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## **EUROPEAN SECURITY: THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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## **European Security: The role of the European Union**

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### **Abstract**

*The paper analyses the European Union as a successful peace project which has managed to transform most of Europe into a security community. It further looks at the progressive enlargement of the EU, not only promoting prosperity and democracy but also spreading the foundations for a stable peace. EU activities that are directly related to security, under the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Security and Defence Policy, are also recorded.*

### **Introduction**

The European Union (EU) is arguably the most successful regional organisation in the world, but it is often regarded as an exclusively civilian organisation with little if any impact on security and conflict. Nothing could be more wrong, as the following will show.

The EU has managed to transform Europe from a war-ridden region into one of the most peaceful regions of the world. Indeed, it has solved this problem so successfully that it is often forgotten that there ever was one to solve. Moreover, it is steadily expanding its 'zone of peace' to the outskirts of the continent, not so much through its actions as by virtue of its very existence. It is seeking to transform into its own image former adversaries in its immediate neighbourhood, and to establish peaceful relations with an outer ring of states, thereby not 'merely' spreading democracy and other liberal values, but seemingly also making these countries more peaceful.

Less important, but probably also beneficial for regional peace, are those EU activities that are directly related to security, including the construction of a common military identity and the deployment of joint military forces, not for forceful intervention, but mainly for peacekeeping and peace-building missions.

The paper will begin by showing how the nucleus of what is now the European Union was created as a peace project and how it gradually grew both in width and depth. Not only did the membership steadily grow, but integration also expanded from a rather narrowly circumscribed collaboration in a particular sector to encompass the entire economies of the members – and how it was accompanied by a gradual transfer of

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formerly sovereign powers to supranational authorities. It will be further shown how this process has not only promoted peace among the EU members, but that it has also made would-be members so eager to join that they have willingly emulated the EU model in the hope of eventually being granted membership, which in turn has also made the EU's neighbours more peaceful.

While it is the paper's main argument that this has been the EU's principal contribution to peace in Europe, it also records how the organisation has gradually 'branched out' into the field of traditional security politics, by coordinating foreign and security policies as well as, more recently, by developing a genuinely common security and defence policy – the latest offspring of which is EU military missions. The more it prioritises this in the future, the more it is likely that it will become a competitor of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and its leading member, the United States, which has so far played the role of a military underpinning of an EU that deliberately neglected military matters.

Unless specifically indicated, the term 'EU' will throughout the paper be used as a shorthand for the various European communities: the European Coal and Steel Community (ESSC), the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC), as well as for the European Union as such.

### **'Security by Being': Peace by Indirect Means**

The European project has all along been motivated by the desire for peace, as was made explicit in the 1950 Schuman Declaration, which referred to the incipient European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the first building block of what is today the European Union:

The coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany. (...) The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe (...). The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible. (Schuman 1994: 11-12)<sup>2</sup>

The intention was thus to ensure peace in Europe, starting with a core comprised of the two countries deemed most likely to end up at war with each other unless prevented from this, and to do so by furthering interdependence between them.

### ***Integration and Security Communities***

This European 'peace through interdependence' strategy thus preceded the seminal work of this 'school' in international relations, dating from 1976 – albeit with older ancestors (Keohane and Nye 1977; Wilde 1991). It could be seen as a variation of the economic version of the liberal peace theory, the theory that trading states are inherently peaceful, and that international trade promotes peace (Mansfield 1994). There was only a small step from interdependence theory to the theory that integration flowing from intense and complex interdependence is also peace-promoting.

This was, indeed, a very indirect approach to security, in the spirit of which the

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<sup>2</sup> See also Parsons 2002: 47-84.

founding treaties of the European communities (ECSC, the EEC and the EAEC) failed to even mention the peace objective, which has ever since been implicit rather than explicit. It would thus seem that the European project strives for peace, and probably actually furthers it, almost through deliberate neglect, since it only approaches the problem of conflict and war indirectly (Eistrop-Sangiovanni and Verdier 2005). Arguably it furthers peace and security by being something without saying, and certainly without doing, anything directly related to security – even though International Relations ‘realists’ might claim that this deliberate neglect was only possible thanks to the American security guarantee to those EU members who were also members of NATO.

Whatever the cause, at least the EU’s part of Europe has undoubtedly undergone a profound metamorphosis from a conflict formation in which wars were all too likely to a security community, defined by the inconceivability of war among its members (in the terminology of Karl Deutsch 1957, as well as the revised version of the same theory developed by Adler and Barnett 1998). Indeed, the EU may even have proceeded beyond this point to one where security problems have simply disappeared from sight and memory, rather than a solution consciously found (Wæver 1998a & b), which may explain why the peace-furthering role has almost been forgotten.

This theory of peace through integration went hand-in-hand with the most prominent theory of how to promote integration: neofunctionalism, mainly associated with Ernest B. Haas, according to whom political integration would, paradoxically, fare best under conditions of depoliticisation. Haas imagined bureaucrats, technocrats and economic actors to be the main integrating actors who should be given as much freedom as possible to forge all sorts of cross-border links. Integration would follow via ‘spill-over’ from one sector of the economy to the next, and eventually also encompass the political realm. Only in the case of crises – when, for example, sovereignty might become an issue – would there be a need for politicisation, in order to make a quantum leap in integration (Haas 1966; Tranholm-Mikkelsen 1991; Risse 2005; Schmitter 2005; Jensen 2003). Neofunctionalism was quite good at explaining progress with regard to integration, but failed when integration came to a halt, as happened in the late sixties due to French opposition. The realist school of intergovernmentalism was not surprised by this at all, as it had great difficulty in comprehending any progress towards integration and supranationalism (Grieco 1996), even though the somewhat more optimistic sub-school of ‘neoliberal intergovernmentalism’ does envision a gradual ‘pooling of sovereignty’ (Moravcsik 1994).

