inclination to view the US-EU relations into three categories: those in favour of a stronger and more independent EU role on the world stage, those who favour the primacy of NATO as a source of stability and prefer a balanced partnership between the US and EU, and finally those who would prefer to keep a strong bilateral tie with Washington even at a cost of not acting along with the other EU member states. As in the case of the Czech Republic, such differences exist not only between political parties but also across parties as well.

Hungarian foreign policy and Atlanticism is reputed to be more consistent than that of the Czech Republic. This reputation is based on the strong coordinating role of the Prime Minister on issues regarding external relations and relatively high levels of apathy among the general public toward foreign policy issues. Nonetheless, the domestic political constellation has had an impact on the consistency of Hungary’s Atlanticism. FIDESZ, although largely Atlanticist and a dominant right-wing party, has used in the past a more anti-American rhetoric than one would have expected, in its goal to attract more nationalist voters. This “nationalist” strategy is similar to Václav Klaus’s opposition in the Czech Republic to the US strike on Iraq in early 2003.<sup>10</sup>

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9) Šťastný, Gábelová: ‘Transatlantic Relations as seen by politicians in Slovakia’, Institute for Public Affairs, 2004.

10) Significantly, his opinion was not consistent with the party he used to chair (Civic Democratic Party, ODS).

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In contrast, Poland throughout 1990's demonstrated long-lasting and consistent support for US foreign policy over many issues, starting with the First Gulf War, Kosovo air campaign, Afghanistan and later Iraq. This attitude was never questioned by Polish political elites,<sup>11</sup> a situation that differs markedly with the political elites of the Czech Republic (over military actions in Kosovo and Iraq). Poland's pro-US stance remained constant despite the fact that the political scene had changed frequently during this period. And there is another explanation why Atlanticism is so deeply enshrined in the thinking of Polish political elites – the strong Polish diaspora in the US plays a very important role in lobbying Polish interests with US administrations. On the contrary, in the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Hungary relations with the US (and foreign policy in general) play a very minor role in general elections.

In Latvia and Estonia the pro-American (and, at the same time, anti- Russian) political consensus is quite robust across existing party lines. The one factor, which might change this in the future, is a greater enfranchisement and mobilisation of Russian speaking minorities. Thus in countries where the broad political consensus on an Atlanticist orientation in foreign policy is weaker, political actors in those countries can just use the fact they are in opposition as leverage on the ruling government, without this position having necessarily to reflect their long-term strategies on the desirability of siding with either the EU or the US.

It is possible to argue that the Iraq crisis was such a specific case of a transatlantic rift that it is not possible to draw general conclusions on the assumed "Atlanticism" of the political actors in CEE countries on the basis of their attitude to this issue.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore during the Iraq crisis, the new member states were in the final stages of accession into the EU, and were thus not eligible to vote or take part in the deliberations.<sup>13</sup> This enabled them to take a slightly more independent approach, and their stances perhaps can even be perceived as a "revenge" for not being admitted to the deliberations at an earlier stage.<sup>14</sup> This situation was a unique one and is not a reliable indicator of future behaviour.

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11) Although some experts tend to point out that some political parties have started to challenge the traditional bases of Polish foreign policy, including the strongly pro-Atlanticist orientation: e.g. Lepper's Samoobrona (Self-Defence) Party. See, M. Zaborowski: "Poland – What Kind of an EU Member?" in *Reshuffling the European Chessboard*. Institute for Public Affairs, 2004.

12) The analysis of IVO noted earlier shows that even representatives of parties who otherwise tend to favour a pro-US policy strongly contested the legitimacy of the action. Note for example ANO (J. Banáš, K. Glončáková-Golev), the Christian Democratic KDH party (V. Palko) and the HZDS (Sergej Kozlík).

13) The participation of the accession countries in the deliberations of the EU bodies happened only after signing the Accession Treaty on 16 April 2003.

14) The accession countries were not invited to join the European Council meeting on 28 February 2003 that adopted a common position on Iraq. It was decided that the accession countries would be immediately informed on the conclusions after the summit.

However, the new member states have been instrumental in repairing the recent transatlantic rift over Iraq. The fact that Washington now understands that there are more friendly countries in the EU might lead the US administration to adopt a more open approach to the EU as such. This was clearly demonstrated during the visit of George Bush to Europe in February 2005. The highlight of his journey was the Bratislava summit with Putin. Significantly, even in Brussels, it was Slovak Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda who spoke for Europe with regard to Iraq. This can also be viewed as a sign of understanding among the older EU members that the good relations of Central European states with Washington might work to the benefit of the EU. But once the CEE countries are members of the EU, depending on domestic political constellations, their positions in the Council regarding issues where relations with the US are at stake might differ, depending on who is in power. This situation might be similar to that of Spain immediately after the March 2004 elections, when there was a U-turn in the attitude of the new government on Iraq. Consequently, a country that was one of the strongest supporters of US military action decided almost overnight to pull out of Iraq.

Support of US policies, especially if they are viewed to be somewhat controversial from the European (i.e. EU) perspective, may not emerge just because the United States is viewed as the primary guarantee of CEE security. The countries in the region do expect the United States to offer something in return, exactly because sometimes they opt for policies that are not always popular with their respective electorates or with the other EU leaders. The most frequently articulated issue over the last year or so has been the inclusion of the new member states in the visa waiver programme which would enable the citizens of Central and Eastern European countries to travel to the US for a period of up to three months without visas. At the moment, only Slovenia enjoys this status. The visa waiver programme contains a number of conditions that all new EU member states fulfil – with the exception of a refusal rate that is not supposed to exceed 3%. The argument of most of the governments in the region is that with EU membership, the CEE countries do not pose significant security concerns for the US administration in terms of possible large-scale trans-Atlantic migration. Moreover, the move is seen largely in symbolic terms as the minimum that the United States could do in return for the CEE allies strong supporting on the Iraq issue.

But their efforts are not likely to be successful in the short-term. Inclusion in the list of countries to which the visa waiver programme applies

would require a change in legislation by Congress. This would be difficult, not least because of increased concerns over national security among both Democrats and Republicans. There were even proposals to abolish the visa waiver programme completely, reintroducing visas for all the countries currently on the list.<sup>15</sup> The issue was touched on during the visit of George Bush to Bratislava in February 2005 but his message was rather ambiguous with uncertain promises being made. Nonetheless, it is clear that the governments in Central Europe will continue to raise this question in bilateral relations with the US.<sup>16</sup> If the United States resists embarking on a road toward lifting the visas, such US intransigence might lead to a cooling of bilateral relations with Washington and less enthusiastic support for its policies. Moreover, the new member states might – if they feel their voice is not heard – try to use the EU as leverage to achieve a change of policy in Washington in this respect.<sup>17</sup>

### 3.3 Public Opinion and Atlanticism

Another point that ought to be considered in connection with the Atlanticism of the EU newcomers in CFSP is public opinion in these countries. In all of the accession states, in relation to Iraq, an overwhelming majority of the populations in the region opposed military intervention in Iraq. But Iraq is not the only example. The recent Transatlantic Trends Survey published by the German Marshall Fund of the United States shows that in many ways, the new member states are not necessarily more Atlanticist than the old members. Although the last year survey (2004) included only Poland and Slovakia from the group of the new member countries, it can still provide very useful guidance on attitudes in Central and Eastern Europe in general.<sup>18</sup>

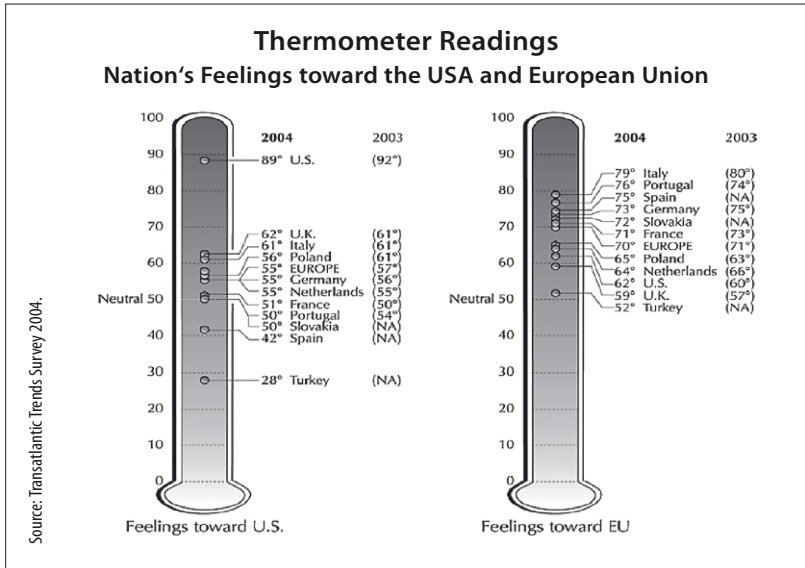
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15) This idea was eventually turned down. However, citizens of countries participating in the visa waiver programme will in the future have to carry passports containing biometric data.

16) The issue was for instance discussed during the visit of Marek Belka (Polish Prime Minister) in Prague in September 2004 where he agreed with the Czech Premier Stanislav Gross that they would coordinate their efforts to achieve the ultimate goal of lifting US visa for the citizens of Poland and the Czech Republic.

17) This provision is already included in the so-called Hague programme for Freedom, Security and Justice, highlighting the future agenda for policy concerning visas, asylum, immigration and internal security in the EU.

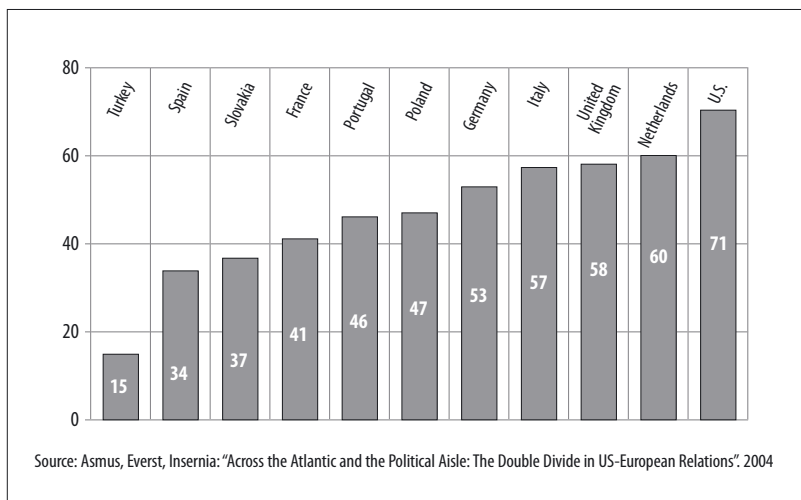
18) Transatlantic Trends is comprehensive survey of American and European public opinion. Polling was conducted in the United States, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and the United Kingdom and, for the first time, Slovakia, Spain, and Turkey. The survey is a project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Compagnia di San Paolo, with additional support from the Luso-American Foundation, Fundacion BBVA, and the Institute for Public Affairs (IVO). Findings and further analysis are available at [www.transatlantictrends.org](http://www.transatlantictrends.org)



For instance in the thermometer readings, it shows that the “warmth” of feeling towards the US in Poland is 56°, but still lower than for instance in the UK (62°) or Italy (61°). Moreover for Poland this figure represents a decline of five points since 2003.<sup>19</sup> On the contrary, Slovakia (50°) can be found at the very opposite end of the spectrum, with only Turkey (28°) and Spain (42°) exhibiting significantly lower degrees of sympathy towards the United States. On the other hand, looking at sympathy towards the EU, Slovakia ranks much higher with a score of 72° (even higher than France) and Poland with 65°. Therefore the Polish public feels (9 points) warmer toward the EU than the US. An Atlanticist index, developed from the Transatlantic survey places Poland in the middle of the countries surveyed, with a score of 47 which is lower than Germany (53), Italy (57), UK (58) or the Netherlands (60), while Slovakia is at the bottom of the table with a score of 37.<sup>20</sup>

19) A special type of survey question that measures the attitudes of citizens in selected countries towards the US and EU using the convenient and easily understandable format of a thermometer reading.

20) Ronald Asmus, Philip P. Everts, Pierangelo Isernia: “Across the Atlantic and the Political Aisle: The Double Divide in US-European Relations”. “The Atlanticist Index” was based on questions such as the sympathy to the US, desirability of the US global leadership, NATO’s essentiality, the share of common values between the US and EU or the importance of having allies when acting militarily. Published by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2004. More information is available at [www.gmfus.org](http://www.gmfus.org)



According to a similar survey undertaken in the Czech Republic by the STEM agency (December 2001), 75% of Czech population was in favour of coordinating Czech foreign policy with the EU. Coordination with US foreign policy was favoured by 37% of respondents. Moreover, when answers to these survey questions were combined a majority (over 50%) of the public regarded Czech foreign policy as following the right direction because there was no blanket decision of coordinating with the US.<sup>21</sup>

To look at the public opinion in the region more broadly, use can also be made of the latest Eurobarometer survey, undertaken in October/November 2004.<sup>22</sup> Examining public perceptions of the United States in promoting world peace and stability, the survey shows that only three countries out of the 30 surveyed view the role of the US positively, all of them being new member states or accession countries: the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Romania. A similar scenario would apply to perceptions of the US in the global fight against terrorism. While a majority of the public of the new member states view the US role positively, there is in contrast a negative view of the US among a majority of the publics in most of the EU-15 member states with the exception of those belonging to the traditional supporters of US

21) See, Věra Řiháčková: 'Czech Republic: Europeanisation of a hesitant Atlanticist?' EUROPEUM, Prague, 2005.

22) [http://europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62firsten.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62firsten.pdf). This is one of the most recent comprehensive bi-annual surveys of various EU-related issues, undertaken in 25 EU member states as well as candidate countries.



policy, i.e. the UK and the Netherlands. The role of the EU in promoting peace in the world and the fight against terrorism is viewed most positively by Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which show the highest positive assessments in the EU. Most of the other newcomers are scattered around EU average, with only Poland viewing the positive role of the EU in these domains rather sceptically.

On the other hand, this Eurobarometer survey also suggests that the populations of the new member states are much more receptive to the idea of having a genuine CFSP. Public support for CFSP is strongest in Slovenia (81%), Poland (78%) and Slovakia (75%), but also in the Baltic states it is above the EU average (Latvia and Lithuania at 71%, Estonia at 70%, the EU average being 69%). Only Hungary and the Czech Republic demonstrate less enthusiasm for a genuine CFSP, with 69% and 59% in favour respectively. The picture becomes more mixed when an examination is made of attitudes towards European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). An interesting observation is that all the new member states are overwhelmingly in support of ESDP, as opposed to some of the old member states, with support ranging between 88% in Slovenia to 84% in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Estonia, with only Lithuania exhibiting a lower level of support (but still quite high at 81%, i.e. at the same level as France).

One has to be cautious in interpreting these findings for two reasons. First, the high level of support in the CEE region might also result from a lower level of familiarity with what CFSP/ESDP actually entail, including for example a more complicated relationship with NATO or with the United States, or the necessity for increasing defence spending, or the willingness to engage militarily beyond EU borders. Secondly, it is questionable to what extent public opinion is really shaping government stances in foreign policy. Over the past few years, mass surveys have shown large support amongst EU citizens for a genuine CFSP, and yet the member states have not been able to move forward significantly on this issue. More generally, national governments are rarely under strong electoral scrutiny with regard to foreign policy issues. In fact, the example of Iraq shows that the governments of countries such as Italy or Spain adopted very firm pro-American positions, despite strong opposition within public opinion.<sup>23</sup> Therefore the fact that public

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23) This is not to suggest that the foreign policy positions of a government have no electoral consequences. It is undoubtedly true that the Iraq issue played at least some part in general elections in Spain (March 2004) and the UK (May 2005) and in the April 2005 regional elections in Italy. Only in Denmark did the incumbent pro-US government not suffer electorally because of an unpopular stance on the Iraq issue. However, all of these electoral outcomes can be most appropriately explained in terms of domestic political factors.

opinion in Central and Eastern Europe might not be more Atlanticist than in old EU-15 does not necessarily exclude the fact that the governments in the region will keep a stronger pro-US profile.

To summarise the discussed observations, the presumed Atlanticism of the new member states is likely to bear two main consequences in the near future. First, most CEE governments will try in the foreseeable future to ensure that the EU and the US act together on the most important issues in international relations. Second, the degree of their willingness to support the US in situations where there are divergent opinions with the EU will vary across the region, as it varies within the EU-15. Poland is likely to remain the most committed Atlanticist, along with the Baltic countries. The smaller Central European countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia, are likely voice their support for US policies more cautiously, giving greater regard to the opinion of the major EU players.

## **4. GEOGRAPHICAL PRIORITIES IN THE ACTIVITY OF THE NEW MEMBER STATES**

The area in which we might expect to see the most diverging stances of the new member states vis-à-vis CFSP is arguably the geographic focus in which these countries would like the EU foreign policy to evolve most. EU foreign policy is obviously a complex phenomenon, with many different countries pushing for privileged relations or close engagement of the EU in various parts of the world. It can be argued that each enlargement brought about a new dimension to the external action of the EU – the accession of the UK brought closer ties with the Commonwealth countries, Spanish and Portuguese accession increased the focus on Latin America, and the accession of Finland and Sweden fostered a Nordic dimension. With the entry of countries from Central and Eastern Europe, it was assumed that these countries would push the Common Foreign and Security Policy eastwards. But the term “East” in itself does not say much. It is not any precisely defined area, and it would be more accurate to describe the goals of the newcomers as wishing to develop a consistent EU policy towards neighbours who are outside the EU, especially those in the East as opposed to the neighbours at the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

The focus on neighbours is understandable for several reasons. Firstly, none of the newcomers have more “global” aspirations with the possible exception of Poland, whose control of one of the occupation sectors in Iraq can be considered as a sign of stronger foreign policy ambitions. But even Poland can at the very best aspire to be a regional leader but hardly ever it behaves as such, it does not aspire to become a regional speaker on issues such as the Middle East peace process (arguably it does so on other issues such as Ukraine). Moreover, the regional leadership of Poland is strongly contested in neighbouring countries, especially in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Secondly, all of the newcomers, again with the exception of Poland, are relatively small countries, a fact that obviously influences their foreign

policy goals. During the transition to democracy, apart from the primary goals of joining the EU and NATO, the foreign policies of these countries were focused mostly on achieving and sustaining friendly relations with their neighbours. With membership of the EU, the CEE “neighbourhood” remains the main focal point but the focus shifts to countries remaining outside the EU. And precisely because the CEE countries are rather small, acting through the EU becomes a very convenient tool for these countries to achieve their goals. There is the hope that the 2004 accession states expertise with the EU’s new neighbours (being “old” neighbours for CEE countries) will be acknowledged by the other EU partners and they will be allowed to take the initiative and give a new impetus to pre-existing relations between the EU and these countries.

In this respect one important point has to be borne in mind. There are many new neighbours and they constitute a rather heterogeneous group. They stretch from Russia in the North (although Russia is *stricto sensu* not a new neighbour due to the previous Finish accession, but the inclusion of the Baltics certainly gives EU-Russian relations a different dimension) to Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro in the South. These new neighbours are very different in many respects: they include countries that will soon join the EU such as Romania or those who are expected to join at a later stage, e.g. Croatia. They also include countries whose eventual accession is beyond doubt, at least politically, such as Serbia and other Western Balkan countries.<sup>24</sup> But the group also includes the Ukraine where recent developments shed some more optimism and the EU will soon have to tackle the issue of how to respond to European aspirations within the Ukraine. Belarus is a particular case in that relations between the EU and this failed state are practically frozen and nothing much can be achieved as long as Lukashenko stays in power. Finally, Russia is a very special case in many respects, not least because of its size, economic importance and the fact that it is still – if not a superpower – at least a very important actor on the world stage.

Thus, the diversity of the EU’s new neighbours implies that it would be very difficult for the new member states to agree on how third states should be prioritised in terms of CFSP. Such diversity makes it difficult for CEE member states to propose a convincing plan to its EU partners for dealing with these new neighbours.

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24) But the future of EU enlargement is strongly contested in some member states, not least in France which will hold a referendum on any enlargement, taking place after 2007.

#### 4.1 Russia – Will the Balts Be Able to Prompt a Common EU Voice?

As has been already suggested, Russia represents a very special case in relation to the EU. Not only is it by far the largest neighbour of the EU, it is economically and arguably strategically the EU's most important regional partner. It is quite evident that there is at present no common EU stance as to how to deal with Russia. On the contrary, it seems that the EU's dealings with Russia are a sum of bilateral diplomacies rather than a consistent front. A few recent examples where certain old EU member states (France, Germany and Italy) took very specific and independent positions vis-à-vis Russia underscore this point. At times it seems as if some of the old-EU leaders were competing for Putin's attention. Perhaps the most striking example is that of Berlusconi when during the Italian Presidency in 2003 he openly spoke in favour of Russia joining the EU or showing understanding for the tough stance of Putin on Chechnya. The question remains whether there is any real substance behind these gestures. However it is certainly the case that many of the EU-15 member states' relations with Russia lack strong tensions and they do not want to see a hardline approach that some of the new members would like the EU to adopt.

Looking at how to deal with Russia from the perspectives of the new member states, there is no doubt that this is a number one issue for the Balts and very important for Poland as well. Russia still poses a risk for the Balts in various respects – ranging from cultural pressure to geopolitical, economic and political threats. The cultural pressure stems mainly from a continuous raising of the question of Russian minorities in the Baltic states at various fora, including OSCE or EU-Russia summits. This is particularly sensitive in the case of Latvia where the Russian speaking minority constitutes close to 40% of the total population,<sup>25</sup> and in the past there has been pressure from Russia to turn Latvia into a bi-communal state. Estonia has a large Russian speaking population as well (28%),<sup>26</sup> which leaves Lithuania the only Baltic state where the Russian minority is not a contentious issue in bilateral relations.

But there is some strong evidence that Russia is exerting economic and political pressure on the Baltics. All the Baltic states are heavily dependent on Russian energy supplies, as well as on the willingness of Russia to pay for

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25) According to CIA world fact book, the Russian proportion of Latvian population was 29.6% in April 2005. But a distinction has to be made between those who claim Russian nationality in surveys and the overall number of Russian speakers (including migrants from other parts of ex-USSR). Were this figure to be used the total number of Russians in Latvia would increase to 40%.

26) Ibid.

transit costs through Baltic pipelines.<sup>27</sup> There is a strong fear of the extent to which Russia can influence politics in the three countries, through use of intelligence, blackmail and espionage, as demonstrated by the impeachment of former Lithuanian President Rolandas Paksas in April 2004 for alleged links with Russian organized crime and secret services.

Apart from these issues, there is a worrying uncertainty over the borders with Russia. Lithuania until recently remained the only country in the Baltics that has signed a border treaty with Russia, although it is still awaiting ratification by the Duma (the Russian parliament). Estonia followed suit only in May 2005. Although the ratification was awaited in Duma in course of this year, Russia withdrew its signature from the Treaty. Such a move followed the decision of the Estonian parliament to attach a preamble to the ratification act, claiming the legal continuity of the Estonian state with the period preceding the Soviet occupation of Estonia, thus disputing the current border demarcation (although without legal effect). There is no agreed border treaty between Russia and Latvia. The border question is understandably one of the issues that make the Baltic countries suspicious of Russia's intentions, an idea until recently fostered by very strong Russian opposition to NATO's enlargement to include these three Baltic states.

The situation has certainly changed after the twin "accession" of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia to NATO and the EU in 2004 and it is clear that Russia is now perceived to be a less imminent threat. But there is a certain frustration among the Baltic leaders arising from the inability of the EU to speak with one voice to Russia and address the enduring concerns of the Balts over both internal developments within Russia as well as with what can be seen as revived Russian imperialism.

