

CFSP WATCH 2003 – Bulgaria – by Georgi Mitov¹

Basic views of CFSP/ESDP in Bulgaria. Priorities for the government in CFSP; key issues for Bulgaria.

1. Basic Views of CFSP/ESDP in your country

1.1. *In which way does your government follow and contribute to CFSP developments and reforms? What are the priorities for your government in CFSP? What are the key issues for your country?*

Bulgaria is not an EU member yet. However, being a European country that is about to become a NATO member in March 2004, an associate state of the EU since 1995 that is currently negotiating its entry in the European Union, Bulgaria is directly related to the development of the CFSP/ESDP.

Bulgaria made commitments in the sphere of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). As the other candidate and accession countries before their membership Bulgaria participates actively in the political dialogue and is fully synchronizing its policy with the CFSP. In practice, after the closure of the relevant chapter (chapter 27) of the negotiations, Bulgaria did not oppose any of the common positions and agreements. In general terms, this does not represent a serious challenge for the decision-takers in Sofia. Most of these positions are simple declarations and do not foresee concrete actions, which could affect Bulgaria. They represent a compromise between all the Member States and the aspects, which might have been contrary to Bulgarian interests, have been watered down and eliminated at an early stage.

The policy of EU, if commonly adopted, should be implemented by Bulgaria. Europe is the natural foreign policy point of orientation for our country. Reasons for this lay in geography, history and culture but also in the economic and financial sphere. In 2007 Bulgaria will become a part of the EU, which has distinctive and very particular interests in the world. Solidarity should be spread not only to economy and finance but also to all spheres including foreign and security policy. Moreover, the fact that the UK and other more 'pro-Atlanticist' members of the Union have a say make it sure for Bulgarians that in most cases the opinion of the United States has been taken into consideration and the Transatlantic link has been respected.

The key priorities for Bulgaria in the Common Foreign and Security Policy are²:

- Active support policy for the EU CFSP, according to the commitments, taken during the accession negotiations;
- Policy of joining to declarations, demarches and EU common positions;
- Active participation in the political dialogue with the EU;
- Active support policy of the European Security and Defense Policy – an important stage of the long-term EU political strategy and a national contribution to achieving its goals;
- Active participation in the dialogue mechanism and consultations on a permanent basis on all levels;

¹ University of National and World Economy, on behalf of BECSA.

² Bulgarian Strategy for acceleration of the negotiations for Accession of Bulgaria in the European Union.

- Development of the quantitative aspects of the additional contribution to the European capability for conflict management by military means, that is:
- Contribution to the EU traced out goals concerning civil aspects on conflict management, according to the models offered for participation of Third countries;
- Engaging in strengthened cooperation of the defense industries of the EU member states;
- Cooperation of the EU within international organizations and in relations with third countries;
- Cooperation with the EU in the sphere of diplomatic and consular protection in third countries c EC;
- Building out of efficient control system for foreign trade with arms and dual-use goods and technologies and effective implementation of EU negative measures towards third countries;

Bulgaria is strongly resolved to continue to ensure the conduct of a responsible national policy with regard to transfers of arms and dual-use goods to particular "sensitive" states and regions. Bulgaria will remain firmly committed to the strict implementation of the export control legislation, thus ruling out any possibility for its infringement. Our commitment is substantiated by undertaking practical measures aimed at tightening the control over trade in arms and improving its enforcement.

- Active role in the achievement of stability and cooperation in the region and contribution through conveyance of the common European democratic values in regional context.

1.2 Does the public (media, interest groups, parties, etc.) take notice of the developments of the CFSP/ESDP? What are their expectations and concerns?

Basic foreign policy priorities of Bulgaria with respect to CFSP, as viewed by some of the political parties represented in the 39th National Assembly.

Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)

- Bulgarian foreign policy should take into consideration the goals of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, that is: to defend the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union; to strengthen the security of the Union; to maintain the peace and to strengthen the international security, in accordance with the UN Principles, the Final Act of Helsinki and the Charter of Paris; to promote international cooperation; to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, as well the preservation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- Intensifying of the European integration and recognition of the EU CFSP.
- Harmonization in a natural way of the priorities and approaches of the European countries towards third states as a necessity in the process of decision making in the foreign policy;
- European Security and Defense Policy, as an integral part of CFSP has made a big progress, but it should not lead to undermining the confidence in NATO or to doubling the functions of the EU and NATO. At this moment Bulgaria has real chances in taking part in the ESDP activities, but Bulgaria's commitments are to strengthen substantially after the accession to the Union. The NATO membership and the Bulgarian experience in military missions abroad will help the full valued engagement of Bulgaria in ESDP. The decision for deployment of US military bases in Bulgaria should give an account of the ability of the country to fully take part in the ESDP in a long term aspect.

