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European Foreign Policy on Trial A Global Actor in the Making?

- Although the EU has a wide range of effective policy instruments at its disposal all too often it is unable to deploy them. Rhetorical declarations aside, it lacks both clear precepts in terms of norms and values, and their implementation in the form of political priorities and coherent policies.
- Unless it is able to clarify its relations with key partners and reach agreement on common priorities the EU will be relegated to a subordinate role in the face of pressing global challenges and the reshaping of the world order.
- At the forefront of any strategic debate should be the EU's relations with the USA and Russia, and its policy towards its immediate neighbours.

MARCH 2009

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1 Introduction and Aims

EU foreign policy, in particular the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), are relatively new policy areas that have developed rapidly in recent years (Wong 2005: 141).

Although at the beginning of the 1990s Europeans proved themselves incapable of bringing an end, either diplomatically or militarily, to the wars that had broken out on their own doorstep in Yugoslavia, today the EU has a more substantial role on the world stage. This applies to both political influence on critical developments, including by means of the Union's economic apparatus, and taking action internationally. The EU has been assisted in this by the fact that, since the decision taken in Cologne in 1999 to establish a European Security and Defence Policy, significant progress has been made in terms of making member states' civil and military capacities available for EU missions and putting in place the requisite planning and control mechanisms at European level.

At the same time, a High Representative of the EU for CFSP/ESDP was appointed in the person of Javier Solana, who has put a face – not to mention the much quoted telephone number – on European efforts on the global stage, and thanks to whose endeavours the EU has had a European Security Strategy (ESS) since 2003.¹ Once agreement has been reached on the Reform Treaty, further institutional innovations will take place that will have the effect of strengthening Europe's foreign and security policy.

These advances face a series of problems, however. These include the debate on the Iraq War, the still unresolved financial mechanism for CFSP/ESDP, disagreements among the member states concerning central issues of the EU's global role, and the lack of significant strategic capacities, such as air transport and helicopters. Given the broad support among European citizens for a global role for Europe (European Commission 2008: 15), as well as the ongoing challenges of global governance and security policy that individual member states are scarcely capable of handling on their own (Steinmeier 2007: 28), the need arises for a sustainable foreign and security policy for Europe. This would have to do justice to both internal and external expectations, as well as pending tasks. Basically, the question is to what extent will the EU be able in the coming years to contribute to solving the most important question of global govern-

ance: Effective multilateralism, hegemonic multilateralism or a multipolar world?

Europe's foreign and security policy is defined by common goals

The aim of a future European foreign policy, however, should not be a claim to sole representation on the part of the EU and so the total renunciation of sovereignty in foreign and security policy by the member states. The interests of the EU and the member states would be better served if they were to jointly pursue the aims of the European Security Strategy, the EU Africa Strategy and other documents, as well as coordinating the relevant policies accordingly. A really effective European foreign and security policy will be achieved when the member states and the European institutions are able to settle on a division of labour on the basis of which each actor performs the tasks for which it is best suited and those concerned coordinate closely with one another and cooperate should the need arise. Europe's current »polyphony« as regards external action can contribute to better implementation of the EU's aims. It can also make it easier for it to enter into dialogue with third states.² Having said that, deviation from Europe's foreign policy consensus by member states or institutions must be avoided since this would call into question Europe's most important global currency, its »soft power«, which rests upon the unification of many member states, compliance with common rules and the corresponding deployment of a wide range of instruments.

We shall approach our object in a number of steps. We shall first present the current state of Europe's foreign and security policy, looking at both institutional aspects and current operations and capabilities. We shall then analyse Europe's medium-term strategic challenges. This analysis will be conducted with one eye on the global level and corresponding developments, and with the other on developments in Europe in order to be able to identify fractures within the EU that might jeopardise further development of European foreign and security policy. The third step will comprise an examination of the extent to which Europe, as things stand at the moment, is able to meet these challenges, what problems might be encountered in the process and where the EU's strengths lie. We shall use Bretherton and Vogler's six criteria of

¹ See <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Europa/Aussenpolitik/GASP/EU-Sicherheitsstrategie.html> (last accessed 26 August 2008).

² This is obvious as regards Russia which is more inclined to engage in dialogue with Berlin than with Warsaw, or in European-Cuban relations which will run more smoothly under Spanish leadership than, for example, Latvian.

»actorness« as a measure of the EU's ability to meet these challenges (Bretherton/Vogler 1999: 38). By this means we shall be able to assess how far the EU functions as a unified and autonomous actor on the international stage.

2 European Foreign and Security Policy – The Current State of Play

The EU Reform Treaty agreed by the member states will also bring about significant changes for foreign and security policy (concerning what follows see Bendiek 2007). The most important innovation will be the creation of a »High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy« who differs from the European foreign minister envisaged by the Constitutional Treaty in name only. This post will encompass the authority delegated to Javier Solana, as well as the office of Commissioner for External Relations and vice president of the Commission. Wearing this »double hat« the High Representative combines intergovernmental and communitised competences and as a member of the Commission also enjoys a better insight into EU development policy. He or she will also be the permanent chair of the Foreign Affairs Council in which the member states make decisions on foreign policy. The High Representative will be supported by a European diplomatic service staffed by European and member state officials. To be sure, these new competences and wider remit will be restricted by the simultaneous enhancement of the member states' role in the CFSP, which is explicitly mentioned in the description of the Councils: »It [CFSP] will be determined and implemented unanimously by the European Council and by the Council, as long as the Treaties contain nothing to the contrary« (Council of the European Union 2007: 27). The clumsy title and the limitation by the European Council and the Council »conceal ... fundamental reservations concerning national sovereignty and an unwillingness to concede foreign policy competences to the EU« (Bendiek 2007: 2). A further declaration by the Intergovernmental Conference also establishes that the CFSP will not infringe member states' foreign policy competences and the special character of their security and defence policy, and that the Commission and the Parliament are not to receive new foreign policy powers. Furthermore, the Union may not exceed the authority delegated to it. Nevertheless, the EU will acquire an independent legal personality that will make it easier to conclude international agreements. Decisions in CFSP must continue to be unanimous; majority decision-making is not possible without an amendment

of the Treaty. Flexibility is provided for in the new Treaty, however, which stipulates a minimum involvement of nine countries for »stronger cooperation« between interested member states.

