

CFSP WATCH 2003

NATIONAL REPORT PORTUGAL

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I. Basic views of CFSP/ESDP in Portugal. What are the priorities for your government in CFSP? What are the key issues for your country?

Successive Portuguese governments in the last decade have been supportive of the development of a strong European foreign and security policy. The approach is widely shared by the two main political parties that represent over 75% of the electorate – the *Partido Social Democrata* (Social Democratic Party - PSD), centre-right and the *Partido Socialista* (Socialist Party – PS), centre-left – and which have been responsible for the definition and conduct of Portuguese foreign policy for almost 30 years. The other parties, both to the left and right of the political centre, tend to be more sceptical, although such scepticism is part of a wider anti-EU stance, particularly strong among extreme left parties, for whom the EU foreign policy is merely a replica of US external action. The right-wing party *Centro Democrático e Social* (Democratic and Social Centre) - currently the junior party of the coalition government - is not a great enthusiast of the EU developing an autonomous foreign policy, but has become less critical after becoming part of the government.

However, this general positive attitude vis-à-vis CFSP was not always present, namely during the Intergovernmental Conference of 1991 and the negotiations of the Maastricht Treaty. Portugal's concerns about the development of an independent foreign policy for the EU originated from a strong fear that such policy could undermine NATO's position in European defence and thus somehow weaken transatlantic relations. From this cautious position, Portugal has evolved to a much more positive approach, realising that a EU with a strong voice in international affairs would be beneficial for the promotion of Portuguese interests.

The main reasons for supporting a strong European foreign policy are twofold: First, CFSP is a vehicle for strengthening Portugal's position in the world, in the sense that being a member of the EU raises the profile of Portuguese foreign policy and diplomacy to a level it would not otherwise have. This is particular true for the periods in which Portugal holds the EU Presidency. Second, since EU accession, ECP and then CFSP have been instrumental in the promotion of some of Portugal's key foreign policy objectives, particularly in relation to East Timor, Africa and Latin America.

European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is a key element of the National Defence Strategic Concept, even if the document clearly stresses the need to strike a balance between any developments of European Defence and the maintenance of NATO as "the structuring axis of Portugal's security and defence system". Portugal thus favours the preservation of transatlantic links and of good relations between Europe and the United States, as well as a complementarity between policies developed in the frameworks of NATO and the EU. The

strategic concept also mentions Portugal's commitment to EU crisis management operations as a priority for Portuguese Armed Forces. The view of ESDP as a necessary element for the credibility of Europe's foreign policy ambitions is also shared by the President of the Republic. The President also considers ESDP as an instrument to counter the feelings of insecurity shared by a majority of European citizens.

Public opinion is also largely in favour of the EU's CFSP. According to the Eurobarometer surveys, 65% of Portuguese support a common EU foreign policy, while only 14% oppose it. The same applies to the development of a common defence policy (68% for, 18% against), despite the fact that public opinion in Portugal is slightly less favourable to a common defence than the EU15 average.

The current coalition government PSD-CDS follows the main orientations from the previous governments in what CFSP/ESDP is concerned. The government's programme mentions CFSP as a "powerful factor for the strengthening of Portugal's position in the world". ESDP is described as an integral part of CFSP and "a crucial contribution to the reinforcement of Europe's security and defence architecture". This applies not only to the "traditional" areas of Portuguese foreign policy – such as Latin America, East-Timor and the Mediterranean – but also to all other regions which, after the next wave of EU enlargement, will become part of the Union's neighbourhood.

In general terms, Portugal's main concern is the preservation of a coherent and consensual CFSP, while ensuring the importance of NATO as the main guarantor of European security. Key interests correspond roughly to the priorities of national foreign policy. Apart from the relations with the United States, which should be seen in the context of preserving the role of NATO, the other areas to which Portugal attaches particular importance are Africa, Latin America, East Timor and the Mediterranean. Mainly because of EU and OSCE membership, the Balkans and Eastern Europe constitute also areas of interest.

II. National Perceptions and Positions with regard to CFSP/ESDP issues

1. Perceived success or failure of CFSP/ESDP:

- **Iraqi conflict:**

The government sided with the US since the beginning of the Iraqi crisis and this stance was made clearer when Portugal, together with other seven European countries, signed the famous "Letter of the Eight" showing full solidarity with the American positions. Such a move was not seen by the government as particularly damaging for European unity, stressing rather the negative effects that a loosening of transatlantic ties could have for Europe's security.