- The removal of the tension of the so called Old and New Europe. In this context it is very important that the thrust and good cooperation between the EU and the USA is restored.
- It is vital for Bulgaria from now on not to be set in a position to choose who of the closest partners it should support.
- In 2007 Bulgaria is becoming an outer EU border, a fore front of the Union to regions of its security key importance – The Western Balkans, Caspian region and Caucasus, Middle East and Central Asia.

Union of Democratic Forces (UDF)

- Active role of the Republic of Bulgaria not only in the EU Common Foreign Policy making, but also in the EU building;
- Bulgaria should be an integral part of the integration of Europe and a vanguard of the integration of South-East Europe in the EU, and not a passive observer of the processes on the continent.
- Development and intensifying of the cooperation between the EU and the USA on an equal basis in favor of the respect of the human rights, strengthening of democracy in the society, fight against terrorism and organized crime, establishment of peace and security;
- Enlargement eastwards and establishment of peace, stability, security and democracy with the EU new neighbours – the CIS, the Caucasus region and the Middle East.
- Cooperation with the Mediterranean non-EU states.

Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF)

- Bulgaria has to be an active factor in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP).
- To give efficient contribution to the development of the capabilities of the European Security and Defense Policy, and of the EU peace keeping operations as well.
- Bulgaria's membership in NATO and the EU predetermines the foreign policy of the country in accordance with the common strategy of the two organizations. In the context of these goals comes the efficient integration of the country in the European Union and the recognition of Bulgaria as an active participant in the NATO's collective security system and in the international mechanisms in the strengthening of peace and security, including participation in crisis management operations.

1.3 National Perceptions and Positions with regard to CFSP/ESDP Issues

Please describe key positions and perceptions in your country with regard to EU foreign policy, taking into account the perceived success and/or failure of CFSP/ESDP (e.g. with a look to current developments like the Iraq conflict, September 11th, the missions in Bosnia and Macedonia)

- *Bulgaria and the fight against terrorism*

Bulgaria was among the first states to denounce terrorism. The country took an active part in US's fight against terrorism after 9/11 – placed its air space at US disposal; sent troops to Afghanistan under ISAF; supports the stability on the Balkans – lent support "Allied Force" and "Joint Guardian" under the auspices of NATO and placed peace-keepers under SFOR in Bosnia and under KFOR in Kosovo. Bulgaria is firmly convinced, that the problem of international terrorism can not be solved by one state, international cooperation is necessary.

- *The EU missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

An Agreement was signed at January 9, 2003 in Brussels between the European Union and the Republic of Bulgaria for the participation of Bulgaria in the EU Police mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is EU's first civil operation connected to crisis management within the frames of the European security and defense policy /ESDP/, which is proof of EU's capability to intervene in crisis situations on European territory. Bulgaria expressed its will to participate in EU's first civil operation in crisis management, and believes it will contribute to the establishment of democratic structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is an expression of support of EU policy regarding the Western Balkans and the operations undertaken in the region.

On January 24, 2005 in Sofia an Agreement was signed between the Republic of Bulgaria and the European Union, establishing the framework of this country's participation in EU crisis management operations.

The signing of this Agreement was necessitated by the intensive cooperation between Bulgaria and the European Union within the framework of peacekeeping and peace-maintaining operations in the Western Balkans. This cooperation acquired new dimensions after the EU took over control over the NATO military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bulgaria has already availed itself of the provisions of the Agreement by joining the EU-led Altea operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 2004.

This framework agreement with the European Union regulates the legal and financial aspects of Bulgaria's participation in crisis management operations to which this country has been invited and in which it has agreed to participate.

1.4 The position of your country towards the further development of ESDP (taking into account in particular the role of NATO)

Recognizing the crucial role of NATO in protecting the Western democracies, bridging the old divisions and promoting security and stability in Europe, Bulgaria is firmly committed to contribute to further developing the political cohesion and military strength of the Alliance. In doing so, Bulgaria shall be strongly supportive of both a solid transatlantic link and a much deeper European integration.

For decades now Bulgaria has been a stabilizing factor and unique example of ethnic peace and religious tolerance in the Balkans and South East Europe and Bulgaria remain open to share that experience. As Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE for 2004, Bulgaria had concentrated its efforts in fostering stability and security in Western Balkans and the region of Caucasus. As a matter of fact, the situation in these unstable regions is similar to the Bulgarian 14 years ago, just after the end of the Cold war. That applies to Kosovo, Bosnia, Nagorno Karabakh, and the separatist tendencies in Georgia.