In other words, the Reform Treaty does not represent a milestone as regards further progress in the communitisation of European foreign policy. Rather it establishes the intergovernmental character of the CFSP and protects national foreign and security policy competences from encroachment by the EU. At the same time, it does lead to a further »Brusselisation« of foreign policy in that competences and consultation processes are increasingly being transferred to Brussels. The member states emerge from this strengthened, while the CFSP/ESDP, even with the new High Representative, remains in its difficult position between the »devil and the deep blue sea« (member states and the EU) and thereby runs the risk, in the case of arguments over important issues, of being either ignored or – even worse – steamrollered. How this might develop in the future has been described by Austrian Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer, who also gives priority to the member states: »In future the trick will be to preserve member state sovereignty in security policy issues while becoming more effective internationally, by rationally consolidating the EU countries' complementary capacities and competences« (Gusenbauer 2007: 91).

These provisions therefore conflict with the operational development of this policy area in which the EU, particularly as regards international interventions, is very active, with many missions under the EU flag either ongoing or in the planning stage (see Table 1). For example, the EU took over the NATO-led SFOR operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and since 2004 has safeguarded the peace process in the former Yugoslavia. Another component of European involvement in the region is the EULEX mission, so far the EU's largest civilian mission, the intention behind which is to contribute to building up governance under the rule of law in the newly founded Republic of Kosovo³. In addition, the EU has carried out a notable mission to safeguard the elections in Congo. This was concluded successfully, at least if the fact that the European troops fulfilled their very narrow mandate and were withdrawn after a largely trouble-free election in Congo can be accounted a success (see Martin 2008).

³ See http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=1458&lang=EN and <http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/>.

Chart I

When	Location	Personnel (ca)	Partner
January 2003 – December 2007	Police mission EUPM in Bosnia-Herzegovina to establish sustainable policing arrangements under BiH ownership and fight organized crime and corruption	400	Successor UN IPTF
March – December 2003	Military operation CONCORDIA in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to contribute to a stable secure environment and to allow the implementation of the August 2001 Ohrid Framework agreement.	400	NATO
June – September 2003	Military operation (French-led) ARTEMIS in the Democratic Republic of Congo to contribute to the stabilisation of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Bunia	1800	Mandate of the UN Security Council
December 2003 – December 2005	Police mission EUPOL PROXIMA to monitor, mentor and advise the country's police thus to help to fight organised crime as well as promoting European policing standards in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	200	
January – June 2006	Police mission EUPAT/FYROM to support the development of an efficient and professional police service in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Successor mission to PROXIMA)	30	
July 2004 – July 2005	Rule of law mission EUJUST THEMIS in Georgia to support and advise Ministers, senior officials and appropriate bodies at the level of the central government		OSCE
Since December 2004	Military operation EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia-Herzegovina carried out with recourse to common NATO assets and capabilities. Successor to NATO led SFOR-operation	2500	NATO
Since April 2005	Police mission EUPOL KINSHASA and since July 2007 EUPOL RD CONGO in the Democratic Republic of Congo to support Security Sector Reform	53	
Since May 2005	Security Sector mission EUSEC RD CONGO to provide advise and assistance for security sector reform and contribute to a successful integration of the Congolese army	28	
Since July 2005	Rule of law mission EUJUST LEX to provide professional development opportunities to senior Iraqi officials from the criminal justice system	20	
Since Juli 2005	EU Support to AMIS Darfur to support the African Union's enhanced Mission to Sudan/Darfur	60	AU
September 2005 – December 2006	Aceh Monitorin Mission in Aceh/Indonesia to monitor the implementation of various aspects of the peace agreement (together with ASEAN countries, Norway and Switzerland)	80	ASEAN
Since November 2005	EU Border Assistance Mission EU BAM RAFAH to monitor the operations of the border crossing point Rafah	70	
Since December 2005	EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine to support capacity building for border management, including customs	100	
Since January 2006	Police mission EUPOL COPPS to provide support to the Palestinian Authority in establishing sustainable and effective policing arrangements	33	
July – November 2006	EU Military operation EUFOR RD Congo in support of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the election process	2000	UN
Since June 2007	Police mission EUPOL Afghanistan to contribute to the establishment of sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements under Afghan ownership	160	
Since March 2008	Military mission EUFOR Tchad/RCA to protect civilians, facilitate aid delivery and protect UN personnel in eastern Tchad and the north-east of the Central African Republic	3400	UN
Since June 2008	Security Sector Reform mission Guinea-Bissau to provide advice and assistance on reform of the security sector	15	
Since December 2008	EU NAVFOR Somalia to protect vessels cruising off the Somali coast	1200	

Compiled by Tobias Dörk. Sources: Auswärtiges Amt, (<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Europa/Aussenpolitik/ESVP/ESVP-Operationen.html>) (01.10.07), Council of the European Union (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=268&lang=de&mode=g) (06.02.09)

The European Security Strategy,⁴ the document born in the wake of the Iraq crisis and produced by Javier Solana's Policy Unit, has in recent years developed into the reference document for European foreign and security policy. It was in this document that for the first time Europe's risks and threats were named, and the aims of the EU's foreign and security policy were formulated. Alongside the defence of Europe, these include »building security in [the EU's] neighbourhood« and »the creation of a world order based on an effective multilateralism«.⁵ Taking a broad view of security and foreign relations, and including all policy areas from development cooperation and trade through diplomacy to military forces, the ESS provides a foundation for the EU's external action in many areas. It has become the benchmark applied to the EU's foreign and security policy for the EU's external partners (Biscop 2007: 10). In addition, it offers numerous points of contact for European-American strategic dialogue (Major/Riecke 2006: 95). At the same time, the ESS provides the framework for further development of the strategic debate in Europe and serves as anchor point for policy-specific EU strategies, such as those drawn up in recent years on counter-terrorism,⁶ proliferation of weapons of mass destruction⁷ and the proliferation of small arms.⁸ Another important step towards enhanced operationalisation of the ESS is the EU's Africa Strategy adopted in 2005. It formulates at regional level the aims of the Union and its African partners which relate to the ESS and the UN's Millennium Development Goals, as well as strategies for their implementation (see Working Group on European Integration 2006).