This has been demonstrated on several occasions where the three Baltic states have tried to guide the EU's attention to issues concerning Russia. Salient examples include the "Rose Revolution" in Georgia, the "Orange Revolution" in the Ukraine, Putin's dealings with Chechnya or criticism of Russia's reversion to authoritarianism after the Beslan attacks. However, the Balts were not very successful in convincing their EU counterparts that a tough line had to be taken on Russia on these issues. This is due to several factors. Firstly, the Baltic republics are newcomers and small states, therefore

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27) For example, Russia stopped shipping oil through the terminal in the Latvian port of Ventspils allegedly claiming that the operating company (Ventspils nafta) was charging fees at "uneconomic" levels. Some analysts believe this was a way of exerting pressure to sell the remaining shares (not already in Russian hands) in the company to Russian buyers (Source: Financial Times, 20 February 2005).

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they carry relatively little weight in the formulation of EU foreign policy. Secondly, they are still weakly represented in key EU institutions dealing with EU foreign policy – namely in the Council secretariat and the Commission where they do not hold any top posts (apart from the respective Commissioners or members of cabinet).<sup>28</sup> Thirdly, as was highlighted earlier, many old EU member states hold particular relations with Russia that they are unlikely to sacrifice for the sake of intimidating Russia through automatically accepting the Balts' arguments.

But it can be expected that the Balts with the support of the Poles will continue to raise the Russian card in the EU, in which they are also likely to be joined by some of the countries in EU-15 who prefer a hard-line approach to Russia, such as the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries. Although it might be difficult for the Balts to shape the common position in the Council or to influence the Commission agenda, one body that they can use as leverage in this respect is the European Parliament (EP). Here we could witness a strong activism of Baltic and Polish MEPs on issues relating not only to Russia but on other issues that have direct implications on EU-Russian relations, such as Georgia or the Ukraine. The deliberation on the report of EU-Russian relations, tabled before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the EP by Cecilia Malmström in April 2005, shows a large number of amending proposals made by Baltic and Polish MEPs who are attempting to give the report a much tougher line than is evident in the draft.<sup>29</sup>

One of the points that occupy the minds of the Baltic leaders is that Russia should admit responsibility for the events following the liberation of Eastern Europe from Nazism, leading to a forceful occupation of the region by Stalin. In this they have been joined by the demands from Poland for Russia to admit some responsibility for the Molotov – Ribbentrop pact of 1939. For this reason, the Presidents of Lithuania and Estonia refused a Russian invitation to mark the Sixtieth anniversary of the end of WWII in Moscow on May 9, 2005, although the President of Latvia, Vaira Vike-Freiberga accepted. But Vike-Freiberga during an official visit to Sweden underlined that although she agreed to join the aforesaid celebration in Moscow, she still believed a re-evaluation of the post-WWII era by Russia was necessary. It is also quite interesting to see what tactics Putin used in this respect – in

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28) 'Evident' crisis in EU-Russia relations in Rzeczpospolita, retrieved from [http://www.gateway2russia.com/st/art\\_275177.php](http://www.gateway2russia.com/st/art_275177.php)

29) See the draft report at [http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004\\_2009/documents/PR/560/560592/560592en.pdf](http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/PR/560/560592/560592en.pdf) and amending proposals at [http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004\\_2009/documents/AM/562/562208/562208en.pdf](http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/AM/562/562208/562208en.pdf)

order to lure the Baltic leaders to attend the anniversary, he implicitly promised that the border treaties that Latvia and Estonia desire could have been signed in May 2005. Such implicit promises came to nothing.

However it is important not to portray Baltic interests as being so clear-cut in nature. It must be acknowledged that the three Baltic states do not have the same priorities and goals in relation to Russia and in fact there is not much co-ordination among them. Lithuania has probably best managed to tackle bilateral relations with Russia.<sup>30</sup> The mutual relations between Moscow and Vilnius embrace fewer points of conflict emanating from their mutual history. Their mutual border was recognized at a relatively early stage and a treaty was signed in 1997 (albeit not ratified). Furthermore, the absence of a huge Russian minority takes some tensions off bilateral relations between the two capitals. Thus, the most controversial issue has been the settlement of the status of the Kaliningrad exclave where Lithuania is the principal transit corridor for travel between mainland Russia and the Kaliningrad oblast. While this issue was dealt with mainly through the EU, Lithuania could hide behind various Commission reservations. It was the Commission in fact, who refused to contemplate the idea of retaining a visa free regime, or a transit corridor, through Lithuanian territory – an idea Russia favoured.<sup>31</sup>

Estonian politicians seem to keep a rather low profile in relation to its Eastern neighbour, and it seems as if political representatives are a bit afraid of intimidating Russia. Recently Estonian Prime Minister Juhan Parts rebuked Latvia for its outspoken criticism of Russia because such criticism was viewed as being potentially damaging to Baltic-Russian relations.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, the decision of the Estonian Parliament to attach the aforesaid preamble during the ratification of Russian-Estonian border treaty speaks for the opposite – this was a purely symbolic gesture without any practical effect, and speaks for the belief that Russia would eventually give up, perhaps issuing a similar clause during the ratification in Duma. Perhaps the strongest Estonian voices in relation to Russia may come from the European Parliament from MEPs such as ex-foreign minister Toomas Hendrik Ilves.

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30) See "Bearish" - City Paper interview with Edward Lucas, the Economist's correspondent in Moscow.

31) The issue of transit through Kaliningrad was finally settled in November 2002 by the EU-Russia agreement on the so-called Facilitated Travel Document (FTD) for multiple or single entry visa or Facilitated Rail Travel Document (FRTD) for single journey by train, issued by the Lithuanian consulate. Another problem was that a lot of the Kaliningrad region residents were not in a possession of an international Russian passport but only an internal one. For this reason, a transitional period was agreed allowing the Lithuanian authorities to issue FTD on the basis of internal Russian passports until December 2004.

32) Ahto Lobjakas: Baltics: 'Latvia Spearheads Effort to Force Russia to Confront Its Past', RFE/RL, 2005.



Latvia remains the most vicious of the Baltic states from the Russian perspective. And it is at the moment pushing the hardest to get the EU to recognize Soviet aggression against the Baltic states after WWII and to make the EU speak to Russia with one voice. In this respect, Latvia has been partially successful – it secured the support of Tony Blair and George Bush. The latter spoke in favour of the Baltic states position at the NATO summit in February 2005. In addition, the stopover of George Bush in Riga on his way to Moscow for the Sixtieth anniversary of the Allied victory over Nazism was an important diplomatic success for Latvia. On the other hand, it underlines the thesis that when the Baltic states (and in this case particularly Latvia) do not feel their voice is being listened to in Brussels, they turn to Washington where they are more likely to be successful – and this again illustrates the Atlanticist inclination of these countries.

Although Poland does not have such strong concerns regarding Russia as the Balts, Polish leaders still see Russia as a risk. This perception is based less on Russia's internal political and economic activities and more on renewed imperialist tendencies of Russia in treating its neighbours. Undoubtedly both factors are linked. Consequently, Poland wants for mainly geopolitical reasons to get as many countries out of the Russian sphere of influence as possible through promotion of the benefits of a pro-Western and pro-European orientation. That is why Poland is also supportive of the EU's new neighbourhood policy and calls for recognition of the choice of countries that chose to follow the lead of the EU. The ultimate aim is, however, to minimise Russian influence on Polish affairs.

It is beyond doubt that it will be very difficult to build a genuine common EU stance on Russia in the near future, despite the fact that it would benefit the Balts very much as their capacity to have an influence within the CFSP framework will grow the longer they are members of the EU. But the recent shift to *realpolitik* where the bigger states ostentatiously ignore their EU partners and pursue their self-interest is unfortunately very likely to apply to EU-Russian relations, perhaps more than to any other region. It cannot be expected that Russia will be too enthusiastic about the emergence of any significant pro-active EU presence along its borders – the *status quo* is extremely convenient for Russian politicians as it enables them to play EU members against each other and this gives them a much stronger negotiating role than they would have otherwise.

But it is also possible that we might witness the Baltic states pushing the EU to engage more closely in other parts of the former Soviet Union, namely

in the Caucasus, Ukraine and Moldova. Firstly, this is because of the deep-rooted conviction that the other former “brotherly nations” have the right to opt out of the Russian sphere of influence and chose a pro-European path just as the Balts did. Secondly, there are pragmatic reasons, where the Balts favour more opposition to Russia’s pervasive influence. This stance is underlined by the fact that many of the old-EU states are not ready to view Russia as interfering with the internal business of small neighbouring countries. Thus it makes perfect sense for the Baltic countries and Poland to encourage a more pro-Western stance among Russia’s small neighbours. Ideally these small states would eventually join the EU.

#### **4.2 Poland – Paving the Way for the Ukraine to Join the EU?**

Even before Polish accession to the EU, it was obvious that the Ukraine is a priority country for Warsaw. The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was very active in the formulation of its position on how the EU should deal with the Ukraine after the 2004 enlargement. In January 2003 it circulated its own vision of the new neighbourhood policy in a non-paper (i.e. discussion paper). This document brought forward a number of broad as well as concrete proposals, including, *inter alia*, the establishment of a European Democracy Fund enabling NGOs to implement EU-funded projects, strengthening democracy and the rule of law in neighbouring countries or use of the European Investment Fund to help the SMEs in the region. Although the non-paper does not refer specifically to the Ukraine but covers other countries such as Moldova or Belarus, it makes special recommendations such as EU recognition of the “European choice”. Furthermore it advocates that the existing Partnership and Co-operation agreement should be upgraded to a standard association agreement.

Apart from long-standing historical, social, political and economic links between the two countries, there seems to be an overwhelming political consensus in Poland that the Ukraine should be given the right to join the EU. Prior to the European Parliament elections in June 2004, none of the eight major political parties in Poland opposed the European aspirations of Ukraine, including the two populist parties that are sceptical about the EU – Self-defence (Samoobrona) and the League of Polish Families. According to the League, the Ukraine would be a natural ally of Poland in the EU and would obviously increase its weight in the club.<sup>33</sup>

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33) Taras Kuzio: ‘Poland lobbies EU for Ukraine’, Eurasian Daily Monitor, 2004.

The positions of the main Polish political parties show that there are at least two reasons why Poland should strive for the EU accession ambitions of the Ukraine to be recognized. Firstly Poland generally sees its role as pushing the EU neighbourhood policy to the East rather than to the South. The argument here is that there has to be a clear differentiation between the southern neighbours of the EU (i.e. Mediterranean countries of the southern shore) who are not European and recognition that Eastern neighbouring countries are European. Some political parties, most notably the Law and Justice party, even believe that the Ukraine rather than Russia should be the main focus of the European neighbourhood policy<sup>34</sup>. The second argument in favour of the Ukraine has to do with geopolitics – the Ukraine is seen as a buffer between Poland and Russia that is important because of a deep-rooted perception that Russia is a potential threat. If the right of the Ukraine to join the EU is not recognized, there is a risk that it will tighten its relations with Russia and will remain in its “sphere of influence”.

The willingness of Poland to retain “special” relations with Ukraine was self-evident even in the period of the run-up to accession. Poland strongly lobbied the European Commission to retain a visa-free regime for Ukraine and later to impose visas on Ukrainian citizens only at the date of accession. It should be noted in this respect that the Czech Republic and Slovakia had introduced such visa regulations as early as 2000. In the end, Poland agreed to introduce visas for Ukrainian citizens six months prior to accession. However, Poland managed to extract some important concessions from the Ukraine. Poland undertook to issue free visas to Ukrainian applicants and in return the Ukrainian government agreed to retain a visa free regime for Polish citizens. This issue demonstrates how important bilateral relations with Ukraine are for Poland – for other former CIS countries such as Russia and Belarus visas were introduced at an earlier stage partially because of a failure to conclude re-admission agreements.

Poland was also concerned with the EU not being willing to grant market economy status to the Ukraine.<sup>35</sup> This, had the practical consequence of setting quotas on steel imports from Ukraine to the EU at 185,000 tons in 2004, far below what Poland itself was importing from the Ukraine before the accession.<sup>36</sup>

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34) Russia, however, is *stricto sensu* not part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, although some of its instruments (e.g. the New Neighbourhood Instrument to become one EU financial instrument for the neighbouring countries) will be applicable to Russia as well

35) The recognition as a market economy is essential for the admittance of a country to World Trade Organisation (WTO). Russia was granted the status of market economy already in 2002.

36) *Ibid.*

The Polish focus on the Ukraine was thus strong from the very moment of accession. Obviously, the events of December 2004, leading to a re-running of the second round of the presidential elections in Ukraine and final victory for the pro-European presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko, gave a completely different dynamic to Polish policy. The instrumental role of Poland in dealings with the Ukraine can be demonstrated by the fact that it was the Polish President Alexandr Kwasniewski, along with the EU foreign policy chief Solana and Lithuanian President Adamkus, who were entrusted by the EU to travel to Kiev after negotiations following the first (second round) presidential elections were contested leading to a dangerous political deadlock. It shows that EU leaders are able to recognize the leading role of Poland. However, it also shows an apparent lack of interest in the Ukraine among the leaders of the EU heavyweights, a situation that contrasts sharply in how these leaders normally deal with Russia.

The victory of the strongly pro-reform and pro-EU candidate in the Ukraine obviously shed a completely changed the European aspirations of this Eastern European country. Although this issue was in the past played down by many top EU politicians, not least by former Commission President Prodi,<sup>37</sup> it is clear that it will be very difficult to maintain this rhetoric from now on. Interestingly enough, the Ukrainian factor was evident in the December 2004 European Council decision to launch accession negotiations with Turkey. The point some countries, and notably Poland, are making now, is that once we agree that Turkey can become a member of the club, the EU cannot possibly say no to Ukraine. This has led to a lack of opposition from Poland to open accession negotiations with Turkey. This is because if Ukrainian accession were not at a consideration, the attitude to eventual Turkish accession would probably be much more reserved due to Vatican unhappiness about such a development.

The events of December 2004 showed firstly the reluctance of some old-EU member states to give Ukraine a green light immediately, partially because of fears of antagonising Russia. But it turns out that Putin might not have a problem with Ukrainian aspirations to join the EU – it seems that for Putin Ukrainian membership in NATO is much more problematic.<sup>38</sup> Putin accepted the Yushchenko victory in the re-run elections in January 2005 without any reservations, despite showing indisputable support for Yanukovych ahead of the elections.

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37) Prodi was alleged to say that Ukraine “will never become a member of the EU”. He consequently claimed that the media misquoted him.

38) Taras Kuzio: “Orange Revolution exposes EU’s deficient Ukraine policy”, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 2004.

The visit of Yushchenko to Brussels in February 2005 did not leave anyone in the EU in doubt that for the new Ukrainian president there are no alternatives to the aspiration of full membership. Not even the fact that the EU and Ukraine were able to move ahead with European Neighbourhood Action Plan quickly. Yushchenko spoke openly of his ambition to start accession negotiations in 2007. But again, there is an inter-institutional cleavage: while the European Parliament called very openly to acknowledging candidate status for the Ukraine and applauding Yushchenko during his speech, the reaction from the Council was much more lukewarm. Jean-Claude Juncker as the incoming Council president “warned against offering Ukraine the prospect of full membership” (*The Times*, December 10, 2004). The Commission has kept a rather low profile in the debate so far, but it clearly would like to move ahead with the Ukraine in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

What is going to be the future of the Ukrainian card in the EU and how active Poland and perhaps some other new member states will be in this process remains to be seen. However, recognition of the possible candidate status of the Ukraine now depends on the internal political development in the EU as well as on the progress of the reform process in the Ukraine itself. The complications with ratification of the EU Constitutional Treaty in some member states, underlined by the recent rejection of the Treaty in France and the Netherlands, will lead the EU to rethinking its strategy towards further enlargements (i.e. after Bulgaria and Romania) beyond 2007. And it is highly unlikely that if the ratification process fails the EU would be willing – at least for the time being – to give a green light to Ukrainian wishes to commence negotiations on EU membership.

### **4.3 The Central European Countries – Pulling South Rather than East?**

The geographical focus of the remaining new member states – the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia – is not as clear-cut as in the case of Poland and the Baltic republics. To some extent, they are interested in the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) but not to the same degree as Poland and the Baltic states.

Russia does not pose an imminent threat to the CEE countries even though it is still sometimes viewed with suspicion; because of internal political developments rather than as a security threat to the Central European region. Bilateral

relations with Russia are for the most part normalised where recently the focus has been on the settlement of Russian debts. Although the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia are still quite dependent on Russian energy supplies (crude oil and natural gas), this dependency especially in the cases of Slovenia and the Czech Republic is much less than for other countries in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>39</sup> Since the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary or Slovenia do not share a border with Russia this eliminates many contentious issues. Historical legacies are also much less controversial than in case of the Baltics and Poland. Russia has never been a dominating power in the CEE region except during the Cold War period. Although there were Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia and Hungary during the Communist era, they pulled out very soon after the democratic changes at the beginning of 1990's. Slovenia is a very special case in this respect, because it was part of Yugoslavia, and so Russia exerted very little influence over this country and which had much closer links with its Western neighbours such as Italy and Austria than with the former Soviet bloc countries.

In relation to the Ukraine and perhaps other countries falling under the ENP, the picture is somewhat different. Two of the Central European countries – Hungary and Slovakia – share a common border with Ukraine, and there are certain cultural as well as economic links – given by the presence of a Hungarian minority in the Western region of the Ukraine (Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia or Trans-Carpathia) as well as the historical links of Slovakia to this region (which was in the interwar period part of Czechoslovakia) and the presence of a Ruthenian minority in Slovakia. But these links are much weaker and far less important than in case of Poland. Still, these two countries are likely to support a viable neighbourhood policy in relation to the Ukraine in particular. But to what extent the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia will push along with Poland for recognition of the candidate status of the Ukraine is not very clear. On the other hand, as the Ukraine is so dominant in terms of Polish foreign policy priorities, the other countries in the region may try to fill the gap and take the initiative in fostering links with other states in the East, such as Moldova, Belarus or the Caucasus states. But there is very little evidence at the moment to prove that this will indeed be the case. Furthermore, after the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, the level of support for seeking closer relations with Moldova and the Caucasus states will increase.

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39) The Czech government intentionally kept Russian bidders out of the privatisation of Unipetrol, the state-owned oil refining company.

The region that draws much more attention from the perspective of the Central European countries is South-Eastern Europe or the Western Balkans. There are both general and specific explanations for this interest. In general terms, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia enjoy special relations with the Western Balkan countries in many respects. In the case of Slovenia relations are perhaps strongest. Since Slovenia was once part of Yugoslavia it has very good knowledge and close links to the South-Eastern European region. But there are also more pragmatic explanations – Slovenian companies and enterprises have invested heavily over the last decade in many ex-Yugoslav countries,<sup>40</sup> and for this reason the prosperity of the region and eventual accession into the EU is undoubtedly in Slovenia's self-interest. Despite the fact that there were some contentious issues particularly in relation to Croatia, concerning the dispute over territorial waters in the Adriatic, this is not likely to pose any huge obstacles to support of the Croatian bid for EU membership (an issue to be examined later in this paper).

Hungary's interest in the region is determined by two particular factors: first is the presence of Hungarian minorities in Serbia (Vojvodina/Western Banat), the other one is a thousand-year historical link with Croatia. The minority issue has always been an important element behind Hungarian foreign policy thinking. The assurance of privileged treatment and the well being of the Hungarian diaspora will be one of the focal points for Hungarian priorities in CFSP. The degree to which the issue is important for Hungary was demonstrated during the Convention and the IGC, where the Hungarian delegation was very successful in pushing through the inclusion of a special reference to minority rights among the values of the EU in the Constitutional Treaty. In practical terms, the question intensified with the accession of Hungary into the EU. Consideration had to be made prior to accession of the large number of ethnic Hungarians living outside the EU, and practical problems such as having to possess a visa when travelling to Hungary. The question of a large Hungarian minority, who live in Slovakia (estimated around 450,000 ethnic Hungarians), was settled by the simultaneous accession to the EU and for Romania (with about 1.5 million ethnic Hungarians) this will probably happen in 2007. Thus the largest remaining Hungarian minority dwelling outside the EU relates to the approximately 290,000 ethnic Hungarians (2002 estimate) living in the Vojvodina region of Serbia.<sup>41</sup>

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0) In 2000, Slovenian FDI in the four countries of ex-Yugoslavia: Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro amounted to about 65% of overall Slovene foreign investment.

41) Source: Government Office for Hungarians Abroad, <http://www.htmh.hu/english.htm>

The other strong motive for the Hungarian focus on Western Balkans is the long-standing historical and cultural links with Croatia. Since the 12th century Croatia was joined to Hungary by virtue of a dynastic union that combined the Hungarian and Croatian crowns. Croats have always enjoyed autonomy (even after the establishment of Dual monarchy in 1867) and privileged treatment compared to other nationalities living under the Hungarian crown. Croatia has been traditionally viewed as one of the least complicated of Hungary's neighbours, partially because of the absence of a large Hungarian minority.

In case of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, links to the Western Balkan region can also be explained mainly by historical and cultural motives. This stems from the fact that the Southern-Slavic nations – Croats, Serbs, Slovenes and Bosnians who lived in Austria-Hungary often went to study in Prague which was the main centre of Slavic education in the Empire and there was a very lively intellectual exchange especially during the national revival in the nineteenth century. Today Croatia remains the most popular destination for Czech and Slovak tourists during the summer. Moreover, during the conflict in Yugoslavia Czech and Slovak diplomats were very active in the search for peace. Two examples illustrate this activism. First there was the appointment of the ex-minister of foreign affairs Mr Jiri Dientsbier as the special UN envoy for human rights in ex-Yugoslavia. Second, there was a Czech-Greek peace initiative that tried to avert military action during the imminent humanitarian crisis in Kosovo in 1999.

The strong interest of the Central European states in the Western Balkans relationship with the EU was clearly evident when the EU Council of Foreign Ministers decided not to open accession negotiations with Croatia on March 17, 2005. The decision not to open the accession negotiations in accordance with the original timetable was due to alleged non-compliance and co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for ex-Yugoslavia (ICTY) – a position based on the opinion of its chief prosecutor Carla del Ponte. The main sticking point was seen to be the failure of the Croatian government to organise the surrender of General Ante Gotovina to the ICTY.<sup>42</sup> The decision of the Foreign Affairs Council was strongly opposed by Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and Austria. The Hungarian Prime Minister Gyurcsány even accused those member states that were most strongly opposed to the

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42) Carla del Ponte claimed that the Croatian authorities were not ready to surrender the alleged war criminal, General Ante Gotovina or at least indicate where he is hiding. The Croatian government claimed that General Gotovina is no longer in Croatia.



opening of negotiations, namely Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden, of not treating all EU candidates in the same way. However, success for the Central Europeans came when the European Council in April 2005 agreed, with the proposal of Austria and Slovakia, to re-evaluate the progress of Croatia by May 2005,<sup>43</sup> thus leaving the option for the issue to be reopened in the summer of 2005. Nonetheless the prospect of this happening seems to be very unlikely since del Ponte has repeatedly claimed that Gotovina is within reach of Croatian authorities. Moreover it was made clear during the Luxemburg Presidency that failure to settle this issue would make the launch of accession negotiations impossible.