Having in mind the Bulgarian experience, the most powerful strategic tool and the most effective way to contribute to the process of conflict resolution is to outline a clear vision of future integration. The stability and prosperity of the Euro-Atlantic zone and beyond it depends on the successful implementation of this process. Thus, the Alliance would not need to solve any future problems and build security by peace enforcement operations, as it happened in Kosovo.

Today the Alliance is facing new challenges. Far beyond the borders of the Euro-Atlantic area, NATO is playing a crucial role in Afghanistan as a number one priority on its agenda, and is also engaged in Iraq. In Istanbul the Alliance should take a very close look at the issue of its deeper involvement in the effort to bring Iraq back to normalcy. The greater the cooperation among NATO, EU and OSCE under the UN umbrella is, the more effective this process will be.

2. The role of the EU in crisis management e.g. Kosovo, the Middle East

- **Kosovo**

Kosovo is an example of the unique interaction of the international community - UN, EU, OSCE, the Council of Europe and NATO - in the conducting of complex peace-keeping operations. Bulgaria supported the initiative launched in October 2003 to develop a reliable mechanism for reviewing the progress of the political reforms in Kosovo, with the clear awareness that it marks an important stage in enhancing peace in the area and in the entire region. Bulgaria expects the initiative to mark the beginning of a constructive process, which will eventually lead to the establishing of a democratic and multi-ethnic society, as well as the building of efficient and effective institutions for self-government - a mandatory prerequisite for raising the issue of the final statute of Kosovo. Together with the other members of UN Security Council, Bulgaria encouraged the direct dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, and consistently defended the position on the complete enforcement of Resolution 1244.

Bulgaria expresses its support for the approach of the European Commission, which interacts with Kosovo through the so-called "tracking mechanism" within the frameworks of the stabilization and association process, allowing Kosovo to benefit from the great opportunities for cooperation, proposed by the EU.

- **The Middle East**

The brief survey of the EU's role in the Middle East Peace Process outlined the facts that the Union was the:

- Promoter of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, and prosperity for the region;
- Main donor to the Palestinian and economic partner of Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt;
- Key player in the political and economic reform process in the region.

The Middle East Peace Process had a clear cut end-state mandate – the two state solution – which proved to be a condition *sine qua non* for the achievements of objectives exceeding the dimensions and lasting of them all.

Through the elaboration and conduct of its CFSP and ESDP, the EU managed to secure a unified approach of all its member states to the issues pertaining to the Euro-Mediterranean area. Through its neighborhood policy it intended to create a zone of prosperity and a ring of friends with whom the EU enjoyed close, peaceful and cooperative relations.³

3. What is the correlation between the involvement of your country in the CFSP and commitments with international organisations and external powers: NATO, OSCE, UN, US, Russia?

- **NATO**

The experience, which Bulgaria has acquired in the complicated discussions in the UN Security Council on Iraq, has clearly proved the big importance of the accord between

³ Velichkov, Kamen - "What possible role for the EU in the Middle East Peace Process (in the aftermath of 11 September 2001) in "MORE THAN A DWARF?: FORNET" essays on Europe's foreign policy, security and defence" – BECSA, Sofia, December 2004;

Europe and America. A proof of the positive experience of the cooperation between NATO, the EU, the OSCE and the Stability Pact is the summit in Ohrid on the issues of the security of Balkan borders. During its OSCE presidency, a key priority of the Republic of Bulgaria was improvement of the interaction between the OSCE, NATO and the EU.

- **OSCE**

The Bulgarian OSCE Chairmanship fully supports fostering a network of cooperation with NATO, the EU, the UN and other relevant organizations and institutions contributing to the promotion of comprehensive security in the OSCE area.

A very important highlight, emphasised repeatedly by the Bulgarian side, is the improvement of the interaction of the OSCE with the other international organisations, notably with the European Union, NATO and the Council of Europe. Concrete activities have already been undertaken in this sphere, notably the presentation of the Bulgarian priorities before the NATO Council, and talks were held for improving the interaction both with NATO and with the EU.

Bulgaria welcome the co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe both at headquarters and in the field. There is scope for enhanced interaction to ensure that the OSCE and the Council of Europe avoid unnecessary duplication and fully meet the expectations of participating and member States.

- **UN**

It is with satisfaction that Bulgaria notes the positive tendencies in the methods of work of the Security Council. As member of the Council in 2002-2003, Bulgaria worked untiringly to improve the transparency of its debates.