### ***What is the EU (Becoming)?***

What none of these theories on integration as a process can really explain is the outcome of integration, nor how to characterise the EU at its present stage of development. There can be little doubt that the EU has already proceeded way beyond a regular international organisation composed of sovereign states. Both with regard to the sheer size of the EU institutions and the authority granted them by member states, the EU is definitely an entity *sui generis*. This did not happen all at once, but through a long process, the highlights of which are listed in Table 1, including the following elements:

- A simple expansion of the organisation, through the creation of new offices, directorates, etcetera, and the expansion of its staff;
- A piecemeal transfer of what had previously been sovereign powers of the member

states to the Community, for example through the direct application of EU law without the transmission of national legislation (Wind 2000; Armstrong 1998);

- An expansion of the competencies of the Commission and the European Parliament, both representing the Community, at the expense of the European Council (comprising the governments of member states) that represents its constituent parts, i.e. the member states (Thomson and Hosli 2006);
- A gradual move from consensual modes of decision making (protecting state sovereignty by an implicit unit veto system) to more majoritarian modes, such as qualified majority (Moberg 2002; Tsebelis 2002). The draft Constitutional Treaty envisaged that development would be facilitated by so-called '*passarelle*' (walkway) clauses, allowing for an easier switch from one decision-making mode to another (European Union 2004: Arts I.40.7, III-210.3, III-234.2, III-269.3, III-300.3, IV-444).

**Table 1: History of the European Communities: Highlights**

Signed	In force	Name	Contents
1951	1952	Paris Treaty	ECSC: Collaboration in Coal and Steel Production
1957	1958	Rome Treaties	EEC: Customs union and EAEC: Sharing of nuclear energy
1965	1967	Merger Treaty	European Communities: ECSC, EEC, EAEC merged
1986	1987	Single European Act	Single European Market
1992	1993	Maastricht Treaty	European Union
1997	1999	Amsterdam Treaty	Amendments to the Maastricht Treaty
2001	2003	Nice Treaty	Amendments to Rome and Amsterdam Treaties
2004	-	Constitutional Treaty	Constitution for the EU (rejected)
2007	-	Lisbon Treaty	Amendments to Constitutional Treaty (future uncertain)

How far this institutionalisation should proceed was, according to the Constitutional Treaty (retained in the Lisbon Treaty, also known as the 'Reform Treaty'), to be determined by an application of the three principles of conferral, subsidiarity and proportionality (European Union 2004: Art. I-11; Presidency of the IGC 2007: Point 6). This means that the Union does not take authority, but has authority conferred to it by member states; that it shall only exert authority in a policy field if the scope of the problems to be solved makes local or national authorities inadequate; and that this authority shall be proportional to the requirements.

Just where the progressive amalgamation resulting from this institutionalisation will all end is a matter of considerable controversy. There are certainly resemblances to a process of state building, making it conceivable that the result may be a state (e.g. the 'United States of Europe'). In this case, if only because of its size, the new polity will almost inevitably be based on federal or confederal principles, the difference between the two being the location of sovereignty (Wallace 1982; Elazar 1998; Auer 2005; Blankart 2007). In a confederation, the constituent parts retain their sovereignty and, by implication, also their right to withdraw, whereas in a federation the states have irrevocably transferred their sovereignty to the federation. In real life, however, the distinctions are blurred, and unless one maintains a very formalistic concept of

sovereignty as indivisible, it has to be acknowledged that it is in fact quite divisible and may be transferred in a piecemeal fashion to a supranational entity, and perhaps even claimed back again by constituent states (Martinez 1996; Wallace 1999; Jackson 1999), as arguably happened with the Luxembourg Compromise between France and the rest of the EEC in 1967 (Teasdale 1993; Golub 1999).

One may also conceptualise what the EU is, or may eventually become, as a polity *sui generis*, based on 'multi-level governance'. There are indeed many different levels of governance, ranging from the local, via the national and regional, to the supranational level; and many different actors and agencies involved in it, ranging from union institutions and national governments to a wide range of private actors such as private corporations, trade unions and other civil society organisations – all interacting in a network mode rather than according to hierarchical rules (Marks 1996; Hooghe 1996; Bellamy and Castiglione 1997; Schmitter 1996; Wallace 1996; Knodt 2004; Treib et al. 2007; Aalberts 2004; Eberlein and Kerwer 2004; Zielonka 2007). As spheres of authority often overlap, some have even pointed to similarities with pre-modern forms of governance and 'neo-medieval' features inherent in the EU project (Wæver 1996; Friedrichs 2001).