Member state consensus on the ESS, however – a prerequisite for its success – rests upon the fact that it is not a legally binding document, but rather a declaration of the EU's strategic goals in foreign policy. Although this broad approach made it easier to reach a consensus, inevitably it makes it more difficult to reach agreement on specific measures. Criticism of the Security Strategy attaches to this in particular:

4 <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>

5 The threats are: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, failed states and organised crime. See ESS, p. 3ff.

6 On the link between the defence policy and the governance dimension of these aims see Flechtner (2006), p. 3.

7 <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st14/st14469-re04.en05.pdf>.

8 <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/03/st15/st15708.en03.pdf>.

9 <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st05/st05319.en06.pdf>.

on the one hand, the vague and sweeping nature of the ESS (Major/Riecke 2006: 93) and the lack of strategic orientation (cf. Heisbourg 2004; Toje 2005), and on the other the fact that while the ESS makes large claims as regards strategic issues of intervention (»a culture that fosters early, rapid and, if necessary, robust intervention«) it has little specific to say concerning means, tools and, above all, the conditions for intervention (Flechtner 2006: 3f).

3 Europe's Medium-Term Challenges

Our overview of institutional arrangements, operations and missions worldwide and the development of the strategic debate at European level shows that while the EU has indeed made progress in terms of foreign and security policy it still has to deal with a number of setbacks. Nevertheless, it has been able to establish a good reputation throughout the world that enables it to operate as a neutral actor in crises and conflicts. »One of the assets that we should draw on is that we are seen as an active player but not as a threat« (Solana 2007). The EU has proved that it can intervene successfully in tricky situations. However, further development of the CFSP/ESDP in terms of substance, institutions and capacities faces a number of serious challenges, both inside the Union and externally. This includes the ESS's threat analyses, though we shall not examine them in detail here since they are rather abstract and so apply to the longer term.

In this section we shall outline what, in the author's opinion, constitutes the EU's most important challenges and develop proposals on how the EU might deal with them and thereby emerge the stronger. The EU should be in a position to become a player in global governance and to participate in shaping the core issues of international relations in the coming years. The question is whether this should be on the basis of an effective multilateralism, a hegemonic multilateralism or a multipolar world. We selected the challenges we shall examine with this in view. They include, above all, internal weak points and areas needing improvement, as well as regional hotspots, since the EU is unlikely to be able to take on a global role over the next five years.

In order to get some idea of the EU's ability to act internationally we shall assess the current state of European integration and the attitudes of the member states in terms of the following criteria:

1. A shared set of norms and principles (C1);
2. The ability to identify priorities and formulate coherent policies (C2);

3. The ability to negotiate effectively with international actors (C3);
4. The availability of policy instruments and the ability to use them (C4);
5. Internal legitimacy of decision-making processes and policy priorities (C5);
6. External perception that the EU is an international actor and corresponding expectations (C6).

In order to become an international actor, acquire governance potential and develop a foreign policy that is more than a mere »project« (Maull 2002: 1478), the EU must overcome a number of hurdles, as follows.

3.1 Relations With the USA Must be Clarified

The Iraq crisis has made it clear that relations between EU member states and the USA and its ideas and methods as regards global governance vary considerably and may give rise to long-lasting divisions in European foreign and security policy (Serfaty 2006: 68). This potential for division is based on security strategy differences between the USA and the EU in terms of methods and instruments, as well as aims. In particular, the understanding of multilateralism and international institutions, at least in the formative years of EU foreign policy 2001-2003, differed greatly on the two sides of the Atlantic. While the USA understood multilateralism in instrumental terms and as conditional upon US leadership (»coalitions of the willing«) and treated international institutions with scepticism or even downright distrust (International Court of Justice, Colin Powell's address to the UN Security Council on Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction), the EU explicitly stressed effective multilateralism and a strong commitment to international law and international legitimacy in pursuit of its goal of »a secure Europe in a better world«.

The debate on the Missile Defence System in Poland and the Czech Republic revealed similar tendencies. The decision on the status of Kosovo also made it clear that the EU is unable to take an autonomous stance on security issues once the USA has adopted a position. In other words, the USA is the central reference point for Europe, which must either adapt itself to it or include it in the formulation of its strategies, the building up of its capacities and negotiations with third countries. At the same time – and this is the reason for the conflicts within Europe – the USA is also the reference point for member states' national security policies, so that coordination with partners must always take place with one eye on Washington.

Since the 2004 enlargement, which brought in

eight new member states from Central and Eastern Europe, to all appearances the gulf between »Euro-peanists« and »Atlanticists« has grown even bigger. In particular Poland and the Czech Republic, the protagonists in the debate on the Missile Defence Programme, have frequently been regarded in Europe as »Trojan horses« for the USA (Edwards 2006: 147). Of course there has been a debate between the advocates of an autonomous foreign and security policy independent of the USA and the Atlanticists, who regard dependence on the USA and NATO as inevitable, since the European Community came into existence (cf. Stahl et al. 2004). This is not only a question of building up the EU's own military forces, which in principle the USA would find amenable since it would enable the EU to take on more of the burden in transatlantic affairs, which the USA is constantly demanding.¹⁰ What is really at issue is the significance afforded to international law and legitimation by international organisations. US policy since 11 September 2001 has been based on coalitions of the willing and Washington's claim to global leadership, and subordinates international relations to the logic of the »war on terror«. This culminated in George W. Bush's oft cited declaration »those who are not with us are against us« (Wieland-Karimi 2007: 4). The contrast with European policy, which abjures preventive military strikes, seeks to legitimise military action – at least belatedly, as in the case of Kosovo – in terms of international law and makes every effort to resolve crises and conflicts through the application of a broad spectrum of instruments – economic, diplomatic, military, and so on – is obvious.¹¹

The internal European conflict during the Iraq crisis was based on the different levels of importance attributed to territorial defence and regional security (Edwards 2006: 152) – in the case of the Central and East European states – as well as to the USA. Add to this the special relations with the USA of Great Britain, but also of Poland and the Baltic states.