The stance taken by the Central European states has to be understood not as a justification of the attitude of Croatian authorities towards the Hague Tribunal but within the broader context of EU policy towards the Western Balkans. The leaders of the states who support opening accession negotiations with Croatia believe that it is necessary to give a positive signal to the other aspirants that accession might become a reality. They also fear possible negative consequences of any decision that would lead to a drop in public support for EU integration not only in Croatia but all right across the region.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, the proponents of delaying accession negotiations argue that the EU has to show the other countries in the region that without full co-operation with the ICTY in the Hague, the prospect of joining the EU becomes highly unlikely. This stance relates particularly to the two most wanted war criminals – Karadzic and Mladic whose surrender is required from Serbia. And it seems that in this respect the Serbian authorities have understood the message conveyed by the recent decision of the Council.<sup>45</sup>

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43) The European Council also agreed to set up a team consisting of J. Solana, enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn and the representatives of the UK, Austria and Luxembourg, to evaluate the extent to which the Croatian authorities are co-operating with the International Tribunal on War Crimes and present a report of their findings.

44) After the decision to postpone the start of negotiations, support for EU accession dropped to an unprecedented (low of) 38% in Croatia. Source: Transitions Online and Eurobarometer.

45) Another explanation for the tough stance of Carla del Ponte is that the mandate of the Tribunal is due to expire in 2010 and the most wanted war criminals (Gotovina, Karadzic and Mladic) still remain at large.

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## **5. IDEALISM VERSUS PRAGMATISM IN FOREIGN POLICY:**

### *An Enduring Cleavage between Old and New Europe?*

In this section consideration will be made as to whether there will be an enduring cleavage between the so-called ‘old’ (EU-15) and “new” member states in terms of pursuing idealistic rather than pragmatic goals in foreign policy making. The concept of idealism in foreign policy in this respect is viewed as an emphasis on issues such as human rights, rule of law, democracy, or more generally respect of obligations under existing international law as opposed to an approach that neglects some of these concerns for the sake of keeping good and friendly (not least economic) relations with the governments of third countries.

The hypothesis examined here is not meant to suggest that the EU-15 have not pursued idealist goals in its foreign policy. On the contrary, the EU has consistently used its economic bargaining power to promote human rights, rule of law, democracy and conditionality in a number of countries, including the new member states before accession. It is beyond doubt that many of these ideals helped tremendously in transforming the societies of Central and Eastern Europe to become market economies, with standard democratic political systems and a high degree of human rights protection and legal enforcement. Without the EU’s insistence on the so-called Copenhagen criteria, it is likely that the transformation process would have taken much longer. And the same is happening, or at least beginning to happen, in countries that aspire to EU membership in regions such as the Balkans, the Caucasus or more recently the Ukraine. But the other side of the coin is that this policy is applied only in relation to countries where the EU can clearly apply its “carrot and stick” tactics. States that aspire to membership, or at the very least the economic benefits of closer ties with the EU, are in effect compelled through specific eligibility criteria to develop European institutions of law, democratic politics and respect for human rights.

If we, however, take a broader look at EU policy towards countries and regions that do not currently enjoy preferential treatment by the EU, the picture becomes much more mixed. Such a mixed picture applies especially to CFSP – a domain that is still under the command of member states. Since the other areas of external action, such as trade agreements, humanitarian aid or enlargement, are mainly developed and implemented by the Commission, this framework provides for less involvement by member states, and consequently the opportunities for certain member states who have a strong interest in a particular region or a country to set the agenda at the EU level is much weaker.

The presumed idealism in foreign policy of the new member states stems from their own transformation experience. All of these countries widely acknowledge and accept the strong influence that the principles of democratic conditionality and related issues in foreign policy can exert over in precipitating domestic changes and reforms. And this would apply not only to political elites but also to vast portions of the populations in Central and Eastern Europe. Many of the political elites in the new member states are former dissidents who were persecuted under communism, and have a deep empathy for those who still suffer under authoritarian or undemocratic regimes. Some of the leading proponents of idealism in foreign policy in the last fifteen years came from Central Europe; examples include Václav Havel or Lech Walesa, who held top constitutional posts in the Czech Republic and Poland respectively. Thus, the emphasis of projecting these issues into EU foreign policy from the perspective of new member states is understandable for historical reasons. There are some very good examples of this idealist orientation despite the relatively brief involvement of CEE countries in CFSP.

The most recent one relates to the deliberations of the Council of Foreign Ministers in January 2005 over the issue of lifting diplomatic sanctions against Cuba. EU foreign ministers had imposed sanctions on Cuba in 2003 after Fidel Castro arrested about seventy-five dissidents in March of that year. In the autumn of 2004 Spain proposed a partial lifting of these sanctions after Castro's administration released fourteen of these political prisoners. There seemed to be an overall consensus emerging among the member states that diplomatic relations should be, at least partially, restored. Spanish proposals went even further, arguing that the representations of EU member states in Havana should stop inviting Cuban dissidents to their embassies. This was seen as a necessary pre-condition expected by Castro's regime for restoring diplomatic relations with the EU. In fact by 2004 some of the member states

had already stopped inviting dissidents and Havana in response had started to gradually restore diplomatic relations with these countries.

But there was very strong opposition from a handful of member states, headed by the Czech Republic and supported by Poland. The Czech Republic made a very bold move, threatening to use its veto over any decision of the Council that did not make restoration of diplomatic relations with Cuba conditional on further improvements in the situation of the dissidents. For this reason the Council agreed to re-evaluate the lifting of diplomatic sanctions within six months. Furthermore, the Czech Republic insisted that it would keep inviting dissidents to receptions at the Czech embassy in Havana, a policy viewed as giving strong moral support to Cuban dissidents and their families. In the Czech press, the issue was called the Czech Republic's "first foreign policy victory since joining the EU".<sup>46</sup>

One may wonder why the Czech Republic was so vehement on this issue, arguing strongly against anything that might be viewed as a conciliatory gesture towards the last dictatorship in Latin America. Apart from the general background outlined above, there were other particular factors that played an important role in the Czech case. First, the existing links between the Czech Republic and Cuba from communist times still resonate in Czech society.<sup>47</sup> But perhaps more important is the extent to which the Czech political class and Czech NGOs took the issue of supporting the Cuban democratic movement seriously. There are a number of examples to demonstrate this since the late 1990s. The Czech Republic has drafted several anti-Cuban government resolutions in the United Nations Human Rights Commission since 1999, taking the initiative from the United States who was previously the main critic of the Cuban regime. Leading Czech politicians, including Václav Havel, have consistently spoken out against Castro's regime. Two members of the Czech parliament were even arrested during their trip to Cuba in 2001 while on a mission aimed at supporting Cuban political dissidents. This occurred after a third Czech initiated UN resolution had been passed in the UN condemning Cuba. The release of the Czech parliamentarians had to be negotiated directly with President Castro by Mr Pithart, President of the Czech Senate. And last but not least there is the strong influence of NGOs most notably headed by the People in Need Foundation. This foundation runs one of the

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46) The Prague Post, February 8, 2005.

47) Czechoslovakia was one of the leading trade partners of Cuba before 1989; many Cubans studied in Czechoslovakia and much of the infrastructure in Cuba has been designed and constructed by Czech and Slovak engineers.

biggest projects in Cuba aimed at helping dissidents and their families to overcome the consequences of political persecution. For these reasons, the Czech Republic has become the leading European country on the issues of human rights in Cuba. From this perspective, the Czech position during the key Council decision of January 2005 is understandable. But it seems that promotion of democratic change has indeed become one of the focal points of Czech foreign policy. In 2004, a new unit of the Czech foreign ministry charged with promoting democratic transition has begun to monitor and evaluate the development of human rights and democracy in other parts of the world. This unit works in close association with NGOs co-ordinating and running programmes related to the restoration of human rights and democracy in various countries such as Cuba, Belarus and Myanmar.

A clear strategy of putting the human rights and democracy on the foreign policy agenda can be sensed in relation to the countries encompassed by the EU's near neighbourhood policy (ENP) and this is particularly true vis-à-vis Russia, and to a lesser extent Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. It is not surprising that the Balts are the main critics of Russia's reversion towards more authoritarian practices. Chechnya has become the most important issue on which the Balts have consistently criticised Russia on alleged human rights abuses. An astonishingly harsh criticism came not only from leading political figures in all three Baltic states, but also from Baltic citizens. Interestingly the criticism has also been directed towards the alleged ignorance of the international community, including such organizations as the OSCE.<sup>48</sup> But for the Balts, this is quite a tricky game as they are themselves often criticized for their treatment of Russian speaking minorities. Given Russia's pervasive influence among all of its smaller neighbours it is not surprising that the Baltic states, with relatively large Russian speaking populations, have developed relatively stringent minorities policies. Unfortunately for the Balts these strict minority policies have the effect of undermining their democratic idealism strategy.

Another example that demonstrates the rather sensitive issue of adopting an appeasing stance towards undemocratic regimes is the question of lifting the arms embargo on China. In this case, although opposition came mainly from some of the old member states, notably the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark, reservations were also expressed also by new member states, including Latvia,

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48) Estonian President Lennart Meri boycotted the OSCE summit in Istanbul in November 1999, stating that the OSCE should be acting rather than celebrating after the renewed outbreak of atrocities in Chechnya. The Estonian Premier Mart Laar voiced perhaps the strongest criticism of Russia at this OSCE summit.

Poland and the Czech Republic. But unlike the question of Cuba, it is very much doubtful whether they were led by the same motives as Sweden and Denmark who opposed the lifting of the embargo mainly because of concerns over human rights abuses in China. The question of China is more complex for a variety of reasons. One important consideration relates to ensuring economic opportunities for European companies in China and more specifically promoting European defence industry interests in the Chinese market. Therefore firm opposition to the proponents of lifting the arms embargo (mainly France) would undoubtedly lead to complications in future relations with fellow EU member states. It is, however, rather striking that the new member states, especially the Balts and the Poles, did not oppose the lifting of the embargo because of strong opposition from Washington. Thus it is interesting to examine this issue in terms of the Atlanticism of the EU newcomers. On this particular issue, there does not seem to be evidence that the US is exerting pressure on the new member states to block the lifting of the embargo; moreover CEE states have not shown much 'independent' enthusiasm for this course of action.

At the same time, this point demonstrates that foreign policy idealism is not something specifically related to "New Europe" but we can see it in EU-15 as well. Apart from the old member states who opposed the lifting on the arms embargo to China, we can raise the example of the Netherlands which in late 2004 in their capacity of EU presidency criticised the developments in Russia after the Beslan attacks mainly because of idealistic motives .

The Iraq issue discussed earlier also provides some interesting evidence of an idealistic approach to foreign policy. It was suggested that all the new EU members supported, directly or indirectly, the US-led coalition of the willing. But it cannot be assumed that their support for US policy on Iraq stemmed from the same considerations that prevailed within the US administration, even at the level of argumentation. The US leadership has consistently claimed that the main motive for overthrowing of Saddam Hussein related to his attempt to seize weapons of mass destruction, thus posing a threat to world peace. For Central European states a much more important motive for siding with the Americans was the fact that the regime of Saddam Hussein was inhuman, dictatorial and was well known for using terror against its own citizens. This idea resonated very strongly when the Czech position was debated in the Czech parliament and most especially in the Senate.<sup>49</sup>

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49) See Král and Pachta: 'Czech Republic and the Iraq Crisis: Shaping the Czech Stance,' EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, January 2005.

Finally, signs of an idealistic approach to foreign policy may be detected in attitudes towards further enlargements. Most of the new member states are in favour of extending the EU beyond its existing borders, and this is true not only of political elites but also of citizens.<sup>50</sup> However on this point, it is much more difficult to argue that the prevailing motivation of the new member states is based on economic considerations or wishes to bury the artificial division of the Old Continent. It is true that one element in this type of argument is that the EU should not become fortress Europe, by building prosperity inside the Union and not caring about what happens beyond the Union's borders. But there are pragmatic reasons as well, that tend toward pushing the external border of the Union further away, thus eliminating many risks emanating from it. Geopolitical considerations have always been very strong in Central Europe and the idea of the region being a buffer zone still prevails.

Furthermore, it may turn out that in many respects, the countries that hope to join the EU in the future are likely to become direct competitors to the 2004 enlargement states – due to entitlements for regional and structural aid with accession and their substantially lower labour costs. Moreover for those 2004 accession states that want more integration in certain fields (thereby joining the “EU core”) further enlargement poses certain dangers, i.e. maintaining both the speed and uniformity of the integration process. And finally the evidence presented with regard to widening the EU illustrates that new member states support for future enlargement is for the most part predicated on specific and pragmatic considerations. In the case of Hungary it is the issue of Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring countries. For Poland the focus is on the Ukraine because it is a potentially large and powerful partner in the EU. Thus the apparently idealistic approach of the 2004 accession states towards further EU enlargement in reality contains many practical considerations. Such pragmatism is more likely to dominate the longer these countries are members of the EU. Long term membership is likely to prompt the realisation that the EU is not only about nice idealistic goals of European reunification but also about the daily bargaining over “bread-and-butter” issues (a process that will become ever more difficult with an increased number of member states).

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50) According to Eurobarometer 62, published in December 2004, citizens of the new member states are the most supportive of further enlargement, with support ranging from 63% in Hungary to 78% in Poland. This contrasts sharply with public attitudes in most of the old EU-15 member states. A similar positive pattern of support for enlargement exists in candidate countries (i.e. Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Turkey).



Thus predicting the degree to which the foreign policy of the new member states will remain associated with idealistic goals is both difficult and complex. Idealism in foreign policy during the 1990's based largely on the actions of prominent dissident figures is likely to fade away. As senior communist era dissident figures begin to retire from public life in the CEE countries a new generation of more pragmatic policy makers are coming to the fore. But to some extent, foreign policy idealism may remain more associated, at least for some years to come, with Atlanticism rather than with the domestic legacy of dissidents. It seems that George W. Bush's doctrine of "spreading freedom in the world" might still find some ground in the more Atlanticist new members. They may try to use similar arguments in pursuing specific foreign policy objectives.



## 6. CANDIDATE COUNTRIES AND CFSP

The final part of this paper will try to highlight some issues that may arise with further enlargements in the area of EU foreign policy.<sup>51</sup> The accession of the three potential candidates – Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey will also be very important in shaping CFSP.

The geographical location of the three countries of the Eastern Balkans and Asia Minor puts them in a specific position and pre-determines them to be strong players in the region that is of a crucial importance for the EU in the future. In fact, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey are crossroads for several regions where the EU is already engaged: the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East.

Turkey will play a key role among the candidate countries for a variety of reasons: not solely because of its size giving it substantial voting power in EU institutions but also due to its role as a regional power and the size of its military which could make it a very important asset in ESDP.<sup>52</sup> Turkey has often been viewed as a very Atlanticist country. Its strategic alliance with the US is often regarded as one of the key elements of Turkish foreign policy.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, a certain shift in the attitudes towards the US can be detected recently. The AKP (Justice and Development) party of Prime Minister Erdogan has taken a much more hard-line stance, especially over Iraq, where the Turkish parliament voted against the stationing or movement of US troops through Turkey. The Transatlantic Trends Survey referred to earlier suggests that Turkish public opinion is the most anti-American of all the countries surveyed. Therefore there is no guarantee that Turkey will be another “Trojan” horse of the US in Europe. On the contrary, after joining the EU, it may seek to be a reassuring voice in CFSP aligning itself more with the autonomists rather than the Atlanticists. But as the AKP government clearly is more nationalist and traditionalist, much will depend on domestic political developments in Turkey.

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51) Although Croatia is a candidate country as well, it will not be dealt with here as the focus of this analysis is on the Black Sea region. For various reasons, it can be assumed that Croatia will align with the Central European states (Hungary, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia) because of its interest in the Western Balkans.

52) Turkish military forces under NATO command account for 27% of NATO's total strength in Europe.

53) S. Everts: 'An Asset not a Model: Turkey, the EU and Wider Middle East,' Centre for European Reform, 2004.

Turkey will probably be instrumental in developing closer ties between the EU and the Caucasus region, because of its historical and economic ties and not least because of its position as an energy hub through which oil and gas supplies from the Caspian basin pass to Europe (e.g. the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline). And this is also where one of the main problem lies, namely Turkey's complicated relations with Armenia. At the moment, relations are frozen and it seems obvious that normalisation of relations will become one of the litmus tests in the EU accession negotiations. The key issue will be recognition of the Armenian genocide in 1915 and the deeply rooted conviction among Armenians that Turkey is an enemy and not to be trusted. This is linked to the fact that Armenia is still looking towards Russia as the main guarantor of its security, which gives Russia substantial influence, especially after the "loss" of Georgia. On the other hand, a strong Armenian diaspora in France has the potential to use the issue of unsettled history to block Turkish accession. Thus, the normalisation of relations between Armenia and Turkey is crucial in many respects.

As for the Middle East, it has often been argued that Turkey could be crucial in acting as an example to Muslim countries that Europe is not hostile to Islamic societies and cultures. In this respect Turkey could act as a bridge to the whole Middle East region. But this potential impact may be rather limited, due to Turkey's complicated relations with Iran, Iraq and Syria, i.e. countries where EU diplomacy is already quite active. The strong links between Turkey and Israel also pose questions regarding the extent to which Turkey can act as an interlocutor with Arab countries in the region. On the other hand, as in the case of relations with the US, recent Turkish-Israeli relations have cooled with Prime Minister Erdogan being quite critical of the Sharon government. Undoubtedly Turkey has a lot of vital interests in the Middle East, ranging from water resources to the Kurdish issue. For this reason it is likely to be a very assertive player and unlikely to submit to any decision that could undermine its own concerns and interests. In any case, it is rather difficult to estimate at the moment what impact Turkish accession might have on CFSP. A lot will depend on internal developments in Turkey as well as on what the Middle East and Black Sea regions are going to look like in some fifteen to twenty years, and obviously on the outcome of the accession negotiations which do not automatically guarantee a full membership. With the complicated political developments in Europe these days, the Turkish accession seems to be very much off the table for the moment.

The impact of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania on CFSP is easier to predict, as both countries will join the EU soon, probably in 2007. Considering first the issue of Atlanticism, it is quite likely that these two countries will follow the pattern of the other new member states in supporting US led policies, perhaps even more enthusiastically. Both countries strongly supported the US position on Iraq. In order to ensure a swift process of accession into NATO, both Bulgaria and Romania sent contingents to Afghanistan and Iraq and have demonstrated themselves to be the most loyal allies of the US in Eastern Europe. Such a stance obviously complicates their relations with some of the older EU member states. From the transatlantic perspective, the US administration views Bulgaria and Romania as being very important because of their stake in the Black Sea region.<sup>54</sup> Both countries are viewed as prime examples of how successful democracies in the region are clearly heading for EU membership, in contrast to some more troublesome parts of the Black Sea region, especially along its Northern and Eastern shores. Because of close links with the US, Bulgaria and Romania are perceived to be supportive of US policies in many respects, including support for pro-reform movements in various parts of the region. In addition, Bulgarian and Romanian accession is likely to lead to EU involvement in so-called “frozen conflicts”,<sup>55</sup> and confronting the fears of perceived Russian interference amongst its smaller neighbouring states.

The question remains to what extent the approach of Bulgaria and Romania will be based on a pro-active policy and to what extent it will remain US-driven. It is quite clear that Romania and Bulgaria on one hand and Turkey on the other may be trying to pull the EU in different directions. Turkey may be tempted to cosy up to Russia in terms of traditional nineteenth century spheres of influence thinking, especially if the current trends in foreign policy making based on nationalism and anti-Western sentiments endure. Movement by Turkey in this direction would be undoubtedly bolstered if EU negotiations proceed badly. Romania and Bulgaria might call for greater involvement of the EU in the region and use its soft power to turn the Black Sea region into a safe neighbourhood for the wider EU, a strategy very likely to be actively supported by the Balts and the Poles. Certainly, Russia will remain an important actor in the region and EU involvement will be

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54) For further reference to the importance of the region for the US, please refer to the Jackson testimony before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US Senate, March 8, 2005.

55) These include for instance Transdnistria, Southern Ossetia, Abkazia or Nagorno Karabakh.

determined to a large extent by the nature of EU-Russian relations. Given the virtual absence of a systematic EU policy towards Russia at the moment, Bulgarian and Romanian activities might complicate things further where the Black Sea region could potentially become – *cum grano salis* – another Iraq for CFSP. Needless to say, this would be very unfortunate and damaging for the credibility of EU foreign policy.

As for more particular issues, it is quite likely that Romania will try to shape EU policy towards Moldova – many Moldovans possess Romanian citizenship, and the two countries are often considered to be culturally and linguistically one nation. In the case of Bulgaria, it is likely to align with countries that are active in the Western Balkans. International cooperation in the Western Balkans region is already well developed and this cooperation is enhanced by a significant NGO presence.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This paper has shown that the track record of the new member states in the CFSP during their first year of membership is not as clear-cut as is sometimes assumed. The new member states have not and are not going to automatically side with the US on many issues regarding foreign policy, because of different domestic considerations, varying degrees of public support for alliance with the US and because of different threat perceptions. As the geographical interests of the new member states will vary significantly, a united “New Europe” push towards particular regions and issues cannot be expected. Finally, although in the recent past the political leaders in the new member states tended to act with what could be broadly described as an idealist approach to foreign policy, this phenomenon is not likely to endure either, because with membership of the EU, these countries are starting to realize that European integration is very much a pragmatic project – a characteristic that also applies to the domain of foreign policy.

Given that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are not going to act as a homogenous bloc in shaping CFSP, certain dividing lines can be drawn across the region. These dividing lines are determined by the combination of three factors. The main dividing line will run between the three Baltic republics and Poland on one hand and the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia on the other.

The first group will be characterized by a strong emphasis on making CFSP compatible with US policies, not only in terms of defence (demonstrated by a strong focus on NATO) but also on other issues, such as policy towards Russia, the Ukraine, or the Black Sea region. These countries will also prioritise EU external action in the East, namely finding a common EU stance towards Russia, offering incentives to the Ukraine to keep its pro-European path chosen during the Orange Revolution and possibly to encouraging democratic changes in other parts of former Soviet Union. And because of their motivation in keeping Russia out and as far away as possible from Central and Eastern Europe, they will be prepared to commit themselves to helping the countries surrounding Russia to emerge from the Russian sphere of influence and to tie them more closely to the EU. For this reason, the

Baltic republics and Poland will use the rhetoric of democracy (as opposed to authoritarian rule), rule of law and the right of countries to choose their own destiny as an integral part of their foreign policy activities.

Poland is in a particular position because it is in terms of foreign policy priorities strongly linked to the Baltic states but remains anchored in Central European co-operation initiatives (e.g. Visegrád and the Central European Initiative) a situation that makes it a bridge between the two groups. This certainly underlines its aspiration to remain a regional power and to speak on certain occasions on behalf of the CEE region, a fact which is only accepted with reservations, or not accepted at all, by Poland's Central European neighbours.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are often perceived as one bloc but the reality is more complex. Firstly, there is no consistent co-ordination among them on foreign policy issues. These countries often chose to work through different channels. For example, Lithuania has aligned with Poland to steer the EU policy on the Ukraine after the Orange revolution, a move that is understandable for historical reasons. Estonia seems to be trying to keep a lower profile and co-ordinate its activities with Finland, which has a considerable influence in Brussels, given its size. Latvia, who seems to be lacking strong allies in the EU, is left to pursue perhaps the most Atlanticist course, which is apparently understood in Washington and was underlined by the stopover in Riga of President Bush on his way to Moscow on May 6-7, 2005. This demonstrates that the Balts, given their relatively small size and particular concerns, are aware of the necessity of having strong allies to be able to contribute to EU foreign policy. Furthermore the Balts have seen the merits of working through the European Parliament.