Social constructivists, in turn, tend to be very open-minded with regard to the EU's present and future nature, arguing that it all depends on what not only states, but also peoples and societies, want it to be. To the extent that the European identity comes to supersede national ones in the minds of people or elites, the more the EU can develop into a polity, albeit not necessarily a state. What still seems to be lacking as an underpinning of any grand European schemes seems to be a *demos* (i.e. a people) corresponding to the *polis* (political entity) that is presently being born (Checkel 1999; Kraus 2003; Etzioni 2007; Cederman 2001). There seems to be nothing that should, in principle, make the emergence of such a European *demos* inconceivable, even though it may require overcoming the so-called 'democracy deficit' in the EU (Moravcsik 2002; Chrombez 2003; Holzhacker 2007). Citizens of democratic states are understandably reluctant to transfer their loyalties to a political entity unless they are satisfied with their level of influence over it.

Finally, we have the aforementioned neo-realist or intergovernmentalist school that remains very sceptical about supranationalism as such, sticking to the view that states and governments do not willingly relinquish their sovereign powers, especially not in the realm of 'high politics'. They are rarely explicit about where the lines that cannot be crossed are located, but they remain convinced that there are such lines (Collard-Wexler 2006). Even though this position is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain in the light of an obviously progressing integration, it does apparently receive some support from such setbacks for integration as the *cul-de-sac* of the Constitutional Treaty, which has yet to be resolved.

### **Security through Enlargement and Normative Power?**

There can be little doubt that integration has deepened and that this process is likely to continue. What is perhaps even more remarkable is that this has all along been accompanied by a progressive expansion of membership: in 2004, the till now most comprehensive expansion was completed with no fewer than ten new members; in 2007, two additional members (Bulgaria and Romania) followed suit; and by the end of 2007, a further three countries were official candidates for membership, namely Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey. Contrary to NATO expansion, which has always

been opposed by some, there have never been any serious objections (e.g. by Russia) to EU enlargement, perhaps thanks to the almost exclusively civilian nature of the Union (Light et al. 2000; Wallace 2000). There is, on the other hand, considerable controversy over the possible future membership of Turkey, most reservations and objections couched in terms of concern for European identity (Font 2006; Wood and Quaisser 2005; Gates 2005; Rumford 2001).

Enlargement has occasionally been argued in security terms (Higashino 2004), which is to some extent paradoxical. It is tantamount to transforming neighbours into members, but in most cases this automatically brings new countries into the EU's orbit as neighbours, as summarised in Table 2. From a strictly realist point of view, focusing on military security, the rationale for enlargement may thus seem dubious, as it means longer and more challenging borders to defend against new neighbours and because not all new members have really had much to contribute to any defence of the community, being 'net consumers' rather than 'producers' of security. But then again, the EU is not a military alliance where such considerations would be decisive (Salmon 2006). Enlargement may also seem irrational from the point of view of intra-EU relations, as it may be tantamount to inviting conflict-prone countries inside.

<b>Table 2: EU Enlargement and New Neighbours</b>		
	<b>Members</b>	<b>New Neighbours</b>
<b>Initial Size</b> (1951)	Belgium, France, W. Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands	Austria, Denmark, East Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Yugoslavia (Slovenia)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Enlargement</b> (1973)	Denmark, Ireland, UK	None
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Enlargement</b> (1981)	Greece	Albania, Turkey, Yugoslavia (Macedonia)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Enlargement</b> (1986)	Portugal, Spain	Andorra, Morocco
<b>Informal enlargement</b> (1990)	E. Germany (unification with W. Germany)	Czech Republic, Poland
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Enlargement</b> (1995)	Austria, Finland, Sweden	Hungary, Liechtenstein, Norway, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Enlargement</b> (2004)	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia	Belarus, Croatia, Ukraine
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Enlargement</b> (2007)	Bulgaria, Romania	Turkey, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia
<b>Candidate Countries</b>	Croatia, Macedonia, Turkey	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Montenegro, Syria

Obviously, not all new neighbours have been problematic, and relations with countries such as Norway or Liechtenstein have not really represented much of a challenge. Perhaps surprisingly, relations with Russia have proceeded fairly smoothly, even though this not only became a new neighbour, but also saw part of its national territory (the Kaliningrad exclave) completely surrounded by new EU members. Its unprecedented scope notwithstanding, the 2004 enlargement only produced three new neighbours while that in 2007 produced four – of which Moldova may be a bit of a problem, due to its 'frozen conflict' with Russia. Even more of a challenge was the

accession to the Union of a Cyprus which remains divided between a South claiming to represent the whole island and a *de facto* independent North that is only recognised by Turkey (Emerson and Tocci 2002). The next predictable round(s) of enlargement will bring even more challenging new neighbours such as Iraq, Iran and Syria as well as the countries of Central Asia (Aydin 2004).

Even though it may appear irrational for the EU to accept such challenging new members as Cyprus, it makes perfect sense as an application of the aforementioned 'liberal peace' theorem to the EU's neighbourhood. Assuming that war among liberal states is unlikely or even inconceivable, and that the EU is able to transform states into liberal ones – either in the sense of 'trading states' with market economies or of democracies, or both – it makes perfect sense for the EU to seek to democratise its neighbours and then turn some of these neighbours into members, as this would contribute to the security of the EU. It is also inherently plausible that the EU can promote such democratisation, not so much by *doing* something as by *being* an immensely attractive market and community of nations. In order to join states have to meet various EU standards, not only in terms of their economies, but also with regard to democracy and human rights, including minority rights. This can induce what has aptly been called 'anticipatory adaptation', in the sense that would-be candidates strive to meet these standards by modifying their behaviour, even before actual membership negotiations commence – as Turkey has done with a recent reform package that included abolition of the death penalty (Haggard et al. 1993).