Differences in terms of how important the USA is for a particular country's national security and whether a country has enjoyed a »special relationship« developed over many years are grounded in the

¹⁰ The USA regularly calls for the modernisation of European armies and an increase in national defence budgets. See, for example, the speech by the American ambassador to NATO Victoria Nuland in February 2008, <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/February/20080222183349eai fas0.5647394.html>.

¹¹ The European position is here sketched rather simplistically, but it is resumed in the European Security Strategy on which all member states were able to agree after the Iraq crisis and which the new member states also endorsed.

strategic cultures of individual member states. They cannot be spirited away merely by a new European document or transatlantic conferences. Even the ESS, formulated shortly after the European rupture on the Iraq issue, cannot be taken as a sign of foreign policy consensus, but rather of a complementarity in terms of national standpoints. The aim of the EU and the member states must be to find a *modus vivendi* with the USA that makes it possible to resolve security questions without leading to the outbreak of internal European disagreement. There are a number of examples of practical and fruitful cooperation: the division of labour between the EU-3 and the USA in the negotiations with Iran (Harnisch 2007), the cooperation in Afghanistan (although there is room for improvement) and even the debate on the Missile Defence Programme exhibit a willingness to cooperate and engage in dialogue on both sides; the inclusion of Russia is another indication of this. In addition, the perceptions of Europeans and Americans concerning international cooperation have come closer to one another. This is due on the one hand to developments in Iraq, which have shown the USA the limitations of a predominantly military approach without a clear »exit strategy« (Serfaty 2006: 67), and on the other to the hardening of the position of Iran, the crisis in the Lebanon and the intensification of international terrorism in Europe (Garrett 2006). The official view is that »European foreign and security policy, with a strategy founded on prevention and a future-oriented peace policy, alongside the mission capabilities that have been developed, results in a high level of agreement, trust and demand« (Erler 2007: 114). However, taking European interventions as a whole it becomes clear that the EU is a reluctant actor that confines itself primarily to post-conflict situations and even then can show only limited successes (cf. Dzihic/Kramer 2008).

The Bush administration's strategy of combating terrorism by means of war has enjoyed no more success. On the contrary: »after five years of the ›global war on terror‹ the assessment must be that this has proved a costly mistake« (Mützenich 2007: 285). The outcome of the recent presidential election in the USA, in which both candidates attributed considerable significance to US integration in the international community, as well as calling for greater commitment on the part of the Europeans (Handelsblatt 29 February 2008), offers an opportunity to further improve transatlantic relations.

Taken all in all in this case the EU has only policy instruments at its disposal and even then only a limited ability to use them. It is clear that it does not have a shared set of norms and principles (C1), cannot for-

mulate coherent policies (C2), cannot negotiate effectively with the USA (C3), has only limited decision-making legitimacy (C5) and is not generally recognised as an international actor, even by Washington. The diagnosis turns out to be serious: in relations with the USA the member states largely follow their own aims. The European level is not regarded as either relevant or helpful.

How can the EU become more effective?

On the one hand, communication between Washington and Brussels must be improved to make it possible for strategic questions to be discussed in good time and thoroughly and to give the other partner the opportunity to adopt a position. »A security policy debate on the different, predominantly global responsibilities of Europeans and Americans is overdue. It would serve to clarify the division of labour and to Europeanise Europe« (Bahr 2007: 271). In Europe, unpleasant surprises could be avoided in this way. The ability to formulate coherent policies is increasing and the USA is learning to take the EU seriously as an international actor. At the same time, burden sharing, and entry and exit strategies can be mutually agreed so that on the one hand the USA is certain of European support – also at the UN – and on the other hand, the Europeans are not forced into the strategic corset of American plans out of solidarity and considerations of stability and do not have to take part in operations over whose conception they have no influence (Górka-Winter 2007).

The second path that must be pursued is an internal debate in Europe that takes a good, hard look at relations with the USA and tries to develop an independent standpoint on fundamental issues. Agreement on a common set of values and principles and legitimation of the EU by the member states are indispensable for transatlantic relations. Developing Europe into a counter-power to the USA is a mere pipe-dream and by no means generally desired (Risse 2004: 75), though there are issues on which Europe and America take a different view and on which the EU may take a divergent position. These issues include preventive military action, the war on terror and the treatment of international agreements and international law. A common European standpoint is necessary in this respect since in the meantime the EU has come to be regarded as an important actor in world politics. Every absence from the global stage is therefore regarded as a failure. One positive example was the management of the Georgian crisis under the French EU presidency. Sarkozy acted quickly and on behalf of Europe, even if the individual partners were

not kept informed. Nevertheless, subsequently there was constant talk of a »European peace plan«.

3.2 Relations With Russia Must Serve Commonly Agreed Ends

The EU's relations with Russia have a similar conflict potential to those with the USA. One reason for this is the extremely varying perceptions of Russia among the member states: on the one hand, countries such as Germany, Italy and Greece cultivate good relations with Moscow and would like to intensify cooperation between the EU and Russia, while on the other the new member states from Central and Eastern Europe in particular still regard Russia as the main threat to their security (Edwards 2006: 159).