The situation in the remaining Central European states is considerably different. For them, the issue of developing a strong and coherent policy towards Russia is far less important, because Russia is viewed as much less of an external or domestic threat. They are more likely to exert pressure in the EU to focus on the Western Balkans where they have strong stakes (albeit for different reasons). Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia adopted a particularly hard line on the issue of (not) opening accession negotiations with Croatia. The Atlanticist commitment of Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia is not equally intense as there is no uniform consensus among national political elites that siding with the US is always the best option. Moreover public opinion is less Atlanticist in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia than in the Baltic/Poland group, which gives the gov-



ernments in these four countries even more leeway to “Europeanize” their foreign policy. The new member states idealism in foreign policy was perhaps best demonstrated by the Czech position on Cuba, but this phenomenon is likely to be an exception rather than the rule and will probably diminish as the main proponent of this policy – Václav Havel – has retired from active politics. In general, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia can be described as being more “relaxed” in terms of foreign policy, giving them more flexibility in shaping their positions or balancing out different groupings inside the EU. However such a relaxed stance gives them less leverage in shaping decision-making within the EU as a whole.

In conclusion, it is not possible to give a definite answer to Wessel’s contentions as to what scenarios the new EU member states are going to follow in CFSP. This is because the 2004 accession states cannot be viewed as a compact bloc. It seems that in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary future foreign policy strategies are likely to exhibit patterns consonant with both the *neutral* and *optimistic* scenarios. These countries have kept quite a low profile on most foreign policy issues discussed in the Council since accession, with the notable exception of the Czech Republic on the Cuban issue. Such a low profile strategy helped to repair the transatlantic rifts over Iraq. In the case of Poland and the Balts, these countries have been more active in attempting to shape the EU’s relationship towards Russia. The impact of Baltic and Polish policy in this regard has been rather mixed. It maybe assumed that their push for a more comprehensive EU-Russia policy is mainly driven by domestic considerations and this is particularly true in the case of the Balts. Such a situation is suggestive of a *pessimistic* scenario. However given the virtual non-existence of any common EU policy towards Russia, they cannot be blamed for this as other EU member states, notably France, Germany and Italy, have behaved in a similar way. Thus, we can trace elements of *neutral*, *optimistic* and *pessimistic* behaviours and strategies among the new member states in their attempts to shape EU foreign policy. Whether any of these scenarios will eventually predominate or whether future developments will continue to exhibit a combination of all three behaviours and strategies remains to be seen.



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# **EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP**

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*Not all is achievable with military instruments,  
yet nothing is achievable without them.*

RAYMOND ARON



# 1. INTRODUCTION

The ‘European defence’ idea is as old as the project of European integration itself.<sup>1</sup> Following a number of long-winded adventures the European defence project took shape of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 1998 which has been becoming a still more important component of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security (CFSP). This intergovernmental initiative representing a new dimension of European integration<sup>2</sup> is surely a milestone on the integration journey on which ESDP is as important as the single market or the monetary union.<sup>3</sup> In relation to the ESDP (and the whole CFSP) EU member states have decided to extend – though on the intergovernmental level – the scope of the Union’s action to areas which had previously been under exclusive control by nation states, in spite of a similar military and political cooperation within the framework of the North Atlantic Alliance for over fifty years. ESDP can be said to be a part of European political integration while coming in reaction to the end of the Cold War and the subsequent hot wars on the European continent throughout the 1990s, wars that Europe was unable to face with adequate reaction.

In spite of its large population and great economic power (the EU is the largest economic superpower in the world and the most populous entity in the West) Europe remains a ‘political dwarf’, as claimed by Nicole Gnesotto.<sup>4</sup> So far, Europe has not been able to look after its own security and take up responsibility for what is happening on the European continent, to say nothing of the world.

ESDP could thus be described as an effort at the emancipation of Europe so as to leave behind Europe’s legacy of the Cold War and start intervening in military conflicts and crises on the continent or even beyond, in areas under the aegis of Europeans such as in Africa, with the new joint military instruments made operable only through cooperative effort (such as armed forces speciali-

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1) Lefebvre, M.: *Les perspectives de la défense européenne*. In: Montbrial, T. (ed.): *Ramses 2004*, IFRI-Dunod, Paris 2003, p. 88.

2) Editorial in: *Mezinárodní politika*, No. 3, 2000, p. 3.

3) Brimmer, E.: *Conclusion*. In: Brimmer, E. (ed.): *The EU’s Search for a Strategic Role*. Center for Transatlantic Relations, The Johns Hopkins Un., Washington 2002, p. 159.

4) Gnesotto, N.: *Introduction*. In: Gnesotto, N. (ed.): *EU Security and Defence Policy: First Five Years*. Institute for Security Studies, Paris 2004, p. 35.

sation). ESDP is to allow the Union to undertake military operations without first US and, later on, also the NATO assistance: so far, the ESDP has been linked and complementary to NATO, as part of a larger package of ‘burden sharing’.<sup>5</sup> These operations shall be undertaken by the European Union in line with its values, such as the promotion of human rights, democracy, political and cultural pluralism, and peace and prosperity on the European continent and in the world. They shall be carried out according to the Union’s principles which include the emphasis on international law, multilateralism, co-operation and assistance. Last but not least, ESDP is also geared towards stimulating European governments to pay more attention to their own defence – and increase their defence spending – to end their security dependence on the United States.

The ESDP has had a brief but dynamic past record<sup>6</sup> with a number of achievements. Even though the thoughts of an autonomous European defence were considered utopian during the Cold War era and found resonance in only some, predominantly French, political circles, the end of the Cold War transformed them into a necessary reality.

ESDP itself has evolved from the previous European Security and Defence Identity – the ‘NATO’s European pillar’ – and has been accepted by all EU Member States in the end, chiefly due to the fact that it was Great Britain who co-sponsored the effort along with France after Tony Blair became the UK Prime Minister. Great Britain’s own perception of its role in ESDP is that of a driving force. The USA has declared its support to the ESDP project to a certain extent and under certain conditions. ESDP is provided for in the primary law of the European Union and has its own institutions, along with its slowly developing Rapid Reaction Force and Battle Groups. First military operations in the Balkans and Congo have been undertaken under the ESDP leadership and EU flag even though all of them relied on NATO military and planning capacities, except for the Congo operation. ESDP has gained wide support from the general public across EU states with people preferring ESDP rather than NATO and reliance on the US.<sup>7</sup>

And yet, despite all these indisputable achievements the ESDP is still tied by substantial constrictions, symptomatic more or less for the whole CFSP or European political integration in general. To a large extent, the implementation of ESDP targets is a compromise struck among the EU Member States

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5) Layne, C.: *Death Knell for Nato? Policy Analysis*, Cato Institute, Washington 2001, p. 5.

6) Gnesotto (ed.), 2004, p. 11.

7) Eurobarometer 62, Autumn 2004, [www.europa.eu.int](http://www.europa.eu.int).

and is hostage to the unity of their positions on foreign policy and security issues which is very hard to achieve, especially in issues that are on top of the national foreign policy list. Each of the EU states has projected its national foreign policy and security preferences into the implementation of ESDP goals and each of these EU states has had a different perception of the need for autonomous European defence and European political emancipation or the role of NATO and the USA in European security. Last but not least, the ESDP project has been discredited by the ongoing unwillingness by EU Member States to spend (even slightly) more on defence because of their strained budgets having to bear up the welfare state burden. On the one hand, Europe wishes to take on some more responsibility for its defence and become a heavier global actor, on the other hand, however, Europeans are not willing to spend enough money on that goal (in fact, of all the EU countries, only Great Britain, France and to a lesser extent Germany have armies that could be used in modern operations). In general, many ESDP and CFSP aspects are dealt with on the theoretical level, 'on the paper', but the execution falls behind the plan, due to a number of reasons.

The ESDP project is not carried out in a vacuum even though that might sometimes seem to be the case. It seeks to react to the transformation of the security milieu after the Cold War.<sup>8</sup> New, 'asymmetric' or 'non-state' threats have emerged upon the disappearance of the communist threat. Terrorism now represents the primary threat for the West, as the September 11 2001 attacks and other later attacks in Madrid and London confirmed. Along with these changes, the understanding of security and security policy have also been transformed into much more complex notions, including a broad range of both military and non-military instruments. This has had a crucial impact on the security and defence policies of European states as new threats have been defined, helped to legitimise the very existence of ESDP (the EU as a civilian – and future military – power aspiring to become a universal security structure), and somewhat challenged, in the long term, the so far unswerving position of NATO as an exclusively military organization.<sup>9</sup> These changes in the security milieu have met with even more avid response on the other side of the Atlantic: the US security policy has been adapted and rationalized, though in a different way and through different methods of first choice than in Europe. The very definition of threats, however, is the same for Europe and the USA.

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8) Cameron, F.: *The Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union CFSP*. Sheffield University Press, Sheffield 1999, p. 69.

9) Van Ham, P.: *Security and Culture, or why NATO Won't Last*. In: *Security Dialogue*, No. 4, 2001.

These ESDP developments have been closely linked to the development of transatlantic relationship and the transatlantic security link. The transatlantic link was the axis of Western security throughout the Cold War era, largely retaining this role in the post-Cold War context as the community of values and fundamental interests still means that Europe and North America need each other as allies. A debate has started, however, on a substantial transformation of the transatlantic relationship in relation to the building of a political union and CFSP (and ESDP) as well as in the context of a changed US foreign and security policy after September 11, 2001 which has brought unilateralism and non-reliance on Europe and NATO and, eventually, caused a rupture in the West over Iraq. The two sides of the Atlantic are said to be moving away from each other.<sup>10</sup> The USA has become less interested in Europe and it is in this respect that Americans welcome the European efforts to take over from them the responsibility for Europe's own security. At the same time, Washington – along with some European capitals – is concerned about the EU being overambitious in terms of the common EU's foreign and defence policy by seeking to establish ESDP as a defence union, making the EU the world's leader and a global power. The potential (and still more or less theoretical) translation of these ambitions into reality might dramatically change or damage, depending on the point of view, the transatlantic relationship and the position of NATO, dominated by Americans.<sup>11</sup> It might also threaten the US interests and the dominance of the USA in the world.

This paper seeks to analyse the current and future effect ESDP might have on the transatlantic relationship while trying to find out what form of ESDP might disrupt the transatlantic partnership in the future and what form would, on the contrary, be beneficial. This paper aims to prove that ESDP is perfectly compatible with the transforming transatlantic relations, providing specific conditions are met, which will be specified in the below text. This claim is not made because of the fact that the currently minimalist ESDP is not in conflict with the transatlantic relations and the role of NATO today as this might change over time, depending on further ESDP developments. This assumption is rather made on the basis of a successful ESDP being able to bridge the present 'mental gap' between Europe and the USA stemming from their different military potentials and their willingness to use military force.

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10) Layne, 2001, p. 9.

11) Khol, R.: Introduction. In: Khol, R. (ed.): ESDP: Národní perspektivy. ÚMV, Praha 2002, p. 9.

The paper will also aim at proving that the existence and development of ESDP are inescapable – though problematic – because the very transatlantic relation must become more balanced to benefit all stakeholders and maintain the transatlantic link for the future since the importance of this relation is unquestionable for the whole Western community. The primary focus of the future transatlantic relations in security and defence shall be on the EU-US relationship whose goal should not be to become absolutely conflict-free at any costs. The focus shall therefore shift from NATO, even though, from the practical point of view, NATO might seem indispensable today. We do not dispute NATO's role in a mutual defence relation. As an organisation though, NATO has been losing its political *raison d'être* from the long-term perspective, we believe, because of the ongoing political integration of the EU and the recently changing security milieu and due to the transformation of US foreign and security policy.

The paper builds on a top-down critical analysis method. First of all, we focus on general issues such as the changing security environment and the post-Cold War developments in the security policy of Europe and the United States. A case study comparing the European Security Strategy with the US National Security Strategy is used to illustrate this. This case study is followed by an assessment of post-Cold War transatlantic relations, along with an outline of the ESDP developments so far, follows, tracking the progress both on paper and in practice, focusing on the key aspects of ESDP. Another section of the paper deals with European defence industry which is a marginal topic in respect of ESDP but plays an important role in the broader security context of our paper. These introductory – rather descriptive – chapters serve as a backdrop to some more specific issues such as the positions of key nations on ESDP. We will focus on Great Britain, France, Germany and the USA. These actors' attitudes towards ESDP are absolutely crucial for this paper: the analysis of these common and divergent positions will allow us to predict future ESDP developments and their impact on transatlantic relations as it is states, in the first place, that determines the nature of ESDP and the transatlantic relation. This analysis takes account of the long-term and continuous positions of these states represented by their governments. Where appropriate, however, some attention is also given to other actors, such as opposition parties etc. And, finally, the concluding synthesis seeks to answer the question asked at the beginning: How and under what conditions will ESDP influence transatlantic relations?

Before starting with the analysis, we shall turn to the state-of-the-art debate on this topic. Since ESDP and post-Cold War transatlantic relations are extremely topical and fast evolving issues, there is quite little consensus among experts on these themes. There is practically no disagreement among the authors about the fact that some European defence policy is definitely needed today to remove the burden from the US shoulders and that a transatlantic defence alliance must be retained. Little consensus, however, is found in what the defence policy should look like and whether it should go hand in hand with an overall political emancipation of Europe or rather with the effort to make the EU a global player acting independently from or even contrary to the USA. There is a whole range of views on, for example, the future of NATO: some authors, in minority now, argue that NATO is irreplaceable, being the only effective embodiment of the transatlantic defence relations which is seriously threatened by an extensively evolving ESDP. Other experts perceive NATO as an obsolete ‘Cold War relic’<sup>12</sup> which is not to today’s security reality and lags behind the transforming transatlantic relations and the changing US security policy. (Security is a complex notion: it is necessary to combine and complement military and non-military instruments as well as internal and external security policies.) These authors see the Union or the ESDP, operating with a wider range of instruments than NATO, as the only chance to carry out a European security policy in the context of recent developments. There is no consensus among authors on what the security and defence relations between Europe and the USA should be like in the future: similar to today’s relations, i.e. security interdependence even though Europe is rather dependent on the US in this model; or different, with Europe and the USA becoming equal and independent partners who may ‘quarrel’ from time to time, after all. A note must be made here that the views of these experts are often out of sync with the views of politicians and administrations of their respective countries. Yet, there are clear exceptions to this: French authors unanimously pushing for ‘European solutions’ and authors from the ‘New Europe’ countries – including from the Czech Republic – clinging to the current status of NATO because, being ‘orthodox Atlanticists’, they see NATO as the corner stone of security of their countries which have only recently joined NATO and have still been influenced by their deeply troubled past.<sup>13</sup> Despite some distrust by US administrations of ESDP, there are many American authors

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12) Layne, 2001, p. 9.

13) Bugajski, J., Teleki, I.: *Washington’s New European Allies: Durable or Conditional Partners?* *The Washington Quarterly*, No. 2, 2005.

who rather welcome ESDP and its further progress, including the development of a ‘new, balanced transatlantic partnership’<sup>14</sup>. This is either because they recognise European ambitions as legitimate, or because of the need to ‘disregard’ Europe as such, in the spirit of the new Republican ‘isolationism’. In general, ‘non-believers’ in ESDP and a possible equality in the EU-US relationship pointing out the need for NATO retaining its current role, are ‘closer to the practice’, perceiving NATO as indispensable at this moment in time and in practical terms. On the contrary, ESDP supporters who believe that an equal security partnership between the EU and the USA is the only feasible one for the future are closer to academia and theoretical thinking.

Little has been written on the very topic of ESDP effects on the wider transatlantic relations. Given the complexity of the issue examined, we had to rely on a synthesis of a broad spectrum of publications on (current and future) transatlantic relations in general and ESDP in particular, along with the individual positions of states on security and defence. We also studied publications analysing the theoretical aspects of security policy and the current trends. As things move very quickly in this area, we had to follow the press and news servers as well. A number of publicly available sources were relied on, too, such as EU summit communiqués etc.

We have taken four publications as the main reference documents for the analysis of facts, definitions and views. Two of them – one by a French and the other by a Czech author – deal with the ESDP development and main features (Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003)<sup>15</sup> or the positions of key countries on ESDP (Khol, 2002),<sup>16</sup> both being quite detailed. The other two publications are written by American authors, one by a US thin-tank CSIS<sup>17</sup> focussing on the past and present developments in the transatlantic relations (Balis, Serfaty, 2004)<sup>18</sup> and the other by a Johns Hopkins University team, dealing with the way how the ESDP effects the transatlantic relations (Brimmer, 2002).<sup>19</sup> The last-mentioned volume was the major source of information for us in terms of our assessment of the future ESDP scenarios and the likely impact on the transatlantic relations. Publications stressing the importance of building an autonomous European defence (Andréani, Bertram, Grant,

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14) Layne, 2001, p. 11.

15) Dumoulin, A., Mathieu, R., Sarlet, G.: *La PESD*. Bruylant, Brussels 2003.

16) Khol, R. (ed): *ESDP: Národní perspektivy*. ÚMV, Praha 2002.

17) Center for Strategic and International Studies.

18) Balis, C., Serfaty, S. (eds.): *Visions of America and Europe*. CSIS, Washington 2004.

19) Brimmer, E. (ed.): *The EU's Search for Strategic Role*. Center for Transatlantic Relations. Johns Hopkins University, Washington 2002.

2001; Layne, 2001),<sup>20</sup> pointing out to the weakening political role of NATO (Van Ham, 2000),<sup>21</sup> and the need for a balanced transatlantic relationship (Brimmer, 2002; Swiss, 2003)<sup>22</sup> were of crucial guidance to us as well. On the other hand, we had to stand in critical opposition to some Czech authors, namely to Jiří Schneider and Michael Žantovský<sup>23</sup> representing a thought community insisting on the indispensability of NATO as the single framework for transatlantic relations. As much as ESDP is concerned, we also had to somewhat relativise the Robert Kagan's famous *Power and Weakness*.<sup>24</sup>

Let us conclude this introductory section with the definitions of several key notions used throughout our paper. By the frequently used term '*Europe*' we mean a political area of Western Europe embracing EU Member State and candidate countries and the European NATO members. For the purposes of this text, the *transatlantic relationship* is reduced to security and defence cooperation (we refer to a *transatlantic link*), in spite of the need to take the political dimension (i.e. the politically balanced relationship between the EU and the USA) into account as well. *Security and defence policy* shall mean a policy providing for the security of a given entity. Nowadays, however, this is not limited to the defence of a state territory by force only and to the reliance on armed forces and intelligence but it increasingly covers out-of-area military or other operations<sup>25</sup> or international cooperation, in line with respective foreign policies. When speaking about *European defence* or the *European Union security and defence policy* (the EU being composed of nation states with their own defence policies), we refer to the latter security policy category only, i.e. to operations abroad.<sup>26</sup> The *European security and defence policy* (ESDP) is understood very specifically, as an EU project or policy implemented after 1998 only, despite occasionally dealing with the future models of ESDP as well.

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20) Andréani, G., Bertram, C., Grant, C.: *Europe's Military Revolution*. Centre for European Reform, Londýn 2001; Layne, C.: *Death Knell for NATO?* CATO Institute Policy Analysis, Washington 2001.

21) Van Ham, P.: *Europe's Common Defense Policy: Implications for Transatlantic Relationship*. In: *Security Dialogue*, No. 2, 2000.

22) Swiss, C.: *Sharing Hegemony: Future of Transatlantic Security*. In: *Cooperation and Conflict*, No. 3, 2003.

23) Schneider, J., Žantovský, M.: *NATO and the Greater Middle East: A Mission to Renew NATO*. Pass Policy Paper No. 1, Prague 2003. Schneider, J.: *Budoucnost transatlantických vztahů z pohledu České republiky*. In: *Mezinárodní politika*, No. 4, 2005.

24) Kagan, R.: *Power and Weakness*. Policy Review, No. 113, 2002.

25) Cameron, 1999.

26) Krahmann, E.: *Conceptualizing Security Governance*. In: *Cooperation and Conflict*, No. 1, 2003.



## 2. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SECURITY CULTURE OF EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

### 2.1. Changing Understanding of Security and Security Policy after the Cold War

This paper deals with the post-Cold War period which has brought about a fundamental change in the security milieu and, sooner or later, the reactions by members of the Western community. The vacuum created by the sudden disappearance of the dominant threat from the Communist camp has been filled by ‘asymmetric threats’ posed by non-state actors who did operate prior to the end of the Cold War but were not paid much attention to and were only recognised by the tragic attacks of September 11, 2001. The transformed security environment has necessitated modifications in the strategic thinking of both Americans and Europeans.

Traditionally, security thinking distinguished between external security (reactions to threats from abroad) and internal security (reactions to threats coming from within). A distinction used to be also made between *hard security* (reaction to a military threat by a state by using military instruments) and *soft security* (reaction to internal and cross-border threats by non-state entities by using both military – *hard power*<sup>27</sup> – but also non-military – *soft power* – instruments).<sup>28</sup> Because of the presence and nature of the new, asymmetric threats it is not tenable to treat these as separate categories since they are intertwined: all security threats must be approached in a complex way today.<sup>29</sup> In other words, post-Cold War security is a complex issue covering even those areas that had previously not been included in the security category.<sup>30</sup>

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27) Fatić, A.: Conventional and Unconventional – Hard and Soft Security: The Distinction. *South-East Europe Review*, No.3, 2002, pp. 93-98.

28) Joseph Nye defines the combination of soft power and hard power methods as a ‘carrot and stick’ method. (Nye, J.: *The Paradox of American Power*. Oxford Un. Press, Oxford 2003, p. 10).

29) Van Ham, 2001, p. 396.

30) Cf. the concept of ‘securitization’ – Waever, O.: *Securitization and Desecuritization*. In: Lipschutz, R. (ed.): *On Security*. Columbia University Press, New York 1995.

## 2.2. Comparing the European Security Strategy and the US National Security Strategy

The European Security Strategy and the United States National Security Strategy provide the best illustration of the new European and American perception of threats and the adequate answers to these threats.

The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS) was drafted in 2002. In spite of the NSS being a standard document produced by every US administration, the NSS of the Bush administration, drafted after the 9/11 attacks, holds a privileged position as it is considered to be an embodiment of a long-term US foreign and security policy after the Cold War. NSS has identified three major threats: terrorism, regional conflicts and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>31</sup>

The European Security Strategy (ESS), subtitled as ‘A Secure Europe in a Better World,’ was drafted to serve as a long-term strategic conception of the EU Member States (not only) for the purposes of CFSP. The ESS was endorsed at the December 2003 summit in Brussels. The ESS identifies the same threats as the NSS but adds another two: failed states and organised crime.<sup>32</sup> The ESS is certainly document providing a fair reflection of today’s security reality. The strategy, however, is a hurried document – it is not clear how the ESS is going to be implemented as it is a joint strategy of twenty five states.<sup>33</sup> But this aspect should be left aside for the moment.

Europe and the USA agree, in principle, on the definition of threats. They are, however, at times in disagreement over the way of facing them. Europe is generally in favour of an ‘effective multilateralism’<sup>34</sup> building on the primary role of international organisations (the UN in particular) which provides more space for Europe to exert its influence.<sup>35</sup> This method is built on an assumption that diplomatic instruments must be used to muster support for the use of force (and possible military solutions) from as many states as possible to make this use of force legitimate and to ensure that this solution complies with international law. Europe also argues that, besides force, prevention through humanitarian and economic aid as well as through

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31) Weiss, T.: *Evropská bezpečnostní strategie ve světle Národní bezpečnostní strategie USA*. In: *Integrace*, 27/9/2004. *European Security Strategy*, 2003, s.3-4; *National Security Strategy of the USA*, 2002, part III, IV,V

32) *Ibid.*

33) Grevi, G.: *No Strategy Without Politics*. Ideas Factory – European Policy Centre, Brussels, 2004.