The EU thus exerts 'normative power' over the prospective new members in Europe and probably even beyond this circle. Even though such power resembles the 'soft power' eulogised by Joseph Nye and others, as argued by Ian Manners and others it has some unique characteristics. Not only may it enhance national security by 'desecuritisising' issues (or 'bracketing security'), but it will also improve human (as well probably societal) security (Manners 2002 and 2006; Wæver 1995 and 1993). Not only does the EU base its understanding of itself on normative principles. It also seeks to spread these values beyond its borders, both via aid conditionality and demands to candidate countries. There are resemblances with the *mission civilisatrice* used to justify European imperialism (Behr 2007; Hansen 2002), and it could certainly be regarded as an exercise of 'hegemonial power' (Gramsci 1971: 323-377; Keohane 1996). The assessment of the normative power exerted by the EU thus depends on whether one subscribes to the values being promoted. Even though most of these values are, at least formally, universal in the sense that most countries have signed and ratified treaties and conventions codifying the very same norms (e.g. the human rights conventions), beneath the surface there may be less agreement on values such as secularism, materialism and consumerism.

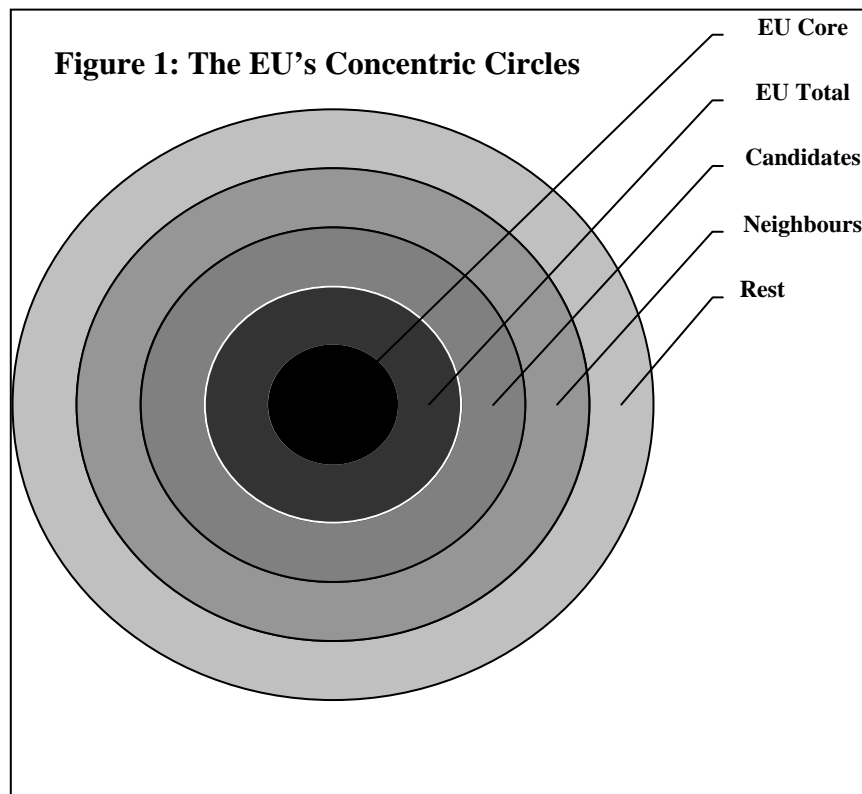
Both the accession itself and the negotiations leading up to it are very complicated and bureaucratised matters for the EU and the candidate country. The latter has to sign up to and implement the European *acquis communautaire* – i.e. the entire *corpus* of treaties, agreements, etcetera, forming the essence and defining the parameters of EU membership, amounting to around 100,000 pages of documents (Hille and Knill 2006; Grabbe 2002; Wiener 1998; Engelbrekt 2002). The EU is thus an exclusive 'club' for which membership is not granted to everybody. Had it been any easier to gain admission it might also have been less attractive, at least to statesmen reasoning like Groucho Marx that 'I would not join any club that would have someone like me for a member'.



### **‘Security by Assistance’: The Neighbourhood Policy**

Besides those countries that are, at any particular juncture, in line for membership, there are also states not expected to join this exclusive circle in the foreseeable future, but which nevertheless occupy a special place in the EU’s view of the world. One can depict this worldview as a set of concentric circles, as illustrated in Figure 1, which should be understood as a snapshot of a continuous process, and with the ‘rest’ category subdivided by the EU into different categories.

If the history of the EU teaches us anything, it is that what was previously held to be impossible may in due course become reality. Some present neighbours may thus become candidates, sooner or later, just as some candidates are likely to become full members. A neighbour, however, may be socially and discursively constructed in different ways, either as a potentially hostile and dangerous Other, or more neutrally as merely a ‘different Other’, or even as what might be called a ‘transient Other’ – i.e. as someone who will, in due course, be welcomed into the ‘family’, as a future candidate country or even member state.



Different strategies are appropriate to the various Others, as set out in Table 3. A hostile Other is a potential threat that should preferably be eliminated or at least contained. A different Other, however, is one with whom one must and can co-exist for the indefinite future, and with whom it therefore makes sense to establish normal international relations. A transient Other, in its turn, has to be made ready for the ‘merger’ with one’s self, which requires engagement. Hence, whereas the relationships between the Self and the hostile as well as different Others are based on equality, that with the transient Other is, by its very nature, unequal, as the Self is regarded as superior, both by itself and the inferior Other.