The replacement of the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement was delayed because negotiations on a »Strategic Partnership« between Russia and the EU were long blocked by Poland.¹² At the EU–Russia summit in Khanty-Mansiysk in 2008 both sides agreed to resume negotiations on the Strategic Partnership. It will cover the economy, freedom, internal and external security and justice, as well as science, education and culture (Buhbe 2007: 10).¹³

Another reason for problematic relations is Russia's partly erratic foreign policy which on the one hand supports European efforts to solve international conflicts – as in the case of the Iranian nuclear programme¹⁴ – but on the other hand seeks aggressively to demonstrate its new self-confidence against the interests of Europe or of individual European countries. This was discernible particularly in the negotiations on the status of Kosovo and Moscow's reaction to the declaration of independence, but it also finds expression in the firm stance towards the American plan for a Missile Defence System together with Poland and the Czech Republic. The policy of maximising its influence, reminiscent of the nineteenth century, was exemplified by the crisis in Georgia (cf. Kagan 2008). Future conflicts between the EU and Russia will also concern dealings with post-Soviet states. The

turning off of the gas supply to Ukraine and Belarus in order to secure higher prices, the trade boycott against Georgia and Moscow's unwillingness to cooperate with initiatives within the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy showed this clearly even in the run up to the Georgian crisis.

At present, Russia is an unreliable partner which is regarded partly as an opportunity and partly as a threat in the EU. Consequently, it remains unclear what aims the EU should pursue in relation to Moscow and what means would be appropriate. As in the case of transatlantic relations here too the EU's capacity to act internationally appears to be weak. No shared set of norms and attitudes (C1) is discernible and no coherent policies have been formulated, although the increasingly important area of energy security has been singled out as a priority (C2). Negotiation possibilities as regards Russia (C3) are still too dependent upon the EU presidency of the day and its chosen range of topics, as a result of which the EU is still all too clearly not regarded as an international actor by Russia (C6). As in the case of transatlantic relations, in the case of Russia the EU possesses a formidable economic and trade policy apparatus, but limited capacity (C4) and legitimacy (C5) as regards its deployment, in particular when clear-cut security policy issues are at stake.

How can the EU become more effective?

Relations with Moscow are the key to a coherent European policy towards the East (FAZ 5 March 2008). Agreement between the member states on a Strategic Partnership that includes all important thematic fields is the first step in this direction. The ongoing security policy problems facing the EU – such as energy security, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Iranian atomic programme and counter-terrorism – require a rapprochement with Russia. Due to their urgency and topicality they constitute an opportunity to accumulate trust between the more hesitant member states and Russia which is necessary if comprehensive agreements are to be signed. The form of cooperation must be tailored to Moscow's special status; conditionalities in the Partnership Agreement would be counterproductive. Instead, the emphasis should be on a close consultation and information network which would enable an intensification of relations in the sense of a »new policy of detente«. Alongside the central EU foreign and security policy actors, the member states and the Commission should also be involved to ensure that external action on the part of the EU is coherent and to prevent individual actors or policy areas – such as governance and en-

12 Because of the import ban imposed by Russia on Polish foodstuffs (especially meat products) at the end of 2005, Poland refused its assent to negotiations on a new Partnership Agreement between the EU and Russia. Furthermore, Poland regards the still pending ratification of the »Energy Charter« by Russia as a condition of further negotiations on a Strategic Partnership.

13 Cf. The joint statement of the EU and Russia: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/101524.pdf

14 Cf.: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/09/08/opinion/ed-takeyh.php>

ergy security – from being played off against one another.

3.3 EU Cooperation With International Organisations (NATO, UN, AU)

Another challenge facing the EU in the coming years concerns how, in what areas and in which regions to organise cooperation with other international organisations, or the extent to which the member states will make this possible. For implementation of the goal of »effective multilateralism«, as called for by the ESS, the EU requires capable and cooperative partner states and organisations. »By far the biggest challenge [in the medium and longer term] will be to protect and develop a system of institutions capable of tackling the problems of our globalised world to build an international order with the rules that will help us navigate the choppy waters ahead« (Solana 2007).

Hitherto the member states have made use of the various organisations – above all, the UN and NATO – in accordance with their own preferences and have supported them with their own resources. This is clearly illustrated, for example, by the number of member state soldiers deployed abroad: at present, around 50-60,000 European troops are stationed across the world (cf. Giegerich/Wallace 2004: 164), but only a part of them in independent EU operations; the bulk are involved in »coalitions of the willing«, NATO or UN operations. That is, the member states are pursuing a pluralistic approach to the utilisation of security institutions, in terms of which the EU is on the same level – almost – as other institutions (Gowan 2007: 62).

The EU already has some experience of interinstitutional cooperation with NATO (Bosnia, Macedonia and – soon – Afghanistan). There is also a small operation in support of the African Union (AU), which will be expanded by the mission in Chad and the Central African Republic. Congo and, again, Bosnia are examples of cooperation with the UN. Experiences with partners in EU missions have largely been positive, first and foremost as regards cooperation on the ground and between mission headquarters.

EU-NATO relations are a special case because, on the one hand, the Berlin-Plus Agreement in theory regulates cooperation between the two organisations – which in any case should not be particularly problematic given that the two have 21 member states in common – and on the other, the fact that the USA is the most important partner in NATO brings with it all the abovementioned difficulties. In practice, strategic dialogue is further overshadowed by the conflict be-

tween Cyprus and Turkey, whose use of their institutional rights in pursuit of their own – mutually directed – national security policies under the Berlin-Plus Agreement stymies cooperation between the EU and NATO (Katsioulis 2008; cf. Kupferschmidt 2006). The stance of the new French government, which wishes to become more involved in NATO and would like to make EU-NATO cooperation the focus of its EU presidency, offers an opportunity to give new impetus to this relationship (FAZ 5 October 2007).

As regards the UN the ESS makes it clear that it remains the ultimate authority for European operations and missions. Apart from that, however, a clear vision is lacking concerning how the relationship should be organised. Relations between the EU and the UN intensified in 2006. The EU and the UN worked closely together at organisational and mission level in the missions in Congo. The international intervention in Lebanon, in which the EU itself is not present as an actor but the member states have played a decisive role and have introduced quasi-European structures, has also deepened EU-UN relations. As a result, it has become clear that the two organisations can be of great mutual benefit (legitimation for the EU, effective instruments and support in the Security Council for the UN). The lack of external transparency – though not only from the outside – that characterises EU decision-making in foreign and security policy, with parallel and partly overlapping policies on the part of the member states and the EU, leads on the UN stage to confusion and diminishes the effectiveness of cooperation.