34) Weiss, 2004. *European Security Strategy*, 2002, s. 9.

35) Multilateralism is an idea once promoted by the United States (by presidents Wilson and Roosevelt) as an alternative to the European Concert that led the world into two world wars.

wider co-operation (*soft power*) can be effective in fighting terrorism where no negotiation is possible.

The United States, on the contrary, generally favour *preventive* or *pre-emptive actions* taken without any previous diplomatic negotiations and recourse to international law.<sup>36</sup> This strategy grows from a conviction that the absolute national sovereignty concept in the UN Charter is an antiquated notion and that immediate interventions are necessary to safeguard human rights and democracy even at the price of an armed conflict. (This strategy is undoubtedly built on the high-level US armed forces allowing for fast and precise actions without substantial harm to civilian populations.) Moreover, the traditional US Cold War doctrine of deterrence is not effective in fighting terrorism.<sup>37</sup> We must note that European countries do not reject the pre-emptive action doctrine as such but they understand it in the spirit of the ‘Annan Doctrin’ of humanitarian intervention,<sup>38</sup> i.e. as a military intervention by the international community in order to prevent a humanitarian disaster or a massive violation of human rights, such as in Kosovo in 1999. It is clear, however, that the war in Iraq, for example, has gone beyond this concept of humanitarian intervention: Iraq was not a failed-state type of a threat as defined under the ESS – and failed states are to be assisted, on top of that. Instead, it was an implementation by the USA of a *regime change* doctrine<sup>39</sup> which does not see the threat in failed states that have to be assisted but rather in the *rogue states* whose regimes need to be overthrown by military force.

The US National Security Strategy is based on the notion that internal and external or hard and soft security are both part of a larger whole and that the USA, with its military capacities, would be ‘better off’ in exporting the effort to safeguard its internal – or soft – security (e.g. the fight against terrorism) abroad. This means that an internal/soft security threat is reacted to by using hard security/power instruments.<sup>40</sup> Europe, on the other hand, makes a distinction between external security (through national defence or NATO and/or ESDP) and internal security (the fight against terrorism using intelligence within national borders or EU-level coordination such as in the spheres of police cooperation or an anti-terrorist coordinator).

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36) Weiss, 2004. Pre-emptive war is what happens when a state targets an enemy that represents an imminent threat of attack. The Six-Day War was a pre-emptive war. Preventive war is what happens when a state targets an enemy before they can become an imminent threat of attack. The attack on Pearl Harbor was a preventive war.

37) Föhrenbach, G.: Security Through Engagement: The Worldview Underlying ESDP. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p.15.

38) A concept promoted by Bernard Kouchner, the chief of the Médecins Sans Frontières, in the 1980s.

39) Courmont, B.: Washington et le monde. In: Boniface, P. (ed.): L'Année stratégique 2004. IRIS, Paris 2003.

40) Shapiro, J., Suzan, B.: The French Experience of Counter-terrorism. In: Survival, No. 1, 2003, pp. 79-80.

The USA has a wealth of both hard power/security and soft security instruments, Europe (or the EU) has a wide range of purely soft power instruments: Europe enjoys much more trust in the world due to the weight of a joint position of many countries and the ‘power of an example,’<sup>41</sup> it has a much greater potential to negotiate and much greater potential to help and cooperate. What is positive about the transatlantic link is the mutual inspiration in this respect – in communicating with their US ally, European states realise the need for more hard power while the USA recognise the many benefits of soft power thanks to Europe.<sup>42</sup> It is therefore quite paradoxical that Europe used to be the greatest power in terms of hard security while the USA exerted most of its influence as a soft power.

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41) Nye, 2003, p. 9.

42) Otte, M.: ESDP and Multilateral Security Organizations. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. 53.

## 3. TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AFTER COLD WAR

### 3.1. New Reality for an 'Old Relationship'

The transatlantic relations have been going through a time of significant change caused by the above-mentioned transformation of the strategic milieu after the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks. It is necessary to note that pessimism is currently prevailing in terms of the future of the Atlantic alliance, mainly due to the Iraq crisis.<sup>43</sup> More and more voices point out that the two sides of the Atlantic are moving apart from one another and that common values no longer have much weight in a world of increasingly divergent interests and growing disagreements. All of this goes hand in hand with increased anti-Americanism in Europe and anti-Europeanism in the USA.<sup>44</sup>

On the other hand, we may assume that the alliance from the Cold War era would endure the new threats and challenges and that the Western community of values has not ceased to exist but has begun transforming into a 'more conflicting community,' a community which is, nevertheless, driven by the will to actively deal with and overcome the conflicts. Extensive trade between the two Atlantic coasts, the largest flow of goods and investments in the world<sup>45</sup> prove the tight bond. (The trade exchange exceeds USD 500 billion, creating some six million jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.)<sup>46</sup>

According to Richard Holbrook, the United States was a 'European power' throughout the Cold War era.<sup>47</sup> Back in 1990, the then US President George Bush claimed that: 'We are not in Europe for the sake of the Europeans – we are in Europe for our own sake.'<sup>48</sup> With the end of the Cold War, however, the unifying threat of Communism has disappeared and, for many authors, the

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43) Solana, J. Foreword. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. VII.

44) Transatlantic Trends 2004. German Marshall Fund, Washington 2004.

45) Up to now, American investment in the Netherlands has been higher than the US investment in China. Similarly, the French investment in Texas is greater than the French investment in the whole of China (Němec, P.: Atlantická obchodní válka? Važme slova. Hospodářské noviny, 26/4/2005.

46) Solana, 2002, p. VII.

47) Föhrenbach, 2002, p. 12.

48) Penksa, S., Warren, M.: EU Security Cooperation and Transatlantic Relationship. In: Cooperation and Conflict, No. 3, 2003, p. 267.

world has shifted from the bipolar to a multipolar model, by the virtue of which the reason for US ‘hegemony’ over Europe has disappeared. One thing must be highlighted, however: the current condition of the transatlantic security relation is largely a legacy of the Cold War. Europe has not been able to cast away this legacy and the and so has Europe’s ‘security dependence’ on the USA persisted. Western Europe got used to not being engaged in its own security during the Cold War and the reactions to the end of the Cold War era were by no means adequate. At the same time, and quite paradoxically, this European ‘dependency’ on the USA deepens the transatlantic divergences caused by the fact that Europe relies less on military power in dealing with conflicts and tends to criticise US solutions based on force. Some authors go as far as to speak of a new ‘European appeasement’.<sup>49</sup> American political scientist Robert Kagan described this quite aptly in his famous essay *Power and Weakness*<sup>50</sup> by claiming that ‘the USA come from Mars and Europe from Venus’ – whereas it was exactly the other way round before World War II. This process runs parallel with similar developments in the ‘European public opinion’<sup>51</sup> which has – since the 1980s – been generally strongly anti-war and even anti-American or at least has not largely approved of the current US role in the world, trusting more to Europe which, however, is hardly breathing down America’s neck in terms of political clout and global role.<sup>52</sup>

NATO, born as an alliance to defend the West against the Soviet block, is the major security glue in the transatlantic relations which has less and less practical use, however, after the Cold War and whose future is not quite clear.<sup>53</sup> Both Europeans and Americans continued to speak about the necessary reform of the alliance after the Cold War in order to modify NATO to be able to operate outside Europe and the North Atlantic region. Some substantial reform steps were taken at the 1999 Washington summit where a new strategic concept was endorsed. On the 2002 Prague summit NATO Rapid Reaction Forces were created, and, finally, at the 2004 Istanbul summit out-of-area operations were officially promoted on the basis of the NATO-headed operation in Afghanistan. As much as there is no doubt about the actual irreplaceability of NATO’s operational and planning capacities, the

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49) Serfaty, S: Anti-Europeanism in America and Anti-Americanism in Europe. In: Balis, Serfaty (eds.), 2004, p. 6.

50) Kagan, 2002.

51) The term ‘European public opinion’ is a highly problematic one. Some authors, such as Dominique Reynié, point out that it is especially in relation to the war in Iraq and the US role in the world that such a phenomenon does exist.

52) Eurobarometr 62, Autumn 2004.

53) Layne, 2001.

political meaning of this organisation has become a moot point. More and more voices can be heard about NATO being an obsolete political structure out of all current and future reality of the EU-US relations.<sup>54</sup> Given their recent foreign and security policy unilateralism, Americans are not increasing NATO's political prestige either: on the one hand, they declare NATO to be indispensable (and any autonomous European defence policy redundant). On the other hand, their recent political conduct has revealed that they do not need NATO at all.

### 3.2. Post 9/11 Transatlantic Relations

The terrorist attacks at New York and Washington on 11 September 2001 have surely brought a similarly important impetus for change in the transatlantic relations as the end of the Cold War. The 9/11 attacks also brought an unprecedented confirmation of the existence of new, asymmetric threats in the post-Cold War world.

September 11 was a milestone for the involvement of Europeans in the defence of the West. European states expressed enormous solidarity with their attacked US ally, promising their extensive engagement in the war against terrorism. And they were serious.<sup>55</sup> European NATO members decided to evoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty for the first time and many of them – Great Britain, France and Germany, in particular – were actively involved in the operations against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan as well as in the post-war ISAF administration of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the generally cold reactions by the USA to this European solidarity and engagement and the clear choice of unilateralism by the Bush administration have been disappointing for a number of European politicians, especially those from France and Germany. In their eyes, this has confirmed the interpretation of the USA as no longer considering the partnership with Europe to be crucial.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, the major crisis of the 'transatlantic trust' which has probably been more serious and grave than all the previous ones, including the Suez crisis or France's abandoning of NATO military structures, came with the war in Iraq. The transatlantic rupture during the 'Iraq crisis' between January and March 2003 was enormous indeed. It was

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54) Van Ham, 2001.

55) Parmantier, G.: *Diverging Visions*. In: Balis, Serfaty (eds.), 2004, p. 116.

56) *Ibid.*, p. 118.

also extremely confusing for many countries, such as the post-communist states. The Iraq crisis split Europe into two camps, showing what a utopia the oft declared European unity in foreign and security policy is and how divergent the views and ambitions of European countries are in relation to Europe's position vis-à-vis the USA the optimum response to the security threats of the world today. In a sense, the post-Cold War transatlantic rift was, sooner or later, inevitable.<sup>57</sup> Diverse interests have appeared after the joint threat disappeared and different perceptions of the world on the two sides of the Atlantic have become apparent.

### 3.3. Changing US foreign and security policy

The war in Iraq played such a crucial role in the transatlantic relations not least for the fact that it was largely a proof of major changes in the US foreign and security policy after 9/11. The foreign and security policy pursued by the Bush administration is, in many a respect, a continuation of the policy implemented by the previous administration and could be understood within the context of new U.S foreign policy developments in the post-Cold War environment. Yet, it has been the administration of President George Bush jr. that has reinforced and accelerated this trend in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, putting foreign and security policy at the top of the US domestic policy agenda and making it – as the ‘War on Terror’ – a clear priority of President Bush's first term in office. Some authors go as far as to speak of Bush's ‘revolution in foreign policy.’<sup>58</sup> What are the major features of this ‘revolution’ whose main pillars can be found in the above mentioned National Security Strategy of 2002 but whose practical manifestation has gone beyond this document, a ‘revolution’ often labelled as ‘neoconservative’ as the so called neoconservatives, holding key positions in the Bush administration, are the carriers of this change? First of all, it is an attempt to break out of the post-war order logic, namely challenge the role of international law and the UN while beginning to face global challenges effectively.<sup>59</sup> President Bush's statement in a conference only a few days after the 9/11 attacks that ‘there are no rules’ in today's world is a fitting summary of the change in the US post-September foreign and security policy that was to come.<sup>60</sup>

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57) Khol, R.: *Spojené státy americké: Nová etapa a nová administrativa*. In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 74.

58) Daalder, I., Linsay, J.: *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington 2003.

59) Hurell, A.: *There Are No Rules*. In: *International Relations*, No.2, 2002.

60) *Ibid.*, p. 186.



In spite of talking about the foreign policy of a Republican administration – and throughout the US history, Republican administrations inclined to realism in foreign policy – a key, if not the dominant, feature of this administration's foreign policy is idealism, even though the protection of America's interests surely is not sidelined. Without any hyperbole we may talk about trying to 'save the world' under the aegis of the USA. This idealism, drawing heavily upon the work of Israeli author Nathan Sharansky,<sup>61</sup> is based upon a belief that once dictatorships are removed from the world and replaced by democracies, permanent peace and prosperity will be guaranteed. These goals are to be striven for with great vehemence (*zero sum game*) and use various tools which may not always be generally acceptable, such as pre-emptive war principle and regime change, by and large in the spirit of 'the end justifies the means'. Even though the neocon – and largely black-and-white – visions are not something that would appeal to the pluralistic Europeans, it is chiefly the means used by the neoconservative foreign policy-makers that raise most doubt across the Atlantic.<sup>62</sup> There is a general consensus in the Western community over the rightness of the principle of humanitarian intervention, such as the one in Kosovo, and looser interpretations would find some support for this principle in international law. What is not, however, a matter of consensus, is the unilateralist tendency of this foreign policy. According to French security expert François Heisbourg,<sup>63</sup> it is this unilateralism that may bring the end of the West because it is a sign of contempt of – namely European – allies and of a 'hegemonic temptation' of the single global superpower of today.<sup>64</sup> The unilateralism of the Bush administration and the war on terror marks, in actual fact, a return to the Cold War logic of the presence of a permanent enemy. Only Europe is not really counted on according to this logic.

The lesser US interest in Europe is manifested not only through a gradual pull-out of the US troops from Europe but also through the unwillingness to perceive Europe as a whole while trying to pick the 'right ones' from the continent, those who are willing to join the USA (New Europe) and the 'wrong ones' who do not share the US visions (Old Europe). This differentiation presupposes the creation of the 'coalitions of the willing' made of those world countries that are willing to join in and contribute to the achievement

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61) The Odd Couple. *Economist*, 3/2/2005.

62) Courmont, 2003.

63) Heisbourg, F.: *La fin de l'Occident*. Odile Jacob, Paris 2005.

64) The former French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine even talks of a 'hyperpower': Védrine, H.: *Face à l'hyperpuissance*. Fayard, Paris 2003.

of some US objective, following the ‘coalition does not define the mission but the mission defines the coalition’ logic.<sup>65</sup> This, however, is against the basic principles not only of the EU’s CFSP but also of NATO itself.

It is quite obvious that the current American foreign policy is not just a matter of the Bush administration and that the development is, to a certain extent, irreversible and the next US administration will not be willing and able to abandon this course.<sup>66</sup> On the other hand, there can be and probably already is a shift in the style of behaviour to and in communication with Europe. This was manifest throughout George W. Bush’s February visit to Europe during which the US President made a significant gesture of recognition of the European Union and the EU institutions: he did not visit the capitals of the large European states but came to the European Council summit in Brussels and visited the seat of the European Commission. Not even this ‘reconciliation’ visit did, however, help to overcome mutual disputes which are aplenty these days, from the divergent views on the Iran nuclear programme and the cancellation of embargo on arms export to China, to the disputes over the International Crime Tribunal or the Kyoto protocol, to the disagreements in the World Trade Organisation. It appears, though, that the desire to overcome the discord is still prevailing on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>67</sup> The Iraq crisis seems to be forgotten now and common values and the ensuing long-term interests of the West are getting prevalence again even though the USA and Europe have still more disagreement over how to enforce and protect these. The European Security Strategy is a good case in point, identifying more or less the same threats as the US National Security Strategy and giving the USA a privileged position of a partner in managing these threats, in spite of the ways of facing these threats being different on the two sides of the Atlantic.

We may thus conclude this chapter with an optimistic claim that the transatlantic community is a ‘conflicting community’ after the end of the Cold War but it is a community after all.

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65) The terms ‘New Europe’ and ‘Old Europe’ as well as the ‘coalition of the willing’ principle have been introduced by the US State Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

66) Courmont, 2003.

67) Král, D.: Bushovo evropské turné. Policy Brief, Institut pro evropskou politiku EUROPEUM, February 2005.

## **4. EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY (ESDP): DEVELOPMENTS AND KEY FEATURES**

### **4.1. Pre-ESDP Developments**

The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) as we know and analyse is today was preceded by a relatively long development starting back in the 1950s. European integration evolved over the Cold War era, one of the main objectives being to cordon off Communism from Western Europe. It was politically impossible to distinguish between NATO, the European Communities and parallel security structures in Western Europe which were linked to the North-Atlantic Alliance during the Cold War era. These parallel structures included, in particular, the West European Union and a failed project of the European Defence Community – the ‘Pleven Plan’ – geared towards the remilitarization of West Germany within the framework of a supranational organisation and common military structures which might, with some license, be labelled as a ‘European army. The European Defence Community project was not implemented in the end because of the rejection of the plan by the French National Assembly in 1954, due to the major influence the French Communist Party at that time. The other European security structure, the West European Union (WEU), however, did overcome the twists and turns of history. Originally, a defence alliance was established back in 1948 by France, Great Britain and other countries to safeguard them against Germany (the Brussels Pact, the alliance’s founding treaty, expired in 2002). This Western Union Defence Organisation was transformed into a West European Alliance in 1955 as the Federal Republic of Germany was remilitarised and joined NATO (WEU was under the military control of NATO during the Cold War).<sup>68</sup> The sixties and seventies saw attempts at the deepening of political integration of EC Member States which was, from the very beginning, understood as the reason behind establishing the EC, though through economics.<sup>69</sup> The ‘Fouchet Plan’ (1961) was another attempt at this direction,

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68) Fidler, J., Mareš, P.: *Dějiny NATO*. Paseka, Praha 1997.

inspired by the ideas of French President De Gaulle on the political and security emancipation of France and the whole Europe from the two superpowers of the Cold War, superpowers that were often – and even more so during the détente period – overlooking Western Europe in their negotiations.<sup>70</sup> The Fouchet Plan resembles the current CFSP in many respects, namely in foreign and security policy cooperation between the Member States of the European Communities. But this plan had to be brushed off since it might threaten the spirit de corps of the Western bloc in the Cold War context. A plan presented by Commissioner Etienne Davignon (1970) was much less ambitious and led, in the end, to the establishment of the European Political Cooperation – a fairly limited mechanism of EU Member State foreign policy coordination.<sup>71</sup>

It was only at the end of the Cold War that this situation changed. The transformation of the security environment, described above, and the slowly weakening interest of the USA in Europe put a new burden on Europe's shoulders: Europe was to become responsible for itself if nothing else. The early 1990s saw the revival of the WEU which was to turn into a purely European security structure operating parallel to NATO. On the basis of this initiative by France and Germany, joint international units such as Eurocorps, Eurofor, and Euromarfor, were established with three states dominating this effort: France, Germany and Spain. In 1992, the WEU member states defined new tasks of this organisation – the 'Petersberg Tasks', focused on humanitarian operations, conflict-resolution or peacemaking, and peacekeeping.

The revitalisation of WEU was, nevertheless, overshadowed by another event: the establishment of the European Union by the Treaty of Maastricht, a major step forward in Europe's political integration, and the creation of the Union's Common Foreign and Security (CFSP). CFSP, however, turned out to be a 'still-born baby' soon after its birth because the EU states were unable to find a consensus vis-à-vis the boiling conflict in the former Yugoslavia over the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia.<sup>72</sup> The EU inability due to its political fragmentation and actual military capacities to prevent or manage the civil war in the Balkans made the USA intervene once again in the 'European backyard.' The Bosnian lesson was a 'cold shower' for, and a reason for great self-reflection in, the EU.<sup>73</sup>

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69) This view is supported by the Treaty of Rome preamble identifying the aim of integration: an ever closer union.

70) Cameron, 1999.

71) Cameron, 1999.

72) Gnesotto, N.: *La puissance et l'Europe*. Presses de Sciences Po, Paris 1998, pp. 9-14.

73) Otte, 2002, p. 41.

The 1997 Amsterdam summit saw the EU incorporating the WEU whose founding treaty was to expire in five years, adopting the above Petersberg tasks, and creating the post of an EU High Representative for CFSP (and the Secretary General of the Council of the EU at the same time), a post taken by former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana two years after that.

In the meantime, a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) concept has been created on the basis of WEU, integrated into the EU in 1999 after the Amsterdam Treaty became effective. The ESDI project, endorsed already at the 1994 NATO summit in Brussels and fully supported by the Clinton administration encouraging Europe to take over the responsibility for itself, was to become a 'European NATO pillar' of a sort. The ESDI was a cherished project of France, which was seeking rapprochement with NATO and considered returning into NATO military structures at that time. The ESDI project counted on the formation of European Combined Joint Task Force under the operational and planning command of NATO headquarters in Europe (SHAPE).<sup>74</sup>

#### 4.2. Birth and Development of ESDP

Things have started developing in a different direction, though. A 'European turn'<sup>75</sup> of the British foreign policy in relation to Labour Party leader Tony Blair becoming the UK Prime Minister brought about yet another initiative which has, in the end, proven more viable: an autonomous European Security and Defence Policy, outlined at the October 1998 EU summit in Portsäch and defined at the Franco-British summit in Saint-Malo in December 1998.<sup>76</sup> A common defence policy was born, along with NATO-independent joint forces deployable for the implementation of the Petersberg tasks under the UN mandate. This Franco-British initiative stemmed from the political positions of the two main actors, i.e. UK Prime Minister Blair and French President Chirac, which will be discussed later in this paper, and also from the fact that France and Great Britain have been the only EU countries with truly operable military capacities to execute modern missions.

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74) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 26.

75) Khol, R.: Velká Británie – v srdci Evropy a v čele evropské obrany? In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p.18.

76) Franco-British Summit: Declaration on European Defence, 4/12/1998.

The Kosovo War, i.e. the NATO intervention under the US command, was another rude awakening for EU Member States who appeared to be unable to tackle problems in their 'near abroad'. The Kosovo lesson brought a more specific ESDP and the Saint-Malo agreement.<sup>77</sup> The EU adopted a European Headline Goal at the 1999 Helsinki summit, following discussions at the 1999 Cologne summit.<sup>78</sup> According to this European Headline Goal, (almost all) EU countries were to earmark by 2003 between 50,000 and 60,000 troops deployable within sixty days in the radius of action of 6,000 kilometres for one year. This EU Rapid Reaction Force was to implement the Petersberg tasks.<sup>79</sup> A year later, at the Nice summit ending the EU's Intergovernmental Conference, ESDP was incorporated into the EU primary law and EU political and military institutions under the European Council were established.<sup>80</sup> These were similar to COREPER, i.e. included permanent representatives of EU Member States. It is unclear, however, what their specific competencies are with respect to the EU Council and its formations as there are some overlaps between them. The same actually applies to the High Representative for CFSP and SHAPE. The following institutions are referred to:

- Political and Security Committee (consists of permanent representatives of EU Member States – often juniors compared to COREPER or NATO; deals predominantly with the political aspects of ESDP – monitoring crisis areas; provides for early warning and political leadership of ESDP operations; prepares documents for General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) meetings)
- Military Committee (the EU's highest military body composed of members of the General Staff of EU Member States – usually the same ones as in NATO; provides other EU bodies with military information needed for military operations)
- EU Military Staff (under the Military Committee, deals with practical ESDP operational issues)
- EU Satellite Centre and EU Situation Centre

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77) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003.

78) Presidency Conclusions, European Council, 10-11 December, 1999.

79) Van Ham, 2000.

80) A 'civilization shock' metaphor is sometimes used in relation to ESDP and the EU military institutions: the EU as a civilian organisation is also becoming a military organisation.