This view was in stark contrast to those taken by the opposition parties and public opinion. To a large extent, governmental support for the US policy in Iraq also ran against the position of the President of the Republic, who publicly opposed any military intervention in the Persian Gulf without a clear UN mandate. The President, as well as the Socialist Party were particularly concerned with the effects such an alignment with the US would have for Portugal's overall position within the EU.

In the aftermath to the armed conflict, Portugal joined the coalition forces by sending (in December 2002) a battalion of armed police officers to help in the patrolling of the Basra region.

▪ **September 11th:**

The response to the September 11th terrorist attacks was hardly discussed in the context of CFSP/ESDP, mainly because the EU was not perceived, neither by political actors nor by observers as a particularly relevant actor in the process. The military campaign in Afghanistan against the Taleban regime and the subsequent stabilisation operations had little or none EU intervention and therefore cannot be seen as a success or failure of CFSP. The European dimension of the fight against terrorism is seen in Portugal mainly in the context of measures approved to reinforce co-operation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs, where the general national understanding is that EU member states should do more together.

▪ **Position towards NATO (in relationship with the ESDP)**

As state above, Portugal has always been against any moves to reinforce ESDP which could in any way undermine the role of NATO as the main pillar of European security. The maintenance of NATO's primary responsibility in this area is seen as the best way to ensure a continued US commitment to Europe's security, as well as a privileged instrument for transatlantic relations in general. Portuguese positions in relation to this issue have evolved significantly since the early 1990s, when the government refused to consider giving the EU a role in defence matters, to a more pro-European position, which favours a development of ESDP in articulation with NATO, in a spirit of complementary and non-duplication. In this sense, the conclusion of the Berlin Plus agreement for the use of NATO assets in EU-led crisis management operations was received by the government as a fundamental step towards the operationality of ESDP. Berlin Plus should thus be the rule for EU operations, not the exception.

The proposals for the establishment of an EU operational planning staff that resulted from the April 2003 summit between the leaders of Belgium, France, Germany and Luxembourg also met with considerable scepticism by Portuguese authorities. The so-called "Tervuren proposal" was seen in Portugal as an initiative which could undermine NATO and establish a de facto "core Europe" (idea which in general is not supported by political and diplomatic circles).

▪ **Missions in Bosnia and Macedonia:**

Portugal has repeatedly supported the development of the EU's civilian and military crisis management capacities as an important element for the operationality of ESDP and the overall strengthening of the Union's role in international affairs. Thus Portugal participated in the two ESDP missions in the Western Balkans – the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM) and the military operation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM), Operation Concordia. The fact that

the Force Commander of Concordia is a Portuguese general shows the country's commitment to EU crisis management.

2. The role of the EU in crisis management:

▪ Kosovo:

Portugal participated in NATO's bombing against the Yugoslav armed forces in 1999 and has been involved in KFOR from the beginning of the operation. The participation in the NATO-led mission is very much in line with Portugal's positions on ensuring NATO's predominant role in Europe's security affairs. For the time being, no position has been taken about a potential take-over by the EU of the current NATO mission, as was the case in FYROM and almost certainly also in Bosnia.

▪ Middle East:

The EU has for a long time been criticised in the media by opinion makers and academics for its lack of policy towards the Middle East and for not using its instruments for having a greater say over the course of events. Officially, the government has no strong position on the issue and limits itself to supporting the various initiatives aimed at ending the conflict, either in the context of the Quartet or the démarches by the EU High Representative Javier Solana.

3. The perceived impact of the EU enlargement on CFSD/ESDP (old versus new Europe)

Portugal has never been the greatest supporter of EU enlargement, mainly for fear of a future imbalance between East and South in an enlarged Europe. The same fears also apply, even if indirectly, to the CFSP/ESDP field. Since its accession, Portugal has always pledged for the strengthening of EU links with Latin America and Africa. In the 1990's Portugal also became a strong advocate of the various EU initiatives for co-operation with the Mediterranean, especially the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Enlargement to eight new Member States from Central and Eastern Europe may re-direct Europe's interests too much to the East (including Belarus, Ukraine, Russia as well as the Caucasus). Portugal will certainly join the group of EU Member States which will pledge for a balance in Europe's external relations. To some extent, there is also some fear that enlargement carries the danger of further diluting EU's foreign policy, creating new fault lines between Member States and thus weakening the EU's voice in world affairs.