EU cooperation with other international organisations has so far been rather confused; the EU's precise role remains rather mysterious or, for familiar reasons – EU-NATO – is rather difficult. It is true that there is a largely shared set of norms and values (C1) in institutional cooperation, but the EU lacks the ability to formulate coherent policies (C2) that serve as a guideline for all participants, in terms of which they can orient themselves and also enjoy broad internal legitimacy (C5). Even the existing policy instruments are available to the EU only on the basis of member state proviso and so do not strengthen the EU's role as an international actor (C4). Nevertheless, Europe is regarded as an important partner and central international actor, in particular by regional organisations such as ASEAN, the AU and MERCOSUR, and is involved in negotiations accordingly (C6). The modes of cooperation worked out between the EU and NATO show clearly that the EU is regarded as »a player« (albeit by some as a rival).

How can the EU become more effective?

To the extent that the EU is in competition with other organisations – such as NATO and the UN – for member states' limited resources, especially when it comes to intervention, it must be the EU's aim to become the central forum for the member states in which the involvement even of individual states in military or civilian operations is discussed. This should not be used to challenge national decision-making, but to give all actors the opportunity to review European (EU and member states) commitments worldwide and to take this into account in decision-making.

Institutional cooperation with the UN, the AU and NATO, however, must be more deeply embedded in an effective multilateralism, in the interest of the effective and successful solution of problems. The EU's Africa Strategy, which combines the Union's foreign policy instruments as regards policy towards Africa and subordinates them to its overall aims, is a positive example of how such a process towards effective multilateralism can get off the ground (cf. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäische Integration 2006). The Africa Strategy is directly connected to the UN's Millennium Development Goals and brings together the EU's hitherto ill-coordinated policies to make possible a joint contribution to these UN aims. The member states' Africa policies can also be adapted to this strategy because it integrates a substantial information system concerning resource allocation – the EU Donor Atlas – and coordination processes on the ground. Building on this European strategy there were discussions with AU representatives and an Africa-EU Strategy was adopted at the Lisbon Summit which should ensure joint »ownership«. A geographically specific strategy of this kind is a necessary first step towards compiling the different aims and actors in the EU, but the multilateralism based on it will become effective only on implementation and by virtue of practical coordination between the participating organisations.

In a crisis, the EU is still reliant on reaching agreement with individual member states with the relevant interests and capabilities. As long as EU involvement depends on the will of the member states, even if in the meantime procedures in Brussels have come to be strongly determined by the Brussels based administration of the CFSP/ESDP (Duke/Vanhoonaeker 2006), in the face of a crisis the question should not be »How can the EU solve this crisis?«, but »Who can best solve this crisis and how can Europe – Union and member states – provide support?« Such a pragmatic approach (Gowan 2007) has paid off in Lebanon and seems to have been applied in the Darfur crisis so far. It also includes, in individual cases, subordination to

the UN or NATO, though this comes after agreement has been reached within the EU. In this way European foreign policy does not present itself as a ragbag of interests and leave organisations facing a multitude of competing interlocutors.

France's initiative to become more closely integrated in NATO is an important step towards bringing the two organisations' policy and strategic planning closer together. Given the significance of the two organisations for conflict resolution and defence in Europe, a substantial dialogue of this kind is indispensable. Only in this way can the balancing act that many member states have to attempt between the EU and NATO be left behind in favour of a less fraught stance on two intertwined pillars. But to this end the EU has to bring its full weight to bear in the Cyprus conflict and offer as many incentives as possible for a resolution. Until then pressure should be put, with the USA, on Nicosia and Ankara with the aim of keeping the conflict out of EU-NATO relations.

3.4 Governance Needs to be Learned – Stabilisation of the Wider Neighbourhood: the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East

Kosovo's status question, alongside other territorial issues (Moldavia, South Ossetia, Cyprus and Abkhazia) in the EU's neighbourhood – not to mention within the EU itself – are a central challenge for the Union's governance role, and given their geographical proximity could become urgent over the next five years. The challenges to which we have already referred – EU-USA and EU-Russia – play an important role here, for example, in Kosovo, on which Moscow and Washington are diametrically opposed and Europe reached agreement only with difficulty. Europe is nearest to the centre of the conflict, however, and with the prospect of EU accession for the Western Balkans and its numerous commitments in the region most closely affected by this issue (cf. International Crisis Group 21 August 2007). Even more difficult is Russia's involvement in the Caucasus where it is itself embroiled in the two conflicts.

The EU's record so far is rather patchy. While it has made a major financial contribution to all the conflicts in its neighbourhood, appointed numerous special envoys and worked out stabilisation plans, Brussels has seldom been able to exercise decisive influence over political developments in these territories. A notable exception was Javier Solana's intervention in the conflict between Slav and Albanian Macedonians, which led to the Ohrid Agreement, supported by European missions. In stark contrast is the EU's involve-

ment in the Middle East, where it has, for example, invested large sums in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories over a number of years without bringing a solution to the problems any nearer. In Iraq too, where the EU covers forty per cent of expenditure, its profile is almost nonexistent (cf. *Die Welt* 14 May 2008). Similarly gloomy, but even more dire in its consequences for the EU's external impact is the failure to find a solution to the Cyprus conflict, notwithstanding the fact that in the meantime Cyprus has become an EU member state. Enlargement policy, up to now the EU's most effective instrument as regards economic and political transition, as well as for containing and resolving conflicts, has failed in this case. This not only undermines the character of the EU as a »model power« (Miliband 2007), but puts the whole European approach to the Balkans in a new light as compared even to 2003. If the prospect of EU membership is insufficient incentive to persuade the two ethnic groups in Cyprus to settle their conflict, the fear is that it will have no effect on Serbia and Kosovo or on Bosnia-Herzegovina either (Katsioulis 2008).