The High Representative for CFSP (and the General Secretary of the EU Council), currently in the person of Javier Solana, is the coordinator of many ESDP aspects. It is necessary to note that many of the ESDP and CFSP achievements so far are generally ascribed to Solana's personal credit. (He has been the hottest candidate for the future EU Foreign Minister post – see below).

The European Constitutional Treaty means a great leap forward for ESDP, providing the constitutional treaty (or a future similar treaty) is finally ratified, of course, or the relevant provisions from the treaty are introduced into practice without the ratification of the constitutional treaty. According to the constitution, ESDP shall get the most visible reinforcement from all CFSP components (a special ESDP working group was established in the Convention on the Future of Europe preparing the draft constitutional treaty; the working group was chaired by the then French Commissioner Michel Barnier).

The Constitution introduces a new legal option of a 'permanent structured (or enhanced) co-operation' in defence which the existing treaties did not allow for.<sup>81</sup> This idea was initially opposed by Great Britain who has threatened to veto the draft if structured co-operation was not to be open to all states interested in participating and meeting specific criteria, to prevent the establishment of an exclusive 'hard core' made of some countries<sup>82</sup>. The constitution has also made a step forward in making a commitment to mutual defence in case of a military attack on a Member State (mutual defence clause) or to civil and military assistance in case of a terrorist attack or a natural disaster (solidarity clause).<sup>83</sup> A reference is made to Article 51 of the UN Charter providing for regional defence alliances. This mutual defence commitment, however, is quite problematic for neutral EU Member States some of which have an opt-out from defence co-operation as well as for some other EU countries which are also NATO members and are concerned about the potential collision with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.<sup>84</sup> On the other hand, the European Union has been an entity made of politically interlinked

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81) Article I-41 (6) of the Draft Treaty Establishing the Constitution for Europe.

82) The criteria are set out in Protocol 23 to the constitutional treaty. The protocol states that Member States will have to proceed more intensively to develop their defence capacities through the development of their national contributions and in the activity of the European Defence Agency. They will have to become interoperable and achieve the 2010 Headline Goal (formation of Battle Groups). These are relatively undemanding conditions so the possibility of a state not being able to comply with them and being automatically excluded from structured co-operation is very small.

83) Articles I-41 (7) and I-43 of the Draft Treaty Establishing the Constitution for Europe.

84) The constitution includes, at the same time, a guarantee for respecting national defence policies and NATO commitments (Král, D., Pítrová, L., Šlosarčík, I.: *Smlouva zakládající ústavu pro Evropu – komentář*. Institut pro evropskou politiku EUROPEUM, Praha 2004, p. 68).

states, so mutual assistance in case of an attack is quite commonplace and would presumably be provided even without an explicit mutual defence clause, irrespective of the fact that such a clause was included in the Western Union Brussels Pact effective between 1948 and 2002, i.e. outside NATO. The draft European Constitutional Treaty also extends the ESDP goals beyond the earlier mentioned Petersberg tasks: according to the constitution and the international law, the EU can carry out disarmament and anti-terrorist operations in and provide military advice to third countries.

ESDP can be more successful with a newly established post of an EU Foreign Minister, a post merging the powers of the External Relations Commissioner and the High Representative for CFSP in order to make the CSFP more coherent.<sup>85</sup> The newly proposed flexibility in operation financing can make ESDP operations more effective: operations shall be financed not only from the Member States contributions proportionate to their GDP, as is the case today, but also from a Start Up Fund administered by the EU Foreign Minister and financed from Member States' advance payments to be used in the time of operation. The constitution, however, does not envisage decisions being made on ESDP on behalf of the entire EU or the states participating in a structured co-operation by a qualified majority because the two major ESDP actors, Great Britain and France, insist on the intergovernmental principle and unanimity in decision-making.

Finally, ESDP has been provided an official and theoretical base not only in the Constitution but also in the 2003 European Security Strategy the implementation and practical impact on ESDP of which, however, is up for debate.

### 4.3. There Is No ESDP without NATO...

The formal (or theoretical) and institutional shape of ESDP is quite advanced. But let us look at the implementation of the ESDP project in practice. The practical realisation of ESDP was a long-time hostage to the ambiguous relationship between ESDP and NATO.<sup>86</sup> Given the fact that the EU has not had its own planning capacities, EU operations were to rely on NATO capacities. This principle was first proposed at the 1996 NATO summit in Berlin. That is why

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85) The establishment of the post of a Foreign Minister could be understood, as many commentators have it, as a de facto reply to the famous objection by US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in the 1970s that there is no single telephone number in Europe to call from Washington.

86) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 356.



this 1996 agreement between NATO and the WEU was later called a 'Berlin+ arrangement'. In order for EU states to use the SHAPE military and planning capacities<sup>87</sup> for their own operations outside NATO, an agreement had to be made.<sup>88</sup> This agreement was being blocked for a long time by Turkey, a NATO member without the membership of the EU who did not want to open up the way for EU countries to NATO capacities. (Another reason for Turkey to block this deal was the Turkish-Greek controversy over Cyprus and the planned accession of the Greek part of Cyprus to the EU). Nevertheless, the agreement was reached in December 2002 with the view of planned operations under the EU flag. The EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina starting in January 2003 was the first EU operation abroad, even though it was not a true ESDP (military) operation.<sup>89</sup> It was only in March 2003, in operation Concordia in Macedonia (FYROM) that the Berlin+ arrangement was made the full use of. The EU forces took over the activities of three previous NATO operations: Allied Harmony, Essential Harvest, and Amber Fox. On December 2, 2004, EU units took over the NATO Althea operation in Bosnia (SFOR) and deployed 7,000 troops there (EUFOR).<sup>90</sup> The use of the Berlin+ arrangement meant that only flags got actually changed in both of these operations: the planning, command and manning remained the same. The operations have remained under the command of the NATO Deputy-SACEUR, British general John Reith.<sup>91</sup>

As soon as neither NATO units (KFOR) nor the UN and OSCE administration are needed in Kosovo and the status of the province is sorted out, the whole Former Yugoslavia will be under the aegis of the EU which will thus repay its old debt of failing to intervene during the war in Yugoslavia. The EU role in the Balkans is further reinforced by the prospect of EU membership for all former Yugoslavian republics. Slovenia has already joined the EU and Croatia should be soon invited to start accession negotiations.<sup>92</sup>

Africa is the second area of ESDP focus. And it is Africa that is very likely to become the region of most ESDP activities: the USA and NATO are not really interested in intervening in Africa and the EU countries still have close ties with African countries since the colonial times.<sup>93</sup> In June 2003, two EU

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87) For example, the AWACS surveillance planes play a major role in ESDP operations.

88) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 362.

89) With a view to further EU police missions, several states (France, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands) agreed last year, during the Dutch presidency, that new European paramilitary police units modelled on the French Gendarmerie or Italian Carabinieri be established.

90) Řiháčková, V.: EU dnes přebírá od NATO misi v Bosně a Hercegovině. *Integrace – kalendárium*, 2/12/2004.

91) Tertrais, B.: Basic Concepts of European Defense Policy. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. 178.

92) Otte, 2002, p. 41.

93) Pachta, L.: Role EU při prevenci a řešení konfliktů v Africe. In: *Mezinárodní politika*, No. 11, 2002.

states, France and Great Britain, sent their troops (1,500 soldiers) under the UN Security Council mandate to the Democratic Republic of Congo in operation Artemis. This operation was not carried out according to the Berlin+ arrangement but according to the lead nation principle. This principle determines that an operation under the EU flag agreed by the entire Union is carried out by one or more states using their national capacities and units. Sadly though, it is only Great Britain and France that are actually capable of such missions in the EU.<sup>94</sup>

#### 4.4. From Rapid Reaction Force to Battle Groups

In spite of the first real operations under the EU flag but with the units previously earmarked for NATO, the achievement of the 1999 European Headline Goal (EHG) formulated in Helsinki was still far from reality. In 2003, the European Council declared the EHG achieved since 50,000–60,000 troops were really earmarked for the Rapid Reaction Force. (The force, however, was not operable, largely due to the lack of means for unit transport which should be dealt with by introducing the new Airbus A400M carrier between 2008 and 2010 as planned).<sup>95</sup> The striving for compatibility between the EU Rapid Reaction Force and the NATO Response Force (endorsed at the Prague NATO summit in November 2002) made the whole matter even more challenging.

The Helsinki European Headline Goal (EHG), achieved on paper but not satisfactorily met in practice, was replaced by a Headline Goal 2010, approved by the European Council in June 2004.<sup>96</sup> The practical problems of forming the Rapid Reaction Force are to be solved through a speedy formation of Battle Groups or ‘tactical groups’, finally approved by EU Defence Ministers in November 2004<sup>97</sup>. (This idea was supported by the way the Franco-British operation Artemis in Congo was carried out in June 2003). The total of 13 battle groups shall consist of 1,500 combat soldiers and three companies from three EU states. The Battle Groups shall be deployable within 15 days in the area of conflict up to 4,000 kilometres from Brussels and shall be sustainable for 30 days (extendable to 120 with

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94) Khol (ed.), 2002.

95) A European Capabilities Action Plan was adopted at the 2001 Laeken summit to ensure faster equipment of the Rapid Reaction Force. (Dumoulin, Mahieu, Sarlet, 2003, pp. 175-176).

96) Presidency Conclusions, European Council, 17 – 18 June, 2004.

97) The idea of creating small, highly operable units was debated at the Franco-British summit in Le Touquet (2/2003) where the Iraq crisis overshadowed other issues. Barnier, M.: *Actors and Witnesses*. In: Gnesotto (ed.), 2004, p.169.

rotation). The Battle Groups shall become fully operable in 2007, with the exception of one to be operable in 2005 already.<sup>98</sup>

A special, autonomous EU planning cell shall be created at SHAPE.<sup>99</sup> This reflects the ambitions of some EU Member States, lead by France, to cut European defence completely off NATO and establish a ‘European Defence Union’ in an avant-garde group of states. This EU planning cell was proposed at a ‘chocolate creams summit’ in Brussels in April 2003 which brought together the opponents of the Iraq war and advocates of strong European defence (France, Germany, Belgium, and Luxemburg – the so called Gang of Four).<sup>100</sup> The establishment of the planning unit was approved, in spite of the opposition by the USA – and objections by Great Britain – at the ‘Naples Conclave,’ a meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Naples in November 2003. It was more or less a symbolic act though. The cell, located at Tervuren, on the outskirts of Brussels, is at its infancy with its current 40 staff and it does not look like developing extensively any time soon without a close link to SHAPE, as Great Britain expects, to say nothing of planning autonomous operations (jointly with the EU Military Staff) without any NATO help.

#### 4.5. Main Stumbling Block: Defence Spending

The above documents a relatively fast and dynamic development of ESDP<sup>101</sup> – hardly five years did pass between the first ESDP ideas and the first operations. In many respects, however, ESDP is a typical European initiative: the centre of gravity is on paper and not on the ground – just like the establishment of the post of an EU Foreign Minister is a response to the issue of CFSP coherence à la EU which does not really solve the problem. The success of ESDP is restricted by the divergent goals and ambitions of individual EU Member States, namely the big ones (see below) and, more importantly, the actual military capacities of Europeans.<sup>102</sup> The EU can, according to the 2002 agreement, rely on NATO planning capacities but the armament and equipment of EU states is lagging behind on all accounts, mainly in comparison with the USA.

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98) Schmitt, B.: *European Capabilities – How Many Divisions?* In: Gnesotto (ed.), 2004, p. 98.

99) *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

100) Let us mention other initiatives presented at this ‘chocolate creams summit’: a Franco-German brigade modelled on the Eurocorps (up to 7,000 men) and the establishment of a European Security and Defence College. (Dumoulin, A.: *Europe Occidentale*. In: Boniface, P. (ed.): *L’Année stratégique 2004*, IRIS, Paris 2003, p. 86).

101) Gnesotto, 2004, p. 11.

102) *Ibid.*, p. 11.

The low spending on defence is Europe's major problem in this respect. It is not the ESDP contributions by Member States (operations are paid by EU members in proportion to their GDP with the possibility of absence from an operation) but the generally low national defence budgets of the EU countries that make it difficult. According to the *Financial Times*,<sup>103</sup> the European members of NATO spent USD 221 billion in 2003 (1.9% of their GDP), compared with the US spending of USD 405 billion (3.7% of their GDP). The EU countries spending most on defence, i.e. France and Britain, increase their defence budgets each year by 3–4% on average whereas the USA do so by 15%. There is a clear gap between the ambitions (autonomous European defence and military readiness of Europe) and the willingness to pursue these goals through higher defence spending which would necessarily have to shake up the European welfare state model.

#### 4.6. European Defence Industry

Europe can boast of more achievements in defence industry. In spite of the largely economic reasons for this development<sup>104</sup> politics plays also an important role: European corporations are not, with some exceptions, in the hands of the state but it is crucial for the general political and military prestige of Europe that these corporations succeed in developing new, technologically advanced weapons systems.

European corporations such as EADS,<sup>105</sup> Thales or BAE Systems have already started giving jitters to their US competitors who got used to their monopoly in defence industry.<sup>106</sup> European corporations have started to implement grandiose projects such as the A400M carrier, the Eurofighter jet or the combat helicopter Tiger. Technologically, these projects are as good as the American ones though the acquisition costs are still higher. European companies have already started winning contracts from the Pentagon which is also an incentive since the EU states' defence budgets are still relatively low. The question is what effect the advised but still unconfirmed abandoning of

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103) Dombey, D.: Europe must spend more on defence. *Financial Times*, 3/3/2005.

104) Maulny, J.-P.: L'industrie d'armement, acteur et bénéficiaire de l'Europe de la défense ? In: *La revue internationale et stratégique*, No. 48, 2002/2003.

105) European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company, a new corporation established after a merger of the French *Aerospatiale Matra*, German *Daimler-Chrysler* and Spanish *Construcciones Aeronáuticas* in 2000.

106) Airbus, the current major competitor to the US Boeing, is a great European achievement even though in civil aviation. The new A380 is a major success, in particular.

the embargo for EU arms exports to China will have on European defence industry. On the one hand, Chinese demand may stimulate European supply. On the other hand, European corporations might be seriously harmed if Washington reacted by imposing sanctions on Europe, keeping Europeans off the US market.

Europe is also relatively successful in developing modern technologies with no immediate but potential future military use and definite importance for Europe's prestige in the world. The finalisation of the preparatory works for the Galileo satellite navigation system competing with the US GPS or the European Space Agency (ESA) exploratory initiatives can be mentioned in this respect.

Europe has also made some progress in the coordination in armaments and military research, knowing that one state is too little in this respect.<sup>107</sup> Following many previous initiatives<sup>108</sup> aimed at enhancing cooperation in this area, a European armaments, research and military capacities agency (European Defence Agency) was established. The agency is provided for in the European constitutional treaty but, following a Council Decision, it has already been in full operation since July 2004, headed by Brit Nick Witney. The agency's mission is to promote the enhancement of EU Member States' military capacities (a commitment made, among others, in the constitutional treaty), coordinate military research, and monitor the fulfilment of Member States' obligations. The overall aim is to rationalise through co-operation the increase of military capacities of EU states and prevent duplicities.

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107) Keohane, D.: Europe's new defence agency. Centre for European Reform – Policy Brief, June 2004.

108) Western European Armaments Group – 1992, Letter of Intent – 1998, Organisme Conjoint de Coopération en Matière d'Armement (OCCAR) – 1998 or approved liberalisation of trade in military material in the single market.

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## 5. KEY ACTORS' PERCEPTION OF ESDP

The various and often contradictory visions of actors, i.e. countries involved, have to be taken into account when studying the ESDP project. It is only the differentiation between these views on ESDP that allows us to get a better understanding of both the real and potential impact of ESDP on the transatlantic relationship. Some more pro-European and 'EU-ambitious' states perceive ESDP as a baseline for the construction of a European identity<sup>109</sup> and a way to secure a global role for the EU. Other states, seen as 'Atlanticist', understand ESDP (with the rather minimalist objectives) as a value added to NATO, and not as a replacement of the Alliance as known today.

The following chapter will deal mainly with the positions and views of the big EU states and major ESDP actors: Great Britain, France and Germany. European integration did replace the 'European concert', giving small states a voice much stronger than their size and real weight would suggest, which is a good example of the 'overrepresentation' of small states in EU institutions. And yet, we can say that the real EU foreign and security legitimacy and potential comes from large states with their own, well-respected global engagements and operable armies. There would be no ESDP if the big EU states did not find agreement among themselves.<sup>110</sup> We shall also turn to the position of the United States, a key country in terms of ESDP and the transatlantic relationship, and also to Russia and small EU states, particularly the post-communist ones.

### 5.1. Great Britain – From 'Splendid Isolation' to 'Lead Nation' Role

Great Britain plays a key role in the ESDP project. Britain's political weight in the world, its position vis-à-vis the USA, and its military capacities are indispensable for ESDP. Great Britain is also a country that has been able to adapt its military force to new challenges and has been approaching the USA with its

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109) Chilton, P.: La défense européenne, condition nécessaire à la formation d'une identité européenne ? In: La revue internationale et stratégique, č. 48, 2002/2003.

110) This is illustrated aptly by the EU initiative in relation to the Iran nuclear programme from November 2003, promote by Foreign Ministers of the three largest EU countries.

technologies and operability of its force deployable anywhere in the world most of all the other NATO states.<sup>111</sup> At the same time, Great Britain was a country blocking any further, namely political integration of the EU for a considerable time, opposing European defence parallel with NATO. For a long time, Great Britain gave preference to its 'special relationship' with the USA before Europe in the area of foreign and security activities. (Nicole Gnesotto wrote that 'For Britain, the United States is what Europe is for France.').<sup>112</sup>

A major change came with UK's new Prime Minister Tony Blair who won the election in 1997. The Blair government made a U-turn in Britain's EU policy<sup>113</sup> and was quite open about its attempts to 'put Britain in the heart of Europe'.<sup>114</sup> Led by Tony Blair, Great Britain has been actively involved in the European integration process, chiefly on the intergovernmental level though. Along with France, Britain has become the main initiator and the driving force of ESDP. Some authors claim that Blair is using ESDP as a trump card even towards the USA, to show that Britain is not that dependent on the USA. (Similarly, the Brits are playing the US card against Europe). ESDP is also a tool used in trying to influence Washington.<sup>115</sup> Blair's Britain is taking a position of an intermediary in the transatlantic relation, using it exquisitely for its own purposes as well, though one might doubt Britain's real influence on decision-making in Washington.

Great Britain has adopted a very pragmatic approach towards ESDP. The country is aware of the need for Europeans to assume responsibility for their own security and the security of their neighbourhood. But it has refused to make ESDP highly ambitious. It has strictly adhered to a minimalist vision of ESDP, one designed to accomplish only the Petersberg tasks without disturbing and duplicating the role of NATO where the Brits play the most important role after the USA and which is still considered irreplaceable by the UK. Britain is convinced that the ESDP should not aim at a total independence from NATO but that the 'EU should be a smart client of NATO's military services.'<sup>116</sup> The Brits are also insisting on ESDP being open to all EU states. Britain opposes the EU defence hard core or avant-garde vision, reiterating the need for openness of

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111) British strategy and armed forces were adapted on the basis of their Strategic Defence Review in 1998. Khol, R.: *Velká Británie...* In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 17.

112) Gnesotto, 1998, p. 96.

113) Some continuity with the unrealized plans of Prime Minister John Major might be observed here though.

114) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 36.

115) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 38; Schweiss, 2003, p. 230.

116) Khol, R.: *Velká Británie...* In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 21.



structured co-operation in defence for other states that would like to join.<sup>117</sup> The UK Labour politicians believe that ESDP will ultimately be better with the Brits in rather than out and that Britain must not absentee from this project because it might then ‘degenerate’ into something harmful for the transatlantic security relation.<sup>118</sup> And the British role in ESDP should not be minimal but that of a leader, given Britain’s weight and military capacities.<sup>119</sup> What might threaten this prospect is perhaps only a change on the domestic political scene because the conservative opposition is not in favour of ESDP at all and often refers to ESDP – incorrectly and in a populist fashion – as to a ‘European army’.

## 5.2. France – Driving Force Hard to Control

France is the main designer and mover of ESDP.<sup>120</sup> The country has a very specific motivation for this though. The French Fifth Republic has always understood European integration – perceived in France as a ‘French child’<sup>121</sup> – as an opportunity to advance their own interests (‘an extended arm of France’). And since France is rather in favour of intergovernmental integration,<sup>122</sup> CFSP, along with its most recent top-up, ESDP, is completely in line with the French interests. That is why the political scene (democratic parties) is so united on ESDP issues.

For France, ESDP is much more than just meeting the Petersberg tasks. The French vision of ESDP envisages autonomous European defence<sup>123</sup> and security emancipation vis-à-vis the USA and NATO the military structures of which France left in 1960s. In France’s view, NATO is an antiquated instrument of US security dominance.<sup>124</sup> Instead of relying on NATO, Europe should seek complete defence autonomy to meet the criteria of a global power, in line with the ‘Europe puissance’ concept.<sup>125</sup> France’s core assumption is that Europe has its legitimate interests, resting on universally valid values, which might differ from the US interests,<sup>126</sup> and Europe should be able to support these

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117) Ibid, p. 20.

118) Grant, C.: EU Defence Takes a Step Forward. Centre for European Reform – Policy Brief, December 2003.

119) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 41.

120) Andréani, G.: L’Europe de la défense : y a-t-il encore une ambition française ? In: Politique étrangère, No. 4, 2002.

121) Defarges, P.M.: La France et l’Europe: l’inévitable débat. In: Politique étrangère, No. 4, 2002.

122) Eichler, J.: Francie – důraz na mezivládni rámce CFSP a ESDP. In: Khol (ed.), 2002.

123) European defence (défense européenne) is frequently used in French discourse when referring to ESDP.

124) Parmentier, 2004, p. 125.

125) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 64.

126) Parmentier, 2004, p. 127.

interests with adequate political power and military force. The basic premise of France is that the EU is a more universal security structure than NATO: it has a wide range of instruments available, from humanitarian aid and assistance to cooperation and diplomacy to military force, all perfectly in line with the modern understanding of comprehensive security. That is why, France believes, the EU has a chance of a greater success than the USA in, e.g. fighting terrorism where pure military power does not help much.<sup>127</sup>

France is therefore pushing for a fully autonomous ESDP, independent of NATO, i.e. with its own planning capacities, an ESDP relying on international organisations, especially the UN. At the same time, France is a great believer in enhanced co-operation among those EU states that wish to go further in European defence than others. This hard core or *avant-garde* concept is an expression of their ‘European security and defence union’.<sup>128</sup> The above mentioned ‘chocolate creams summit’ of France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg in April 2003 in Brussels was a prime example of this approach. France stipulates that ESDP must remain a project for EU members only. ESDP is a clear manifestation of EU political integration, in the eyes of France, which satisfies the Greeks but displeases the non-EU members of NATO, especially Turkey. But France, with its military potential comparable to that of Great Britain, is not really willing to bring its defence spending up which underscores its ambitious ESDP visions.

In many respects, the French ambitions are founded. What is problematic though is the quite blunt assertion of these ambitions which does not win them much trust with most of EU countries, to say nothing of the USA. The French ESDP ambitions are understood as France’s attempt to reclaim its former position of a great power and advance its interests in Europe and in the world.

### **5.3. Germany – Civilian Power with Military Ambitions**

All of the post-war policy of the Federal Republic of Germany has had a definite European dimension. European integration has been a chance for Germany to get out of the grips of World War II and, given the lack of a global outreach of West Germany’s foreign policy, Europe has been on top of the German foreign policy agenda. Along with France, Germany was the main driving force of European integration, including political integration.