Table 3: Strategies and ‘Others’			
The Other	Hostile	Different	Transient
Relationship	Hostility	Equality	Inferiority
Strategies	Containment Elimination	State-to-State relations Dialogue	Engagement <i>Rapprochement</i>

To its credit, the EU has avoided labelling the various Others as hostile, preferring to treat them as different (e.g. Iran) or transient Others, as with the aforementioned candidate countries. A Commission document on *Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours* thus recalled:

The Union’s determination to avoid drawing new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union. (...) Enhanced interdependence—both political and economic—can itself be a means to promote stability, security and sustainable development both within and without the EU. (...) The EU should aim to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood – a ‘ring of friends’ – with whom the EU enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative relations (Commission of the European Communities 2003: 4).

In May 2004, the Commission followed this up with a strategy paper on the European Neighbourhood Policy, which included a vision of creating:

a ring of countries, sharing the EU’s fundamental values and objectives, drawn into an increasingly close relationship, going beyond co-operation to involve a significant measure of economic and political integration. This will bring enormous gains to all involved in terms of increased stability, security and well being (Commission of the European Communities 2004).

In December 2006, a follow-up to this was published, placing a somewhat greater emphasis on people-to-people contacts and promoting regional and sub-regional collaboration, for example in the Black Sea region (Commission of the European Communities 2006). For now, however, the EU’s most urgent neighbourhood challenges are those with the remaining states of the Balkans and with the Greater Middle East (Lehne 2004). This neighbourhood policy has aptly been labelled a ‘friendly Monroe Doctrine’ (Emerson 2002 & 2003), and it could, indeed, be described (paraphrasing Theodore Roosevelt) as ‘speaking softly and carrying a big carrot’ (Emerson 2004; Smith 2005; Dannreuther 2006; Hubel 2004; Kelley 2006; Zaiotti 2007; Scott 2005). The EU has also shown a considerable willingness to ‘put its money where its mouth is’, by allocating substantial resources to the various neighbourhoods (European Commission, 2008a).

In **the Balkans**, the EU in 1999 launched a ‘Stability Pact for Southern Europe’, intended for post-conflict peace-building following the Kosovo War. Even though this was an EU initiative, it is not an EU programme as such since it also involves other countries. It has sought to promote both the general values of the EU such as democracy, human (including minority) rights and regional collaboration, as well as more concrete demands such as collaboration with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). In addition to these programmes, the EU has also been involved with military missions in both Bosnia

and Macedonia (*vide infra*), but its main contribution to stability and security in this 'near abroad' has undoubtedly been non-military and more related to being than doing.

As far as the **Middle East** is concerned one of the main instruments has been the so-called 'Barcelona process', encompassing the EU and countries of the Maghreb as well as the Levant, including both Israel and Palestine. It was initiated with the Barcelona Declaration of 1995, which formulated the common objective of 'turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity' (European Union 1997; Calabrese 1997; Holm 2004; Malmvig 2004; Solingen 2003). An integral part of the Barcelona process has been the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership programme (MEDA), under the auspices of which the EU disburses grant and loans to the partner countries, both bilaterally and for regional collaboration (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership 2002).

### **'Security by Doing': The CFSP and the ESDI/ESDP**

Even though the EU's biggest asset with regard to security is undoubtedly what it is and represents, both to its members and to other states who would like to join, this does not mean that it does not do something in the field of security.

#### ***The CFSP and Conflict Prevention***

Gradually, and not without some teething problems, the EU has developed a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Nørgaard 1993), which was formally launched with the 1993 Maastricht Treaty on the European Union. One of the first consequences was that the EU countries achieved a unified stance on the recognition on new states such as those in the Balkans (Caplan 1998; Dover 2005).

In the Amsterdam Treaty of 1999 the objectives of the CFSP were enumerated: to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union; to strengthen the security of the Union; to preserve peace and strengthen international security; to promote international co-operation; and to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It was further decided that the most general and principled policies were to be decided by the European Council, implying that this was still regarded as a matter for intergovernmental coordination rather than any subordination under supranationality (Groenleer and Van Schaik 2005; Ferreira-Pereira 2005). The EU nevertheless succeeded in formulating common strategies in a number of fields, including common positions with an obligation to pursue joint courses of action; and various mechanisms were established and special representatives appointed for a range of countries and regions. A High Representative was further appointed, subordinated to the Council. Whereas in practice the High Representative does in fact represent the EU *vis-à-vis* other countries, formally speaking these tasks are shared between the Commission – with the Commissioner on Foreign Relations being in charge of a range of delegations – and the Council, represented by the incumbent President, embedded in a 'Troika' alongside the outgoing and the incoming presidents (European Commission 2008b; Carlsnaes 2004; Smith 2004a; Smith 2004b; Koenig-Archibugi 2004; Tonra 2003; Thym 2003).

Under the auspices of the CFSP, the EU has also developed an arms-control policy, intended not only to harmonise the positions of the member states in various international bodies and negotiations (Bailes 2007; Wulf 2003), but also to regulate

the behaviour of member states (e.g. with a Code of Conduct on Arms Exports). Even though this is only politically, and not legally, binding it has probably contributed to enhancing transparency in this field, involving some of the world's largest arms exporters. The Code prohibits the issuing of export licences for a customer who might use the weapons for international aggression, or to aggravate domestic tensions – and it makes special caution compulsory in the case of countries with serious human rights violations (Bauer 2003).