The reasons for the EU's merely moderate achievements in its efforts towards regional stabilisation lie, on the one hand, in the lack of coherence between the Commission, the Council and the member states. For the most part, EU operations involve a multitude of actors whose mandates, personnel and instruments are inadequately coordinated. On the other hand, particularly in Kosovo, but also in the Middle East and other conflict regions the EU was not in a position to develop a common political position and common concrete aims in pursuance of which it could have deployed its wide-ranging and quite effective apparatus. At the same time, in the Balkans the EU still relies too much upon its singular success in stabilising Central and Eastern Europe with the prospect of accession. The experience in Cyprus, however, should have been a clear sign as early as 2004 that this apparatus should be developed and adapted to specific conditions in the Balkans.

In its efforts towards a constructive governance role in the region the EU has shown itself to be a very active, but still rather unsuccessful actor. It is true that policy in the conflicts we have considered rests on a common set of norms and values, that is also laid down in the Security Strategy, the Copenhagen Accession Criteria and the numerous individual agreements between the EU and Balkan states (C1), but the ability to identify priorities is lacking, and in particular the ability to formulate coherent policies (C2). The EU indeed negotiates with international actors, for example, in the Middle East or concerning the Kosovo sta-

tus question, but for the most part these negotiations lead to unsatisfactory conclusions (C3). The EU's numerous policy instruments (financial, civilian, military) have not helped things along, although in the meantime the Union has become ready and able to use them (C4). The conviction that the EU can be a serious actor with effective instruments in bringing governance to conflict regions is particularly lacking in the capitals of member states. Legitimacy is also lacking for decision-making processes (cf. Kosovo) and established policy priorities (C5). In contrast, external actors have high expectations of Brussels and hope for a tangible improvement in their political and material situation from European involvement (C6).

How can the EU become more effective?

The Lisbon Treaty constitutes a first step towards improving the EU's ability to act in its neighbourhood. The newly established post of High Representative makes it more likely that a coherent position will be reached in foreign policy, in contrast to the previous »pillarisation« of the EU's external relations (cf. Ondarza 2008). Closer intermeshing has yet to be achieved between the EU's economic instruments – which have already proved themselves – and its security policy tools. There is still no horizontal coordination between European instruments. But vertical coordination, too, is at sixes and sevens: the EU is only weakly supported by national capitals. Political dialogue between the EU member states at European level on common goals and the requisite instruments for their implementation must therefore be intensified. The legitimation of the EU as a governance actor must be strengthened by having major decisions concerning the European neighbourhood made in Brussels, not in Washington, whence they are transmitted to individual capitals. Recognition of Kosovo's independence illustrates this particularly vividly. The EU does not have to take such decisions as an institution, but it should establish itself as the first and main discussion forum for the member states for preparation and implementation of such decisions. Such a role for the EU is warranted by the high expectations attached to it, particularly among its neighbours, which should be incentive enough to make every effort to this end. Furthermore, such an »EU political forum« can easily be reconciled with member state reservations about a »European superpower« (Miliband 2007).

3.5 EU Capabilities: Intervention or Defence?

This year the European Union achieved its aim of having two battle groups on standby for successive six-month periods. At the same time, progress is being made in building up civilian capacities, a European Rapid Reaction Force and planning units in Brussels. The aim is to enable the EU to carry out autonomous operations across the Petersburg spectrum. Besides this, the European Defence Agency is working on long-term planning to standardise defence procurement for crisis management so that European capabilities as regards ESDP operations become more compatible.

It is far from clear, however, to what end the EU is building up these capacities, what it will do with them and what common conception binds the military and civilian resources of ESDP with, for example, the Commission's development policies. So far the focus of strategies, missions and procurement has been on crisis management; common defence seems at best something for the future, with no mention of it so far in planning or treaties.¹⁵ But even the previous emphasis on crisis management is barely differentiated. It lacks a coherent idea, a concrete European profile for conflict resolution. In recent years this has become evident in practice, as confirmed by Frank-Walter Steinmeier: »Europeans rely on a clever mixture of political negotiations, military protection and basic practical help for everyday integration« (Steinmeier 2007: 29).

The European profile certainly includes an element of military force, but as embedded in a broad web of complementary policies on rule of law reform, building up police forces, economic reconstruction and suchlike. This diffuse profile is far from being established, however. It arises rather from the logic of the European decision-making process than from an idea uniting Europeans.

The aim of capacity building, which at present is being pursued with a vengeance, remains rather mysterious, especially because threat analysis reveals only a few areas in which the build up of military capacities seems necessary. Terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime and failed states are difficult to deal with militarily. Rather they have to be managed by diplomatic, governance and economic means, which only occasionally might have to be safeguarded militarily. Only in the case of regional conflicts is it clear from the outset that they must be contained by military means. The development of a

European strike force is therefore in the interests of the ESS only if the Civilian Headline Goals – that is, the commitment to build up civilian capacities – are taken into consideration. The integration of these two aspects and their linking to the EU's economic initiatives – development policy, neighbourhood policy, and so on – has so far not been properly thought out.

The idea of a European army (cf. Schwall-Düren/Hemker 2007), long mooted in the EC/EU, would at the present time be rather a highly symbolic integration policy step than serve to improve the EU's real capacities in terms of conflict management!¹⁶ This becomes clear from the words of Egon Bahr, who mentions the European army in connection with the euro, while at the same time emphasising the contrast that such a development would represent with the present – namely, in the form of a European supreme command: »The difference [between a future European army] and the present [situation] would be the unity of command which, similar to the structures governing the euro, would decide on the deployment of this European instrument« (Bahr 2007: 271).

It remains unclear to what democratic controls such a European army would be subject. The Lisbon Treaty gives the European Parliament no further competences in the area of CFSP/ESDP and the great differences between European states as regards the legitimisation of military operations mean that the idea of a European led and deployed army is very much a distant prospect.