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127) Eichler, 2002, pp. 37-38.

128) Dumoulin, 2003, p. 87.

In its foreign and security policy, Germany has always preferred civilian instruments, multilateralism and coordination of its efforts with other states, except for a unilateralist push for the recognition of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia in 1991.<sup>129</sup>

The German government under Gerhard Schröder has therefore been in favour of ESDP.<sup>130</sup> In spite of Germany being a great champion and active member of NATO which has allowed for the remilitarisation and, in a sense, also the rehabilitation of Germany and despite Germany preferring strategic partnership with the USA for a long time, the ESDP, built on a broader and multilateral security concept, has some appeal to Germany. (Germany would even welcome if the ESDP issues were decided by qualified majority which is opposed by Great Britain and France.) The German government perceives ESDP as a chance to increase the political and military weight of Germany in foreign policy which has not been possible so far because of Germany's internal restraints. Germany's government is also seeking a permanent chair in the Security Council.<sup>131</sup> The German efforts at the country's military emancipation translated into Germany's intensive involvement in KFOR in Kosovo (the first deployment of German forces abroad after WWII) or in the ISAF force in Afghanistan where Germany has got the lead nation position. Within the context of European integration, Germany is slowly shifting from the traditional role of communitarism and small states champion to the role of a European power on the par with France and Great Britain. ESDP, on the other hand, exerts a great pressure on the reform of the German Bundeswehr and the enhancement of German armed forces in general, as well as on the defence budget, of course. Germany, despite its ambition to be the key component of ESDP, might end up being dominated by France and Great Britain because of its actual military capacities and relatively low defence spending – Germany spends only 1.14% of its GDP on defence, compared with France's 2.18% and Britain's 2.58%.<sup>132</sup>

The 'anti-American sting' of the 2002 election campaign added yet another dimension to German foreign and security policy.<sup>133</sup> In line with the pacifist and anti-American public opinion in Germany, the government puts less emphasis now on NATO and the alliance with the USA while promoting more

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129) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 45.

130) *Ibid.*, p. 50.

131) A 'new German interventionism' is sometimes referred to in this context (Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 44).

132) Boniface, P.(ed.): *L'Année stratégique 2005*. IRIS, Paris 2004.

133) Handl, V.: Německo – politický závazek s dlouhodobým plněním. In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 50.

the need for European defence emancipation. The current German government is very close to the French one in this respect. Chancellor Schröder had a very surprising speech at a Munich security conference in February 2005 where he spoke of his belief that NATO was not the organisation for the transatlantic security partnership of the future.<sup>134</sup> Instead, the Chancellor proposed a direct dialogue between the EU and the USA. The opposition CDU/CSU does not appear to share this vision though. Yet, it is probable that, given the current public opinion in Germany, the next German government where CDU/CSU will be represented will not change this direction taken by Schröder and Fischer, a direction of exclusive promotion of ESDP at the expense of NATO and of the emancipation of Europe from the USA.

#### **5.4. United States of America – Ambiguous Enthusiasm**

The United States has been a supporter of European integration from the very beginning.<sup>135</sup> Political and economic co-operation of West European countries, bringing peaceful relations and economic prosperity while halting the spread of communism, was beneficial for US interests during the Cold War. At the same time, the USA had a huge political influence over Western Europe, trying to control the process of European integration, which was relatively easy during the Cold War, given the circumstances. European political integration, accelerated towards the end of the Cold War, however has not won a full US support, as documented by the permanent US promotion of Turkey's membership in the EU.

As the US interest in Europe started fading towards the end of the Cold War, the United States welcomed European initiatives aimed at assuming more responsibility for European security and at lessening the need for any future US intervention on the continent as in the case of wars in former Yugoslavia. The USA has thus become an active supporter of the European Security and Defence Identity in NATO which was to become a 'European NATO pillar', allowing for greater burden sharing among allies.<sup>136</sup>

The US position on ESDP itself, however could best be termed as 'ambiguous enthusiasm'.<sup>137</sup> On the one hand, the US has still been quite happy with

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134) The German Chancellor nevertheless mentioned something that has had some resonance in academia for quite some time and has generally been accepted. The full text of the speech can be found on [www.securityconference.de](http://www.securityconference.de).

135) Hamilton, D.: American Views of European Security and Defense Policy. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. 147.

136) Tertrais, B.: ESDP and Global Security Challenges. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. 117.

137) Van Ham, 2000, p. 221.

Europeans trying to gain more military autonomy and end their security dependence on the USA, which (namely in terms of the US units in Europe) is quite costly for the United States and still harder to defend domestically. On the other hand, Clinton's administration – and there is some continuity here even in the Bush administration though the latter is less interested in Europe, just like the mostly Republican Congress – was clearly worried that ESDP might, over time, torpedo NATO. The surprising pro-European turn in Britain's policy certainly played a role here.<sup>138</sup> This worry was reflected in the formulation of three conditions under which the USA has been willing to accept ESDP. These three conditions specified by the Clinton administration in December 1998 and known as 'three D' included *no decoupling*, *no discrimination* and *no duplication*.<sup>139</sup> This means that the USA has been against ESDP disturbing the transatlantic relation (*no decoupling*), against ESDP being an exclusively EU project closed to European NATO members, Turkey in particular (*no discrimination*), and against unnecessary duplication of the existing or developed NATO military and planning capacities (*no duplication*). These conditions have more or less been supported by some EU Member States, including Great Britain.<sup>140</sup> The 'no duplication' requirement is, at the same time, a safeguard for a US 'supervision' of ESDP: Europeans should not seek to be completely independent of the USA and NATO in terms of planning and intelligence.<sup>141</sup> We must point out that Europeans are not even capable of this at the moment – that is why the agreement on the EU's access to NATO capacities was necessary for the past and present ESDP operations in Europe.

We may say that ESDP as such, i.e. an initiative within the framework of NATO and with fairly limited goals (the Petersberg tasks and interventions where neither the USA nor NATO chose to intervene), is acceptable for the USA. This, however, cannot be said about some, mostly French but increasingly also German, ESDP-linked ambitions. These ambitions, seeking to make the EU a global power equal to the United States and defending Europe's interests even in defiance of the USA, or to transform the EU into an arena of competition with the US defence industry, surely are not in line with American interests.<sup>142</sup> Americans often speak of their worries about the future of NATO

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138) Layne, 2001.

139) Khol, R.: *Spojené štáty americké...* In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 67.

140) Hamilton, 2002, p. 147.

141) Americans still dominate in the key domains of effective defence policy – the so called C3I: Command, Control, Communication and Intelligence.

142) Khol, R.: *Spojené štáty...* In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 69.

in this respect but that is not quite frank.<sup>143</sup> The approach of the current US administration, taking NATO as an ‘obedient reservoir’ of potential US allies for this or that operation, devalues NATO as an organisation and alliance in the eyes of Europeans, at the least.<sup>144</sup> Americans are not so much worried about the fate of NATO with respect to ESDP and the European autonomisation aspirations, but rather about their dominance over Europe.

The US approach to ESDP is, to a certain extent, based on the following logic: Europe and the USA are to work together through NATO and Europeans are capable of less in this co-operation. Given their great burdens and low defence budgets, can they possibly handle the ESDP project as well?<sup>145</sup> This more-than-justified US doubt is, at the same time, a self-comforting assurance that the US political and military superiority cannot be questioned by Europe because the EU is simply unable to implement its visions and cannot even agree on these visions as it is not united. It is only logical that the US government of the day seeks to continue providing Europeans access to NATO military and planning capacities to keep them dependent on the USA in this respect while trampling down, in a way, the germs of European unity in foreign and security policy, just as Donald Rumsfeld did by talking of an Old and New Europe.

## **5.5. Remaining ‘Old’ Member States – Mismatch of Ambitions and Capabilities**

The ESDP project is meeting with more or less agreement from other EU Member States. Most of them, however, are not able to contribute because of their insufficient military capacities, in spite of their quite big ambitions (e.g. Italy).<sup>146</sup> Denmark is not taking part in ESDP and has had an opt-out since Maastricht and ‘neutral states’ (if one can speak of neutrality these days) have had quite understandable objections, especially if ESDP developed into a classic mutual defence; these countries must be excluded from the camp of clear supporters of ESDP. Most states, however, do welcome ESDP as a platform for carrying out the Petersberg tasks under the UN mandate (e.g. Sweden), or they accept this in the least (e.g. Ireland).<sup>147</sup>

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143) Hamilton, 2002, p. 147.

144) Schneider, Žantovský, 2003, p. 2.

145) Andréani, Bertram, Grant, 2001, p. 7.

146) Khol, R.: *Itálie – politické ambice větší nežli možnosti*. In: Khol (ed.), 2002.

147) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, p. 54.

## 5.6. 'New Europe' – From Atlanticism to Europeanisation?

New Member States recruited from post-communist countries have quite specific approaches to ESDP. Being more or less 'Atlanticist', they take the transatlantic relationship and NATO in particular as the cornerstone of their security.<sup>148</sup> They also have warmer feelings towards the United States than the old Member States because they are thankful to the USA for dismantling communism in Europe. But that does not mean that these states, labelled as 'New Europe' by the US Defence Secretary, would not support the ESDP project – as long as priority is given to NATO operations. Until recently, states of New Europe made and wanted to make no political distinction between EU, NATO or ESDP as they saw no discrepancy there because they were willing to joint the Western 'Euro-Atlantic' structures.<sup>149</sup> The Iraq crisis may be said to have questioned their a priori non-conflicting approach: they were made to 'chose' and almost all of them chose the side of the USA and their allies. The slight departure from Atlanticism and the incremental 'Europeanisation' of the foreign and security policy of post-communist countries which have joined or will join the EU are, nevertheless, inevitable in the future, says Janusz Bugajsky of the US Center for Strategic and International studies (CSIS).<sup>150</sup>

## 5.7. Russia – Opportunistic and Unpredictable Partner

It is worth to mention the position of the Russian Federation on ESDP as well. The Russian approach to European integration is quite inconsistent. Russia is aware of the benefits the co-operation with Europe brings but has always perceived EU enlargement as a threat. At the same time, Russia is a master at exploiting the fact that EU Member States have very different views on the country and that there is no common EU policy on Russia. That is why Russia has started driving a wedge between EU Member States and has differentiated between these states, namely between the new and the old members.<sup>151</sup> The Russian government has had a quite positive view of ESDP. It has perceived ESDP as a European security structure which has taken up,

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148) Schneider, 2005.

149) Král, D., Pachta, L.: Česká republika a irácká krize. EUROPEUM, Praha 2005, p. 5.

150) Bugajski, Teleki, 2005.

151) Král, D.: Enlarging EU Foreign Policy: Role of the New Members States and Candidate Countries. EUROPEUM, Praha 2005.

in Russia's eyes, many of the activities of OSCE, initiated de facto by Moscow. Russia has seen ESDP as an initiative which may do practically no harm to Russian interests and might, in a certain context, weaken NATO which has quite suited Russia for a long time.<sup>152</sup> The multilateralist approach and the emphasis on the UN in ESDP are also very much in line with Russia's interests. Under Vladimir Putin, Russia has several times expressed its wish to get directly involved in ESDP but that has more or less been rejected by most EU states, especially the new members. To a certain extent, the Russian interest in ESDP is conditional on Russian-US relations that had until recently been more than good (and have remained so, to some extent, thanks to the war on terror, although the US criticism of Russian domestic issues has been growing). In any case, Russia has clearly preferred its involvement in NATO which has included Russia's voice through the mechanism of the NATO-Russia Council before ESDP.<sup>153</sup>

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152) Soukup, O., Votápek, V.: Rusko – pozitivnější přístup, nebo zmatení pojmů? In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 86.

153) Forsberg, T.: Russia's Role in the ESDP. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. 92.

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## 6. SYNTHESIS: EFFECTS OF ESDP ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATION

After we have dealt with transatlantic relations in the security domain, with the development and main features of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and the positions of key ESDP actors let us now turn to the assessment of the actual and possible impact of ESDP on transatlantic relations.

### 6.1. ESDP Acceptable for All

We may start by claiming that the existence of ESDP has long been seen as inevitable, a *fait accompli* which means that the current ESDP, based on co-operation and complementarity with NATO does not principally harm the transatlantic relation.<sup>154</sup> The ESDP project has developed very fast and proved relatively high viability: it is now accepted by almost all EU states, including the three largest ones, as well as by the USA. First ESDP operations have successfully been carried out and ESDP as such has without major harms survived even the Iraq crisis.

The general acceptability of the current ESDP is based on several preconditions. Through ESDP, Europe has been repaying its debts by taking up more responsibility for itself and its immediate neighbourhood at a time when it has been enjoying relative peace and security, unlike the United States.<sup>155</sup> Nevertheless, the EU's possibilities to replace NATO completely in the issues of European defence and security and take over the US role of the loudest voice and actor of Western community are still quite limited. This helps, on the other hand, to inhibit any possible negative approaches to ESDP.

Also, ESDP is acceptable because it is an absolutely logical step in political integration: ESDP is closely linked with and includes the values of EU states and therefore plays a certain role in building the European identity without a state-like community being created from the EU.<sup>156</sup> In other words,

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154) Andréani, Betram, Grant, 2001.

155) Joint Declaration o European Defense Integration – Center for Strategic and International Studies, 8/2004.

156) Chilton, 2002.

the achievement of ESDP objectives is a chance for EU states to implement their foreign and defence policy in line with their values and principles, helping the rest of the world as well. Many politicians understand such global involvement of the EU not as a possibility or option but as a duty. They believe that the Union has more than enough legitimacy to do so as a unified position of all 25 or more Member States is needed (which has some weight in itself) and enough means. In terms of hard power, the European Union cannot equal the United States but in soft power the EU, thanks to the diversity of the EU's and its Member States' activities and policies, has some very good instruments available – from diplomacy to political and economic co-operation to various forms of assistance and humanitarian aid (the EU is the single biggest humanitarian aid donor in the world).<sup>157</sup> Last but not least, what ultimately helps the EU is the fact that its foreign policy (if there is one indeed) or the foreign policies of the Union's Member States are more trust-worthy globally than US foreign policy, especially thanks to the general EU's emphasis on multilateralism and international law. And it is the ESDP that adds the – still limited but functional – hard power element to the wide range of European soft power tools.

As already said, it is not possible to separate internal and external security – or hard and soft security. At the same time, complementarity and combination of hard and soft power elements is important for the overall success in foreign and security policy. In this perspective, the EU appears to become a universal structure capable of reacting to all types of issues and therefore surpassing single-purpose security organisations such as NATO or OSCE.

To relativize the above description of ESDP and the Union's ESDP a CFSP developments as the only possible and 'easy' alternative of further development we must state that the concept of Europe as a global player displays a number of inherent contradictions.<sup>158</sup> Moreover, this Union's aspiration has been undermined by Europeans themselves since they are not willing to spend more on defence and to reach unity in foreign policy issues because of diverging national interests, namely those of European powers without which no European foreign and security policy can be implemented. Apparently, finding a common position on most conflicts, such as a humanitarian disaster or civil war in Africa, is not that difficult for EU states. This unity,

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157) Parmentier, 2004, p. 131.

158) Nivet, B.: La défense : problématiques et dynamiques d'un chantier européen. In: La revue internationale et stratégique, No. 48, 2002/2003, p. 100.

however, will only last before an issue such as the war in Iraq appears which will split Europeans into irreconcilable camps once again. Moreover, there is no agreement in Europe on the nature of the relationship with the USA and the need for a transatlantic link in defence and security, the key concern of this paper. Some states, such as France, go clearly the ‘European way.’ Some, such as the new members from post-communist countries or Great Britain, prefer the emphasis on NATO and the relation with North America. The rest of the states are not willing to choose ‘between Europe and America’. We profess that it will not be possible for CFSP and ESDP to develop beyond the currently very limited and restricted form of co-operation without a common position of EU states on issues such as the war in Iraq, a common perception of the role of the United States and a transatlantic link in relation to European and global security.

CFSP and ESDP largely fall within the category of European theoretical and institutional solutions with no real content,<sup>159</sup> with the lack of common interest and the will to advocate it in practice. The European Security Strategy is a good illustration of this. The creation of such a document which defines common threats and the ways of facing them surely is a step in the right direction. But is it really justified to worry about this achievement remaining just on paper because Member States are not willing to take some practical steps and measures on the basis of this strategy?<sup>160</sup>

## 6.2. Where is the ESDP Heading?

If ESDP, in its existing limited form, is acceptable for West European actors and does not really upset the transatlantic relationship, the future effect it might have on transatlantic relations will depend largely on the next steps and priority goals. It is almost impossible to guess the future developments of ESDP, just like the European integration, a project *sui generis* in itself. Yet, we may present here three scenarios of the future development of ESDP:<sup>161</sup>

1. ‘Minimalist Option’ – ESDP will continue to develop within the current framework. ESDP will continue to be an autonomous project of EU states which will not dent the role and significance of NATO (respecting the

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159) Shepherd, A.: The European Union's Security and Defence Policy: A Policy without Substance. In: *European Security*, No. 1, 2003.

160) Grevi, 2004.

161) This is a synthesis of six scenarios presented in Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, pp. 724-744.

three D and shared burden principles), will have fairly limited tasks (i.e. Petersberg tasks) which will, after all, be implemented only where there is no place for NATO. This scenario reflects the wishes of the USA, Labour-led Great Britain and many other EU states, except the ones mentioned in Scenario 2.<sup>162</sup>

2. ESDP as the main pillar of European defence – EU states will be able to achieve an autonomous European defence policy which will make NATO politically redundant as the Atlantic Alliance will continue to turn around the EU-USA axis. This scenario suits the interests of France, Germany (namely the current federal government), Belgium, Greece, and Luxembourg.<sup>163</sup>
3. Hard Core Defence Union – ESDP will be developing within its current limited framework (Scenario 1) but some states will be seeking more defence integration, wishing for a defence union, in an avant-garde hard core – if need be, even outside the EU structures. This scenario fits France, in particular.

We can also take into account a scenario of total ESDP failure, for whatever reasons. Nevertheless, stopping the project and returning back before 1998, making European defence a 'European pillar of NATO' is, in our view, highly improbable, given its seven years of existence and the great political will behind this project. And as we want to turn to the impact of future ESDP development on transatlantic relations, the thoughts of future non-existence of ESDP is irrelevant to us.

### 6.3. Future ESDP Developments and Transatlantic Relations

Let us now consider the ways in which the further development of ESDP will influence or change the transatlantic relationships, referring to the three scenarios presented above.

A lot has been written on the ESDP - NATO relationship and its complementarity or inevitable antagonism. Yet, it seems that the ESDP-NATO relationship is only secondary here.<sup>164</sup> This is mainly because the complementarity of today's ESDP with NATO was provided for by a 2002 agreement allowing

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162) Radek Khol calls this scenario an optimistic one – Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 69.

163) Radek Khol calls this scenario a pessimistic one – Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 69.

164) Bono, G.: L'ambiguïté des relations OTAN/PESD : faux débat ou enjeu réel ? In: La revue internationale et stratégique, No. 48, 2002/2003, p. 137.

ESDP operations to use NATO planning capacities and to be carried out where the US force is not needed and where the USA itself is not willing to intervene, e.g. in the Balkans. What is crucial now is the relationship the EU is building now with the USA and NATO within the context of the developing European defence policy.<sup>165</sup>

A minimalist ESDP as we know it today (Scenario 1) surely cannot be understood as a ‘Trojan horse’ in NATO as America’s UN ambassador candidate John Bolton remarked.<sup>166</sup> The question is, however, whether the future development of ESDP, though in a limited form, will not necessarily lead to the weakening of the current role of NATO.<sup>167</sup> NATO as an organisation – and not a defence alliance that must undoubtedly be maintained and is absolutely necessary – is a legacy of the Cold War and is largely a ‘service organisation’ for ESDP on the European continent, with the exception of Kosovo where NATO troops are still present, because NATO’s planning capacities are still irreplaceable for ESDP. NATO’s role as an organisation outside Europe will, however, be also problematic. The United States’ reliance on NATO has been only limited and the country has perceived NATO more as a security organisation for Europeans, allowing Europeans to take part in US-lead operations (e.g. NATO units in Afghanistan or the US request for NATO to get involved in post-war Iraq). Presumably, many European states will, however, prefer operations elsewhere than in Europe and – in spite of carrying them out side by side with Americans – under the EU rather than the NATO flag, for political reasons or because of a greater prestige (brand building) – especially if NATO provides its planning capacities and if ESDP remains a project of the whole Union, most members of which are also members of NATO, and not just of an EU hard core.<sup>168</sup> Increasingly, it appears that NATO as a political organisation (and not just a mutual defence alliance) is really losing its *raison d’être*, though not in practice. It will nevertheless depend on whether the USA recognises the EU as its partner, stops discriminating all the time in favour of NATO as against ESDP and allows Europeans to use more of the Alliance’s capacities<sup>169</sup> to prevent duplication<sup>170</sup> while being careful not to undermine their attempt to become independent on

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165) Otte, 2002, p. 53.

166) Layne, C.: *Iraq and Beyond*. In: Balis, Serfaty (eds.), 2004, p. 59.

167) Van Ham, 2000, p. 224.

168) Otte, 2002, p. 50.

169) Van Ham, 2000, p. 227.

170) In this respect, the complementarity between NATO Response Force (NRF) and EU’s Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) still seems problematic.

NATO capacities over time. For this option (basically Scenario 2) to become real, it is absolutely crucial and necessary that Americans are willing to co-operate. This co-operation between the USA and Europe might, however, be threatened by overblown (anti-American) ambitions of EU states, namely of France, and the possible formation of a ‘hard core’, i.e. a defence union, made up of just a few member states (Scenario 3).

The very development of the ESDP project, though related to security emancipation of Europe and weakening of the political significance of NATO, cannot harm the transatlantic relationship in the future, providing some conditions are met, because the very transatlantic relationship has undergone some changes.<sup>171</sup> In saying this, we disagree with a view presented by Jiří Schneider who sees maintaining the present role of NATO (for other than just practical reasons) as the only chance for keeping up the transatlantic link and providing for European security, whereas he admits that NATO’s position is threatened not only by ESDP but also by the US unilateralism and the ‘coalition of the willing’ principle.<sup>172</sup> ESDP is a logical step on the way of European integration which, however, does not have much chance to really succeed without the existence of a transatlantic security relation and co-operation with the USA in planning and intelligence. Turning Europe into a military and political rival of the USA should not be the (dominant) goal of ESDP. Rather, the aim should be to make – along with some other actors – the transatlantic relationship more balanced by Europe taking up more military responsibility so that the huge military capacity gap between the USA and Europe closes up a little. It is this gap that makes Europe and the USA less and less comprehensible to each other in security and defence issues (the ‘dialogue of the deaf’) where each of them is choosing different methods: soft power versus hard power.<sup>173</sup> And it is ESDP that might be the stimulus for Europe to put more emphasis on hard power. Let us take as a point of departure the famous thoughts of Roberta Kagan in his *Power and Weakness* in which he claims that ‘Europe is from Venus and America is from Mars’ and that this absolute gap between the mentalities of Europe and America breaks up the transatlantic relationship since each of these actors ‘speaks a different language.’ In the light of this reasoning, it might be possible to claim that it is the ESDP that may ensure that Europe is ‘less from Venus and more from

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171) Andréani, Bertram, Grant, 2001, p.78.

172) Schneider, 2003, p. 2.

173) Serfaty, 2004, p. 17.