The EU countries are furthermore consulting each other as a caucus within other organisations such as the UN with a view to (but not always succeeding in) reaching a common position on most issues.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the ministerial and summit meetings of the EU, as a matter of routine, pass resolutions on foreign policy issues that have over time become increasingly comprehensive and elaborate, probably reflecting a growing agreement on most issues. They have, for instance, managed to formulate and stick to a joint policy on the Israel-Palestine conflict – which is both a neighbourhood policy and a CFSP issue (Ortega 2003). On the other hand, the EU countries did not at all manage to reach an agreed position on the 2003 US war on Iraq, in the protracted run-up to which serious discord spread through Europe, dividing the EU members into two opposing camp: France, Germany and Belgium adamantly opposing the war; while the UK, Spain and Denmark were strongly in favour of it (Styan 2004; Allin 2004; Menon 2004).

### **From WEU to ESPD**

Until recently the EU deliberately shied away from military matters, even exempting arms production from its general industrial integration schemes, and thus leaving the military aspects of security to NATO and/or the now defunct Western European Union (WEU). The latter, for most of its existence, played virtually no role, as all of its members placed their faith in NATO (Schmidt 1992; Rees 1998; Warwick 1998; McKenzie and Loedel 1998). It thus came as a bit of a surprise when in the EU's Maastricht Treaty of 1992 the WEU was proclaimed to constitute 'an integral part of' the EU, especially considering that not all EU members were, or even wanted to become, members of the WEU. In June of the same year, the WEU formulated its future tasks, henceforth known as 'Petersberg tasks', comprising a catalogue of such tasks as peacekeeping, humanitarian operations and crisis management (Western European Union Council of Ministers 1992: Chap.II Art.5), which has ever since been used to describe as well as circumscribe the EU's military activities and ambitions.

One of the impediments to faster progress in European defence collaboration has all along been (and remains) the somewhat ambivalent and vacillating US attitude. On the one hand, the United States wants its European allies to shoulder a larger part of the total burden of collective defence (as defined by the US), but on the other hand Washington does not want them to become so independent that it might jeopardise its hegemonic position (Gärtner 1998; Kupchan 2000; Lansford 1999). As so often in alliance matters, this has resulted in a series of compromise formulations that are only acceptable to all because they lend themselves to different interpretations, and which therefore often make very little sense if taken at face value.

Gradually, the EU countries – usually on the initiative of either Germany, France or the UK, or any combination thereof – have taken significant steps towards creating a

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<sup>3</sup> Whether this is actually an advantage is questioned in Frieden 2004.

genuine European security and defence capacity. One of the most significant breakthroughs was the St. Malo meeting between the UK and France in December 1998, where both sides committed themselves to the development of a 'common defence policy in the framework of CFSP', including a 'capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so'. This announcement was, as always, wrapped in solemn references to NATO, to the 'vitality' of which this initiative would presumably contribute (Rutten 2001: 8-9).

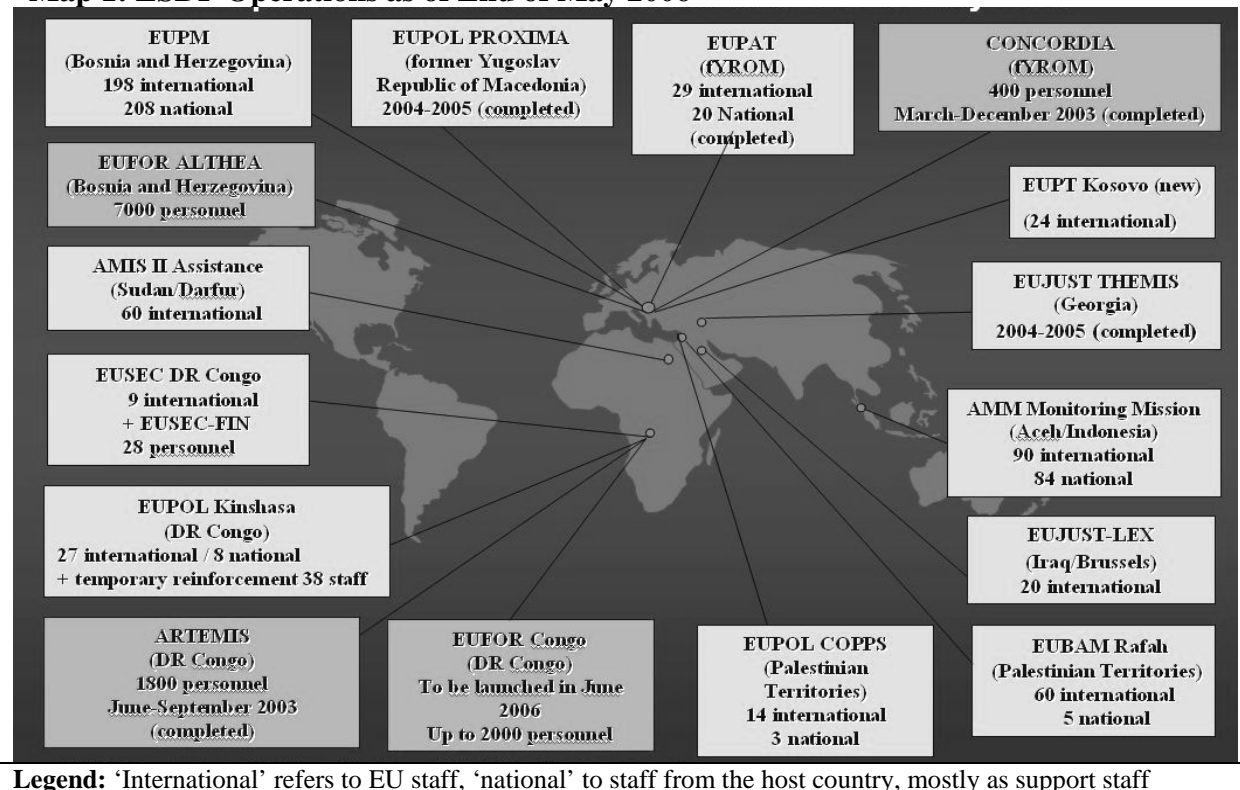
Since then, the ESDP has steadily evolved further (Rutten 2002; Haine 2003; Hunter 2002; Keohane 2004; Pilegaard 2004; Zilmer-Johns and Pilegaard 2004), *inter alia* through the 'Berlin Plus' agreement with NATO on EU access to NATO assets (Haine 2003: 178-180); and commitment of forces to the EU by member states, first as set out in the 1999 Helsinki Headline Goals and Catalogue and then following its 2004 successor, the Headline Goal 2010. In the latter, the ambition was proclaimed to be:

the ability for the EU to deploy force packages at high readiness as a response to a crisis (...). These minimum force packages must be militarily effective, credible and coherent and should be broadly based on the Battlegroups concept. (Schmitt 2004; Hunter 2002: 63-70)

The first of these multinational battle groups achieved initial operational capacity in 2005, and by the beginning of 2007 the EU had enough to have two on-call at all times – both consisting of around 1,500 troops plus support personnel and equipment ('enablers') and capable of stand-alone operations. Serious shortages did, however, remain with regard to the sea and especially airlift capability. None of the battle groups had, by the time of writing, seen any action yet, but the set-up seemed quite promising (Lindstrom 2007).

The main paradox has been that the EU has embarked on such missions as are usually regarded as 'extras', whereas it has explicitly until now had no ambition to be able to defend itself, relegating this task to NATO. The draft Constitutional Treaty did, however, contain a collective defence clause, which has been taken over by the Reform Treaty. It seems modelled after NATO's Article 5, to which it may thus provide an alternative. In order to allay the concerns of the most Atlanticist of the members as well as the United States, both treaties underlined that this is not the intention:

If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States. Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation (Art. I.41.7). (Howorth 2004).

**Map 1: ESDP Operations as of End of May 2006<sup>4</sup>**

While all of the above just relates to planning and intentions, since 2003 the EU has on several occasions ventured into the hitherto uncharted waters of peace operations, not only in Europe, but also in Africa and Asia (see Map 1). In all cases this has taken place with a clear UN mandate; and in most, but not all, cases, with NATO support under the aforementioned 'Berlin plus' framework (Lindström 2004a; Geigerich and Wallace 2004).

The more the EU ventures into actual military deployments, the more it may have to deal with the problems of civil-military relations, especially with a view to ensuring civilian and democratic accountability of its military forces. This is always a challenge in the case of multinational operations where the implicit dual accountability (to the international organisation and the national government) may all too easily dilute accountability (Wulf 2005). This problem may be amplified by the additional layer of multinationality, as when member states provide forces for an EU operation on behalf of the United Nations, perhaps collaborating with other national or multinational forces. Several authors have therefore urged the EU to institutionalise better mechanisms to oversee ESDP operations (Bono 2005 & 2006; Cutler and Von Lingen 2003; Juncos and Reynolds 2007; Kirchner 2006; Wagner 2005 & 2006).

### The European Security Strategy

In an ideal world of complete rationality, the development of the ESDP recorded above would have been guided by an agreed strategic framework, setting out political values and goals, perceived threats and the appropriate grand strategy for dealing with these, from which strategy, force levels and structures as well as deployment could have been derived. In actual fact, however, there had been quite a lot of 'muddling

<sup>4</sup> Taken from [www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/ESDPoperations.jpg](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/ESDPoperations.jpg).

through' (Lindblom 1959), until the European Council in December 2003 approved a European security strategy labelled *A Secure Europe in a Better World*.

The strategy acknowledged that 'large-scale aggression against any Member State is now improbable. Instead, Europe faces new threats which are more diverse, less visible and less predictable.' Among such new threats or challenges it mentioned terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and organised crime as well as regional conflicts and state failure – the last two, however, mainly because of their ability to exacerbate the first three. The document further argued that 'the first line of defence will often be abroad. The new threats are dynamic,' hence 'we should be ready to act before a crisis occurs' (European Council 2003. Also Bailes 2005; Toje 2005; Duke 2004; Hill 2004). Contrary to the United States, however, the EU has not used this as an argument to justify military pre-emption, but rather to underline the need for 'conflict prevention', duly acknowledging that 'none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means.' Rather than advocating military attack the document thus emphasised the need for 'effective multilateralism' and 'a rule-based international order'. This less 'militaristic' approach may reflect a shared European 'strategic culture', but this point remains controversial (Meyer 2004 & 2005; Hyde-Price 2004). In conformity with the spirit of this document, the EU's approach to the most immediate threats (i.e. terrorism and WMDs) has been quite moderate.