Although the EU has a wealth of instruments in the area of capacity building, both civilian and military, not to mention a Defence Agency (C4), it lacks a common set of norms that formulate clear priorities for capacity building and provide the EU with some sort of direction in this respect (C1). The most conspicuous shortcoming is the inability to lay down priorities and to formulate coherent policies that take in whole policy areas (C2). This diminishes the EU's chances of being perceived as an independent international actor because outside Brussels the various actors cooperate only to a limited extent (C3). The lack of internal legitimisation in the decision-making process, which is illustrated by the different policies of the member states, also contributes to this problematic situation (C5). Nevertheless the expectations of external actors as regards the EU are growing exponentially. The capacities of the EU are in demand for conflict resolution. This concerns the EU explicitly as an international actor, however, and not individual member states.

¹⁵ One exception is the woolly mutual assistance clause in the Lisbon Treaty, but it is not very robust.

¹⁶ All the more so when one recalls that more than 50,000 European soldiers are already deployed (though not in all case for the EU). Cf. Giegerich/Wallace (2004: 164).

How can the EU become more effective?

»Alongside building up its military capacities the EU should give renewed consideration to its founding impetus as a peace project. The EU can serve as the model of a force for peace if it is able to develop an appropriate apparatus for dealing with conflicts in which civilian and military instruments are included in an integrated strategy of crisis management and conflict prevention« (Mützenich 2007: 286).

This call for a peace policy model – a truly shared set of norms and principles – can easily be met since the EU already has a well-balanced military and civilian apparatus. The Security Strategy offers a number of starting points here, but because of its modest scale cannot meet the high expectations attached to it. The proposal, long left hanging in the air, to establish human security as an overarching narrative for the EU can form a bridge between the different policies of the Commission, the member states and ESDP, as well as concretising and synthesising the European profile of conflict management. On that basis EU conflict management would have a clear target and common guidelines and so pursue an »ethically consistent foreign policy« (Schulz 2007: 34). The member states and third countries could adapt themselves to this in a flexible way.

Only under an overarching concept of this kind would a European army make sense. Its formation and training would be oriented towards implementing a human security policy and close coordination with civilian forces. A European army of this kind could embody the European profile of conflict management and show clearly that military deployment must always serve a determinate end that benefits people on the ground (cf. Human Security Study Group 2008). In pursuit of this the EU should rely more heavily on the »pooling« of national capacities in order to be able more easily to plug the gaps that inevitably appear in all operations.

Besides this, the topic of collective defence in the EU should be taken up and given serious consideration. It is not enough to formulate a weak mutual assistance clause; what is needed here is a robust formulation of solidarity between Europeans. This would also sharpen up the task of the Defence Agency and give purpose to the increasing interlocking of European armies.

4 Conclusion

European foreign and security policy is not very unified. Although the EU has its own capabilities that are

in strong demand it lacks a common set of norms – that moreover are adhered to – and above all the ability to act coherently and to establish credible priorities. The lack of a common policy is evident, notwithstanding the plethora of documents at European level. Furthermore, neither the European Security Strategy nor the individual substrategies have much cohesive impact on the member states. While the selected aims are effective in individual areas – for example, in relation to international organisations and small, fairly powerless actors – in relation to the USA and Russia the EU is still a long way from establishing a common basis of this kind.

In all the areas we have looked at the EU has an impressive apparatus at its disposal. However, demand has increased more rapidly than capacities, so that European contingents are stretched to the limit while external demands upon them continue to grow.

The general weakness of the EU in formulating a coherent policy and laying down priorities is the main reason why, with the best will in the world, the EU's performance in terms of external relations must be described as mixed. As a foreign policy actor the EU is visible only on an ad hoc basis and always in a precarious situation – threatened by disintegration due to internal dissent. The likelihood of such dissent decreases in parallel with the importance of the challenge. In other words, in the eyes of the member states the EU is an instrument for dealing with small problems, while difficult situations are solved bilaterally or in other configurations. This is underlined by the fact that the EU has not established a collective defence mechanism. In terms of the question concerning »effective multilateralism, hegemonic multilateralism or a multipolar world« it must therefore be admitted that in the coming years the EU will only be able to exercise supportive or ameliorative influence while the rules of the game and operations are decided elsewhere. The difficulties experienced in achieving unity in relation to the USA and Russia cast doubt upon the EU's ability to reach agreement on important foreign and security policy questions concerning emerging powers, above all India and China. As a result, as a Union they remain excluded from important decisions. Germany, France and the UK may perhaps (still) have sufficient weight to get a seat at the table in some cases (such as Iran), but this is a matter of national policy from which the EU cannot benefit as an actor in its own right.

Under the current circumstances the EU will remain a fragmented (Schubert/Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2000) actor, which to be sure has many instruments at its disposal but does not really know what to do with them. What European foreign and security policy

lacks above all is *policy*; that is, a common understanding of what aims the EU should pursue and with what means. The strategic debate should begin in Brussels and above all in problematic policy areas. Only if the EU is in a position to reach a common strategy which is not only signed up to but implemented by all can it be a global actor on important global issues such as climate change and energy security. The debate must also be conducted in national capitals, however. It must be made clear what Europe may do and what individual states are still able to do.

So far the EU has above all been occupied with itself; strategies have been worked out, capabilities built up and operations conducted. The most important aspect of this has been its effects on the EU integration process rather than the global level. But while the EU has become an important actor on the international stage and has intervened successfully in a number of cases, if the EU's economic might is to be brought to bear also in the political sphere its foreign relations must be politicised. The EU must go a lot further along the path of self-reflection than it has so far if it is eventually to be able to act with sufficient unity, even if faced not only by expectations but also pressure from outside.

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Imprint

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
International Policy Analysis
Division for International Dialogue
D-10785 Berlin

www.fes.de/ipa
E-Mail: info.ipa@fes.de

ISBN 978-3-86872-047-1

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