III. European Convention:

1. Contributions:

Contribution by Antonio Nazaré Pereira, alternate member of the Convention:- "Guidelines for parliamentary scrutiny of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)", CONV 606/03, 11 March 2003

Contribution by Alberto Costa, member of the Convention and Guilherme d'Oliveira Martins, alternate member of the Convention:- "Draft Proposal of addition of a new article on "The open method of coordination", CONV 701/03, 28 April 2003

Contribution by Ernâni R. Lopes, member of the Convention: "Draft contribution for the proceedings of the Convention on the inclusion of tourism in the future Constitutional Treaty", CONV 755/03, 22 May 2003

2. External Representation:

Although cautiously at first, the Portuguese government supports the creation of a Foreign Minister for the EU, which should also be a member of the European Commission (double-hatting). The double legitimacy of the Foreign Minister, especially his selection among the College of Commissioners, is an essential aspect to ensure that the Commission is not left behind in the conduct of the Union's foreign policy.

During the works of the Convention and part of the IGC, Portugal was a staunch opponent of changes to the current system of rotating presidencies and of its replacement by a President of the European Council. Therefore, the government would prefer the maintenance of the Presidency's role in external relations. During the IGC negotiations, Portugal softened its position on this matter, without admitting that any of the proposals on the table (tripartite presidencies, one-year presidencies run by two countries) were better than the current system. But risking the re-opening of issues considered as settled would be a far worse scenario than the acceptance of the President of the European Council.

Finally, the Portuguese government also supported the transformation of the current EC delegations in third countries into "EU Embassies", as a factor strengthening the EU's presence in the world.

3. Decision-making:

The Portuguese government did not support the adoption of qualified majority as the norm in CFSP decision-making and therefore the end result of the Convention was satisfactory from the national point of view, also in what concerns ESDP. The use of QMV for proposals submitted by the Foreign Minister are also not favoured by the government, but this is not a major contending issue. Portugal hopes that the IGC will not alter the compromise reached in the Convention and relies on the United Kingdom to also defend this position.

The simplification of CFSP legal instruments (the replacement of Common Strategies and Joint Actions by Decisions) was assessed as confusing and thus in need of further clarification.

On enhanced co-operation and “structured co-operation”, Portugal supported the proposals of the Convention. Enhanced co-operation should be based on clear rules and open to all Member States willing to participate.

4. Crisis Management:

The Portuguese government supported the extension of the so-called Petersberg tasks to also include disarmament operations, military advice and post-conflict stabilisation. The use of military tasks is seen as necessary to guarantee the effectiveness of certain crisis management operations and should, to the extent possible, be complemented by civilian means.

5. Defence:

Due to its traditional Atlanticist stance, Portugal was one of the countries which fought in the Convention for the removal of any proposals which could undermine the role of NATO as the main guarantor of the collective security of its Member States. The inclusion in the constitutional text of a mutual solidarity clause in the case of terrorist attacks and natural disasters was particularly welcomed by the government. A mutually defence clause was not seen as necessary, but the government would also not oppose it.

Permanent structured co-operation arrangements should be allowed, even if the government would prefer a minimum number of Member States (eight) for the launching of such an arrangement. As previously mentioned, Portugal opposed the plans for the creation of a new European military HQ, as this was seen as a duplication of existing NATO structures.

IV. Mapping of Activities in CFSP-related Research

(Major experts, universities and research institutions working in the CFSP field in Portugal)

- Instituto de Estudos Estratégicos e Internacionais (IEEI), Lisbon (Álvaro de Vasconcelos, Maria do Rosário Moraes Vaz, Pedro Courela)
- Observatório de Relações Exteriores, Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (Luís Moita, Luís Leitão Tomé)
- Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Nuno Severiano Teixeira, José Esteves Pereira, Teresa Botelho)
- Departamento de Ciência Política e Relações Internacionais, Universidade do Minho (Ana Paula Brandão)
- Faculdade de Economia, Universidade de Coimbra (Augusto Rogério Leitão)

5. Sources:

- *Eurobarometer 60*, European Commission, December 2003
- *Programa do XV Governo Constitucional*, April 2002
- *Conceito Estratégico de Defesa Nacional*, December 2002
- Several articles in newspapers *Público* and *Diário de Notícias*