Mars'. ESDP and all that is related to it, including the European Defence Agency or the building of Europe's own planning capacities etc., is surely improving Europe's strategic thinking and perhaps allowing for Europe and the USA to 'speak one language' even though the EU's interests might vary still more from the American ones.<sup>174</sup> We can illustrate this on US defence industry: the USA and Europe are the two largest producers of weapons in the world and their products are of the best technical quality, though the USA is still ahead of Europe. The growing European competition in defence industry, which Americans are rather worried about now, may very well stimulate further research and development in defence industry and help to better equip armies because of reduced prices.<sup>175</sup>

Yet, there are some aspects of ESDP that might harm the transatlantic relationship in the future. On the European side, these include an overambitious goal (of France, in fact) of transforming Europe into a great power – which is not linked with ESDP only – standing as a rival to the United States or ignoring the US legitimate right to take part in a decision-making on the security of the whole West, i.e. North America and Europe – all of this spiced up by an anti-American rhetoric of politicians and anti-American public opinion. ESDP would thus appear as the crucial factor in creating a strong defence union which might replace the transatlantic relation.<sup>176</sup> Given that such visions are unenforceable in the European Union as a whole, they would have to get implemented within the above mentioned hard core of the 'chosen countries' (Scenario 3) which would seriously disturb the building of a balanced EU-USA relationship (Scenario 2) as there would be two transatlantic links on the EU side: a tighter and a looser one.

In general, the transatlantic relationship will not be upset by such ESDP bearing European identities in a Europe-wide project; neither will it be harmed by such ESDP which would only be the projection of the interests or an extended arm of the big EU states. Many might think, however, that this is utopian.

But many things to do are up to the US. Europeans do not want to give up their ESDP and CFSP and if Americans do not recognise these European ambitions or even undermine them it will not help the transatlantic relationship either.<sup>177</sup> The USA has so far been unable to genuinely recognise and

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174) Keohane, 2004.

175) Grant, C.: *Transatlantic Alliances and the Revolution in Military Affairs*. In: Ashbourne, A. (ed.): *Europe's Defence Industry – A Transatlantic Future*. Centre for European Reform, London 1999, pp. 63-69.

176) Bono, 2002, p. 137.

177) Layne, 2001, p. 8.

accept the European defence and security ambitions (*hard power*) and the fact that the typically European methods, such as the emphasis on soft power, may bring results.

The current unilateralism and the ‘coalition of the willing’ principle used in the US foreign policy is another risk factor threatening the transatlantic relation. American unilateralism does no good to the transatlantic relationship because it arouses negative sentiments in Europe about America, both on the sides of public opinion and politicians, and because it is principally at odds with the idea of a balanced (transatlantic) partnership and dialogue. The ‘coalition of the willing’ doctrine contradicts the basic principle of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, i.e. seeking a common position of all EU Member States. In CSFP, this principle is acceptable through the above mentioned *lead nation* mechanism: some states carry out an operation but they are supported by the remaining ones. At a time when the EU is – or is trying hard to be – a relatively politically integrated entity, a policy of driving a wedge between EU states can only harm the transatlantic relations.

If the risks outlined in the above paragraphs do get eliminated ESDP will be of a great benefit to the continuation of the transatlantic relation.



## 7. CONCLUSIONS

In spite of its short history, the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is a successful project. At the same time, the present form of ESDP is acceptable to the vast majority of states and political actors on both sides of the Atlantic while being in line with the transforming transatlantic relation.<sup>178</sup> The acceptability of ESDP and its compliance with the transatlantic relation are based on a long-term need, expressed at both sides of the Atlantic, for Europe to end its security dependence on the USA, to take up the responsibility for what is happening in its 'spheres of influence' to use the old imperial term, and to contribute to the defence of the West.

Many of this will depend on what direction the future ESDP development will take. ESDP may stay within its current limited shape which would be welcomed by Great Britain,<sup>179</sup> the countries of 'New Europe' and the United States. According to this scenario, ESDP would remain a policy/initiative whose major feature is complementarity (burden sharing) and co-operation with NATO (confirmed by the 2002 EU-NATO agreement and based on the dependence of Europe on the military and planning capacities of NATO), that is in the form of a 'European pillar of NATO' – though one that is more autonomous than the European Security and Defence Identity before 1998.

ESDP, however, may also start evolving in the direction of a truly autonomous European defence policy independent of NATO and the USA, as more and more political actors in Europe, France and the present German government in particular, wish. And an establishment of a hard core or a defence union made up of a few avant-garde EU countries cannot be ruled out either.

It is quite clear that it is much more than just a 'division of labour' between NATO and the EU what is going on in the present ESDP. Moreover, the ESDP- NATO relationship seems only secondary today: the EU-USA must get into focus instead now.<sup>180</sup>

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178) Scharioth, K.: Making ESDP Strong Will Strengthen NATO and the Transatlantic Partnership. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. 165.

179) Great Britain prefers such concept of ESDP where the 'EU would be a smart client of NATO's military services'. Khol, R.: *Velká Británie...* In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 21.

180) Bono, 2002, p. 137.

The European Union has been going deeper in political integration while reinforcing its CFSP instruments, fully supported by European public opinion. The EU is a political entity which should also have a military dimension so as not to be incomplete. As Europe and the world in general is more and more interconnected, new security threats, such as terrorism, arms proliferation, as well as regional conflicts, have a more even impact on all EU Member states and no single state can face them alone.<sup>181</sup> The European Union also has its own security strategy and its constitution, in spite of not having been ratified so far, includes a commitment to mutual defence. From a certain perspective, it seems that the EU of the future will be a universal security structure, completely in line with the requirements for a comprehensive security policy which is needed now, including, for example, the fight against terrorism, with the use of non-military and other than force-based means. The European Union of today is described as a civilian power<sup>182</sup> using some considerable soft power instruments, such as diplomacy, global prestige, economic power and co-operation, assistance and humanitarian aid. If EU states are able to increase their military potential to the required level the EU will have a wide range of soft and hard power instruments (as explained in Chapter 2) for its own security and for exerting its influence in the world. The global involvement of the EU is made easier by the fact that the Union's foreign and security policy (or the respective policies of EU Member States) evokes more confidence than the policy of the United States. This is both due to the legitimacy of a common approach of all Member States and due to the greater emphasis put by the EU on international law and multilateralism.

The concept of the European Union as a successful global actor, however, hides some contradictions.<sup>183</sup> Firstly, it is very hard to reach a common position in foreign and security policy: the unity must be achieved among all Member States, first and foremost among the big ones without which no European foreign or security initiative is legitimate and can succeed. But EU states have no common positions on a number of issues and, sadly for their foreign and security policy, these include most of the really crucial matters. EU states are not united on the approach to such key issues as the former Soviet Union, Middle East or Far East. Neither can they agree on the nature of the future transatlantic relation, the role of NATO in their security arrangements, and the

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181) Cameron, 1999, p. 71.

182) Khol, R: Úvod. In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p.9.

183) Dumoulin, Mathieu, Sarlet, 2003, pp. 461-465.

direction of the European Foreign and Security Policy, including ESDP. The bust-up during the Iraq crisis was a prime example of the combination of the several levels of EU divergence: there was no unity in the positions on how to solve the situation in such a sensitive and crucial region and no common position on supporting the US ally.

The unwillingness to spend more on defence is the second major flaw in Europe's plans of a global involvement and operational defence policy – the US annual defence spending is almost twice higher than that of all the EU states together. This unwillingness discredits the European ambitions, harming the European defence industry, keeping Europe subordinate to the United States and, in principle, disrupting the transatlantic relationship.<sup>184</sup> The still greater gap between the military potential of Europe and that of the USA results in a lack of balance and mutual distrust: Europe has no confidence in the US solution based on force because it cannot fully participate in implementing it while the USA has no confidence in the European peaceful solution as Americans do not take part in it. This gap in military operability between Europe and the USA was well described by Robert Kagan in his famous essay *Power and Weakness*.<sup>185</sup> In claiming that 'Europe is from Venus and America from Mars' – though it was the other way round before WWII – Kagan transposed this rather simplified distinction onto the level of different mentalities: it is not only the potential of using power but rather the willingness to do so.<sup>186</sup> In the light of this, European ambitions in foreign and security policy seem to be acceptable for many actors because they are quite 'harmless' due to these crucial structural limits. This idea is based on the fact that, due to its general 'inaptness,' Europe is left with nothing else then clinging to the transatlantic relation and remaining subordinate to the USA. But let us now turn to the realms of theory and pies in the sky: let us assume that Europe will be able to overcome these limits.

Given the nature of the security environment today and the changes in the transatlantic relation as well as in American foreign and security policy we believe that there is no other way for Europe seeking to continue with its integration than to develop an autonomous defence policy and overall political and security emancipation even though that will require unity in foreign and security policy and higher defence spending.<sup>187</sup>

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184) *Ibid.*, pp. 461-465.

185) Kagan, 2002.

186) Simon Serfaty proposes a similar comparison – Europe lives in a Kantian world while the USA lives in a Hobbesian one. Serfaty, 2004, p. 6.

187) Van Ham, P.: *A European View of the US and ESDP*. In: Brimmer (ed.), 2002, p. 135.

The need for a truly autonomous European defence policy is closely linked to the quite problematic future of NATO as the main pillar so far of European defence and the embodiment of the transatlantic security relation.<sup>188</sup> Although this relation, mentioned in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty is not and should not be questioned, the political significance of NATO as an organisation has been somewhat fading in the long-term perspective.<sup>189</sup> This statement is principally opposed by die-hard ‘Atlanticists’ from post-communist countries (this paper refers to the work of Jiří Schneider and Michael Žantovský.<sup>190</sup> It is true that NATO is still irreplaceable in practice: recent ESDP operations have been dependent on NATO capacities. On the political level, nevertheless, it is still more difficult for NATO to find its *raison d’être*. NATO as a purely military organization does not correspond to the current need for comprehensive security which would combine hard security with soft security and hard power with soft power. NATO’s future role is rather problematic in relation to another two aspects. Besides the very development of European political integration, including ESDP, and the establishment of a direct EU-USA relationship, it is the recent development of the US foreign and security policy with its weakening of interest in Europe, unilateralism, the ‘coalition of the willing’ principle undermining the coherence of NATO and turning the alliance into a ‘reservoir’ of potential allies for these coalitions.<sup>191</sup> Even though Americans, in their rhetoric, still point out the perpetual significance of NATO, their recent acts reveal that they do not need NATO as an organisation and will not rely on it any longer, as illustrated by the little appreciation by the Bush administration of the historically first evocation of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty in reaction to 9/11 attacks.<sup>192</sup> The USA may thus be suspected of favouring NATO as an organisation only because of the dominant role they play there.<sup>193</sup>

Given this quite unclear future of NATO, even the present, rather limited form of ESDP which is complementary to NATO, seems more and more untenable. The existing ‘division of labour’ between the USA, NATO and ESDP is based on the fact that Europeans themselves are capable of carrying out only operations they have capacities for and in locations the United

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188) Howorth, J.: ESDP and NATO. Wedlock or Deadlock? In: *Cooperation and Conflict*, No. 3, 2003, p. 252.

189) Van Ham, 2000, p. 224.

190) Schneider, Žantovský, 2003; Schneider, 2005.

191) Schneider, 2003, p. 2.

192) We might mention here that the American NATO commitment in terms of armed forces is only 8%. Heisbourg, F.: *Quel rôle mondial pour l’Europe*. Paris Conference notes, 18/9/2003 – *Europartenaires*, p. 3.

193) Layne, 2001, p. 10.

States and their ‘coalition of the willing’ allies do not wish to intervene in. According to this logic, shared with the USA by European ‘Atlanticists,’ it is the USA and its current allies that have preference. Then comes NATO (according to the NATO first principle) and only then, when neither the USA nor NATO is willing to carry out an operation, comes the EU. First, however, comes the consideration of an ESDP in line with the ‘Berlin+’ logic, i.e. the use of NATO capacities. It is only then that an operation can be carried out by EU states themselves, according to the lead nation principle. In the light of the effort to establish a more balanced relationship between the USA and the EU, this logic will get problematic in future. In order for ESDP to have some meaning, the EU should not be *a priori* sidetracked but should have the possibility to carry out operations according to its own interests and not just in ‘allocated’ territories such as the Balkans or Africa and for humanitarian purposes only, in line with the Petersberg tasks. For this to be changed, Europe must, of course, be able to agree on its interests and specific operations while having the adequate military instruments available.

At the same time, the American (and largely also British) conditions under which ESDP is tolerated, the above mentioned ‘3D’, must be relativised: these conditions are somewhat outdated since they were formulated in 1998, shortly after the ‘political launch’ of ESDP. The Bush administration, unlike the Clinton one, is less interested in ESDP and Europe in general. Quite paradoxically, the Bush administration is more in favour of ESDP although this is a rather ‘negative tolerance,’ supported by the weakening interest in Europe. That is why the Bush administration has formulated no new conditions which would reflect the ESDP as we know it today. We may, nevertheless, assume that these conditions set by the Clinton administration still give evidence of the main aspects of the US approach to ESDP.

The ‘no decoupling’ condition, i.e. no disturbance of the transatlantic relation, is politically achievable even in a balanced EU-USA relationship, depending largely on the US approach and tolerance of European ambitions (keeping it dependent on NATO) and whether these ambitions will be understood as harmful to the transatlantic relationship. The other two conditions are more problematic, though: an ESDP accessible for European non-EU members of NATO<sup>194</sup> (no discrimination) and no duplication. ESDP is a project of the European Union which has, so far, been a quite strongly politically integrated entity and which is entitled to have its own interests,

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194) The so called Non-EU European Allies (NEEA).

though it cannot fully define them yet. The participation (as well as decision-making) of non-EU states in ESDP is, in principle, politically unacceptable, even though the number of non-EU members of NATO in Europe will be dropping over time. The no duplication condition is very problematic too. Eliminating duplication in military and planning capacities is more than reasonable, if just for reasons such of cost reduction etc., yet it must not be used as an excuse for blocking the development of European capacities and, in effect, maintaining Europe's subordination.

The gradual development from the currently limited ESDP to a truly autonomous European defence policy is, in our view, absolutely legitimate.<sup>195</sup> This development, however, should not do harm to the transatlantic relation. Europe should not see a replacement for this relation – an a priori rivalry with the USA – in ESDP, nor should it question the crucial role of the USA in European security. Also, no small defence union made up of a European 'hard core' (as many French political actors wish) shall be created in Europe because it would split up Europe, could even be formed outside the EU framework and might deform the relationship with the USA by establishing several levels of partnership with some states having a closer, some looser relationship with the USA. This would undermine the efforts to establish a balanced EU–USA relationship. In other words, ESDP must be a project of the entire EU, and not just a projection of the interests of a few (big) states.

The United States, on the other hand, will have to recognise the EU as an entity with the right to have its own interests and security methods, such as effective multilateralism and soft power, while co-operating with this entity and not seeking to divide it by building 'coalitions of the willing.'

The European Union of today is a civilian rather than a military power which makes the United States whose current security policy is largely based on pre-emptive wars not rely on and co-operate with Europe too much. The military dimension of the European Union, i.e. ESDP which stimulates the EU states to spend more on defence and put more emphasis on the hard power element of their security policy, can paradoxically draw the security mentalities of Europe and the United States closer together. To paraphrase Roberta Kagan, Europe would be 'less from Venus and more from Mars'. Europe could also become a universal security structure complying with the current security policy requirements for the combination of hard and soft power.

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195) Layne, 2001, p. 11.

And Europe as a global political and military power which will suddenly promote its interests in spite of the USA will not necessarily be a threat to Washington.<sup>196</sup>

The transatlantic partnership today, fifteen years after the end of the Cold War and two years after the Iraq crisis, is at a crossroads. In order to remain alive in the future it has to continue to be a real partnership – a dialogue of equal partners, the EU and the USA, none of which is dependent on the other – though it has been mainly Europe who has been dependent on the USA – and who need one another without quite realising it.<sup>197</sup> Europe will presumably not acquire quite the same military power as the USA in near future so the alliance with North America is and will long remain vital for Europe. The USA is one of the world's superpowers that does not need anyone. But the previously great strength of America, the power of example (or soft power),<sup>198</sup> is getting lost from its policy. What America needs, as Joseph Nye claims, is feedback and correction of its hegemonic temptation.<sup>199</sup> And that is why the USA needs Europe, its most faithful ally who has the same values and a similar way of thinking.

In spite of this all, some geopolitical rivalry and divergence of interests between Europe and the USA appear to be inevitable.<sup>200</sup> It is a natural consequence of the disappearance of a common, unifying threat after the Cold War. Today's threats – though equally important for Europe and America – do not have this unifying effect of the old Soviet threat.<sup>202</sup>

It is quite natural for Europe and America to have their own, sometimes clashing interests. What is important here is that they can find agreement. This, however, might not be always possible: internal discord is typical for democratic systems and can be found in the relations between democratic countries, too.<sup>203</sup> What should be always present in the transatlantic partnership though is the effort on both sides to seek dialogue and consensus while realising that the variance of views and methods or even competition can be beneficial for both parties and might enrich both sides alike.

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196) Layne, 2001, p. 9; Srov. Everts, S., Grant, C.: *President Bush: Why You Need the Europeans?* Centre for European Reform, December 2004.

197) Schweiss, 2003, p. 231.

198) Nye, 2003, p. 9.

199) *Ibid.*, p. 39.

200) Khol. R.: *Spojené státy...* In: Khol (ed.), 2002, p. 74.

201) As evident from the comparison of the European Security Strategy and the US National Security Strategy (see Chapter 2.2).

202) Andréani, Bertram, Grant, 2001, p. 74.

203) Parmentier, 2004, pp. 121-122.

Variance is a sign of a mature, balanced relationship which must, however, be accompanied by the art of knowing how to deal with and overcome these divergences – though through concessions.<sup>204</sup> And this art has not disappeared from the transatlantic community although it has not been used too much in recent years. Europe and the United States are still a community sharing the very basic interests and values, in spite of the variances in some interests and methods.

As stated in the introduction to *Europe's Military Revolution*,<sup>205</sup> all those concerned with the success of European integration must wish for a further-developing ESDP and CFSP. We may add that all of those who wish to maintain the Western community in today's postmodern and globalised world<sup>206</sup> must protect and 'nurture' the transatlantic relation: but not at the cost of stagnation and maintaining the status quo, i.e. implementing the European defence policy through NATO only, as seen as necessary by e.g. Jiří Schneider,<sup>207</sup> but by adapting the alliance to new conditions.

What has been described so far is an ideal development which, however, need not correspond with reality. This paper presents the reality and author's ideas in mid-2005 but further developments may cast doubt over many of the presented assumptions. Yet, we believe that the ESDP project, just like the transatlantic relation, builds on a very firm base and that there are not many factors undermining this foundation. Surely, these factors do not include a change in the governments of the countries involved, even though the case of Great Britain, a country which is crucial for further ESDP development, might be different as a potential Conservative government might change Britain's position on ESDP quite substantially. Not even the failure of the European constitution which takes ESDP and the entire CFSP<sup>208</sup> a huge step forward, should threaten further development of the project because many of the constitution clauses can be or have been introduced into practice even without the constitution itself. What is a real risk, however, is that European integration as a whole might be discredited by the constitution (or any other similar treaty) not being ratified or a defence hard core (which the constitution includes a safeguard against) being established and potentially harming the transatlantic relationship.

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204) Solana, 2002, p. IX.

205) Andréani, Bertram, Grant, 2001, p. 7.

206) The paradox has it that the Western community is the main driving force of globalisation while globalisation is a potential threat to the cohesion of the Western community.

207) Schneider, 2005, p. 9.

208) E.g. by establishing a position of EU Foreign Minister.



No serious crisis such as the one over Iraq should threaten to damage the transatlantic relation: the Iraq crisis was very grave indeed but both the transatlantic partnership and ESDP did get over the rupture. Europe has even got 'used to' the US unilateralism, which has become a typical feature of the US foreign and security policy, and can respond with a common foreign and defence policy without disrupting the alliance with the USA.

Let us conclude this paper with a personal observation. Many authors quarrel about whether we are living in a unipolar or multipolar world at the dawn of the 21 century. There are many signs pointing rather to the unipolar order. We may try, however, to make the whole West, and not just the United States, the single world's pole.<sup>209</sup>

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209) We are inspired by the thoughts of a British political scientist Martin Shaw on a single 'Western state'. Shaw, M.: *Theory of the Global State: Globality as Unfinished Revolution*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000.

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## **8. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

### ***European Security and Defence Policy in the Light of the Transatlantic Relationship***

European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was launched in 1998. The project builds upon the necessity for Europeans – who have depended on the US for security and defence for much of the Cold War and post-Cold War period – to take over some of the responsibility for their own security and for the building of permanent peace in Europe ('burden sharing'). The emergence of ESDP was stimulated by three factors. (1) The end of the Cold War saw the disappearance of a unifying threat to the Western Community and a consequent decrease in the US interest in Europe. (2) A change of the security milieu with its new so-called 'asymmetric threats'; and (3) Europe's incapability to react to 'hot crises' in the Balkans in 1990s.

The ESDP project has already brought some considerable achievements. ESDP has become a part of the process of European political integration and EU primary law, having been provided with its own structures and institutions. Under ESDP, the EU is creating the Rapid Reaction Force and Battle Groups. Moreover, the EU has participated in three military operations: two of them in the Balkans (taking over previous NATO missions), with operational support from NATO (SHAPE), and one in the Democratic Republic of Congo, largely inspired and made a reality by the two ESDP 'lead nations' – France and Great Britain.

Despite these achievements, the ESDP is 'weakened' by a relatively low defence spending in European states, as compared with the USA, and by internal divisions among European states that have been unable to find a consensus on the very objectives and interests in their common foreign and security policy. This is most evident in the different concepts of the future role of ESDP where there are two competing models: a minimalist one (preferred by the UK and 'New Europe') versus an ambitious one (preferred by France and Germany).

There are three fundamental questions addressed in this study: Is ESDP necessarily at odds with the current or future form of the transatlantic relationship? What could be the future shape of ESDP? And what is the future role of NATO? This is particularly germane to the development of ESDP (and the whole Europe's political integration) and to the evolution of the transatlantic relationship, most especially in light of America's recent move toward unilateralism.

### **Key findings:**

- ESDP is an acceptable project for all partners in the transatlantic community given the new geopolitical reality and also its present, rather limited form which makes it a complement of rather than an alternative to NATO. Nevertheless, ESDP cannot remain in the shape it has now because it is strongly linked to the process of political integration and is central to Europe's legitimate ambitions to play a more important role in the world.
- Today's EU is technically dependent on NATO; in the long term, however, the EU, through its ESDP, might become a more universal common foreign and security structure than NATO is now. Effective security policy is now seen to require the combined use of both soft and hard security and/or soft and hard power policy instruments and strategies.
- NATO's future political role is fading: NATO is 'only' a military structure; the transatlantic relationship should be founded on a balanced EU-US relationship.
- The development of an autonomous European defence policy is realistic and should not cause damage to the transatlantic relationship if the following two conditions are met:
  - a. The United States should recognise the EU as an equal partner and it should not discourage the EU from achieving military capability and operational capacity making it independent of the USA in terms of security and defence. The USA should not divide Europe by America's unilateral foreign policy and creation of 'coalitions of the willing'.
  - b. The EU should be more united and spend more on defence, but it should not seek to become a rival to the USA and aim to replace the transatlantic relation by ESDP, particularly if ESDP would give birth to a 'hard core' defence group.

- Europe and the USA might and do have different interests, views, and foreign and security methods, but still share some fundamental values, so they both face the same threats.
- Transatlantic disputes are not something to fear but they should never cast doubt on the transatlantic relationship, which is still vital for both Europe and the USA.



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