Even though both the number of terrorist attacks in Europe and the casualties resulting from these have in fact been quite low, even in recent years, both individual European countries and the EU have taken the terrorist threat seriously, at least rhetorically (Gärtner 2003; Delpech 2004; Müller 2004; Lindstrom 2004b; Wilkinson 2005). However, they generally preferred non-military to military responses (Anderson and Apap 2002; Messervy-Whiting 2002; Cross 2007; Zimmerman 2006), and have generally been reluctant to sacrifice human rights on the altar of 'homeland security', even though criticism has nevertheless been raised against moving too far in that direction (Lodge 2004; Vlcek 2007; Warbrick 2004; Gregory 2005).

Of course, as long-standing allies and friends of the United States, both the individual European states and the EU were quick to express their sympathy with the United States in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks (Rutten 2002: 143-144), followed by declarations of intent to create 'a genuine European judicial area' (Rutten 2002: 147-148). Since then, a number of concrete initiatives have been launched, including the following:

- A common definition of terrorism, proceeding from a definition of 'terrorist acts' (in the form of a list of concrete offences committed for a set of specified reasons) to one of 'terrorists,' 'terrorist grouping' and 'terrorist entities' (Rutten 2002: 196-198);
- A list of terrorist organisations and persons based on these definitions (Council of the European Union 2004);
- A commitment to solidarity among members in case one of them should be the victim of terrorist attacks, inspired by the attack against Spain on 11 March 2004 and codified in an EU Solidarity Programme (Council of the European Union, 2004b; Ekengren 2006);
- Collaboration in the field of 'generic' emergency relief and disaster management,

which will undoubtedly be useful not only in the case of terrorist attack, but also for 'ordinary emergencies' (Rhinar et al. 2006; Missiroli 2006);

- Appointment of an EU counter-terrorism coordinator (Rheinheimer 2006);
- A 'Plan of Action on Combating Terrorism', in which the focus is placed on 'deepening the international consensus and enhanc[ing] international efforts to combat terrorism' as well as on reducing the access of terrorists to financial and economic resources, improving the detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorists; and enhancing security of international transport and border controls and capacities for dealing with the consequences of a terrorist attack, alongside preventive measures such as 'addressing the factors which contribute to support for, and recruitment into, terrorism' (Council of the European Union 2004c).

What is perhaps equally significant, however, is what the EU has refrained from doing. For instance, in the conceptual framework on the ESDP dimension of the fight against terrorism (18 November 2004), there is no mention of military interventions or pre-emptive strikes, but the focus is placed on support for other states and protection of EU troops against terrorist attacks (Council of the European Union 2004d).

Having long been engaged in the endeavours to stem the proliferation of WMDs (Lindstrom and Schmitt 2003; Grand 2000), the EU in 2003 adopted a 'Strategy against Weapons of Mass Destruction'. It duly mentions the threat so often highlighted by the United States that terrorists may acquire WMD and even means of delivery, but it parts company with the USA when it comes to countermeasures. The document thus underlines 'our conviction that a multilateralist approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international order.' Whilst referring to the need for coercive measures as a last resort, it also maintains the pre-eminent role of the UN Security Council in these matters. Rather than focusing exclusively on the prospective proliferator, the EU also addresses the central question of the motivation for acquiring WMDs:

The EU is determined to play a part in addressing the problems of regional instability and insecurity and the situations of conflict which lie behind many weapons programmes, recognising that instability does not occur in a vacuum. The best solution to the problem of proliferation of WMD is that countries should no longer feel they need them. (...) To this end, the EU will foster regional security arrangements and regional arms control and disarmament processes. The EU's dialogue with the countries concerned should take account of the fact that in many cases they have real and legitimate security concerns, with the clear understanding that there can never be any justification for the proliferation of WMD (Council of the European Union 2003).

## **Conclusion**

With a steadily expanding agenda and ample resources at its disposal, the EU is already by far the most important organisation in Europe, both in terms of security matters and, even more so, with regard to non-security issues – or, perhaps more correctly, issues which are only indirectly related to security. Its membership is steadily growing and it has a proven potential of promoting not only prosperity, but also democracy and political stability among its member states.

Indeed, the EU's main problem may be its own success. Having effectively



transformed a conflict- and war-ridden Europe into a security community, among the members of which war has become inconceivable, it is all too easily forgotten that there ever was a problem to solve. Oblivious to its own strength and success, one may thus fear that the EU may feel tempted to emulate the United States by placing a greater emphasis on military power at the possible expense of its traditional and much more effective 'soft power'.

Its astounding success notwithstanding, the EU may not be an appropriate model for regional collaboration in other regions – not because a similar evolution would not be desirable, but because it seems unrealistic. The entire EU project was built on foundations not found anywhere else in the world: strong states with a high degree of internal cohesion and a high degree of economic interdependence, based on strong and diversified economies. Even though there may well be elements of 'the EU approach' that can be emulated by other regional organisations, as far as the overall strategy most of them would probably be well advised to look elsewhere for inspiration – e.g. to the much less demanding 'CSCE approach' developed by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Møller 2004).

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