Bulgaria is pleased with the cooperation which sometimes develops into real partnership with regional organizations. Discussions at the Council with the participation of representatives of these organizations have proven particularly productive. In this respect, as a country of Southeastern Europe and former holder of the Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE, Bulgaria was and still remain a direct participant in a doubtless and successful interaction between the UN Security Council on the one hand, and the OSCE, the European Union and NATO on the other. Bulgaria attach great importance to the fruitful cooperation between these organizations in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and other problem zones in which they are cooperating.

- **US**

Washington is a strategic ally of vital importance especially in the security area, and prior to accession NATO membership was depending primarily on the American decision. Bulgaria was in a very delicate situation in the case of the *International Criminal Court*. The Europeans met with reluctance and disagreement the US objective of concluding as many bilateral agreements as possible, with the aim of excluding its soldiers from the jurisdiction of the Court. The fact that Bulgaria joined at the end of June 2003 the common position of the EU led to heated internal discussions and had as a negative consequence the blocking of the American military assistance for the country. The pressure that both Europe and America exerted on Bulgaria was not productive for its foreign policy. Another example is the attitude of Bulgaria before the *Iraq crisis*. It should be stressed that on this conflict the European Union did not reach a common vision, but the consequences for Bulgaria after it took a clear position were harmful. Strangely enough, neither the official positions of France and Germany in January 2003 on the military action in Iraq, nor those of the Group of Eight (supported later by the Vilnius Ten, including Bulgaria) were coordinated with the rest of the EU Member States, or with the Presidency of the Union or the High Representative of Foreign and Security Policy. In this respect there were even some speculations that the Union treaty was not respected. The lack of a common position did not prevent the French

president from blaming publicly Bulgaria for its position, which had some consequences in the EU accession negotiation process.

Both cases lead to the conclusion that finding compromises within the EU and between EU and the US are of vital importance for Bulgaria. There is an evident Bulgarian interest both in strengthening the European unity and keeping strong Transatlantic relations.

- **Russia**

The aspiration of Bulgaria towards EU membership and the accession of Bulgaria in NATO do not presuppose deterioration in the relations with the Russian Federation. Bulgaria recognizes the forthcoming membership in the EU as an opportunity for positive settlement of the controversial issues with Kremlin. Here again the relations between Russia and EU should be taken into account. Russia perceives the all-embracing cooperation with EU as a priority issue and lays forward the task of raising this cooperation to the status of strategic one. The construction of single policy in the sphere of security and defence marks a new direction in EU development. Russia and EU are natural partners in the search for joint answers to the new threats and challenges before European and global security. The overlap of interests as to the European Union at this stage impacts positively the relations between Bulgaria and Russia.

Bulgaria welcomes the development and intensification of the cooperation between the Russian federation and the European Union, which have achieved considerable results in the implementation of the operative and strategic goals of the partnership.

The countries regard the extension and intensification of the cooperation within NATO-Russia council as an important factor for fostering of the European and global security and stability.

4. Reform of EU External relations, CFSP/ESDP

4.1 What are the general objectives and goals defined by your country in the European Convention with regard to External relations, CFSP and ESDP? Are there official contributions that you could mention and briefly analyse?

The idea to create the post of **Union Minister of Foreign Affairs** was warmly welcomed in the Convention and was very thoroughly discussed in the relevant working groups as well as in the plenary. The “double-hat” formula seems to be a good compromise responding to the expectations for greater coherence in the EU external action. It would contribute for the Union to play a greater role in the world.

The Minister’s post, as conceived in the draft Constitution, has a very specific position, being at the same time Vice-President of the Commission bound by collegiality rules for external relations and Chair of the Foreign Affairs Council conducting the common foreign and security policy under the guidance of Member States. This situation leads me to give the following answers to the concrete questions of the Presidency:

- The Minister should have full voting rights in the Commission, including on non external affairs issues;
- Art 25.5 of the draft Constitution states that in case a censure motion is passed by the European Parliament on the Commission **all** Commissioners should resign. Our reading is that this relates also to the Foreign Minister who is a member of the College. This provision does not, however, prevent the European Council to appoint the same person as Foreign Minister in the next College under the procedure foreseen in Art. 27.1. At the same time the Foreign Minister should not be obliged to

resign at the request of the President of the Commission. We believe that the procedure for resignation, except from the case of European Parliament censure motion, is defined in Art. 27.1 and requires qualified majority in the European Council.

- As far as the question of the Commission representation in the Foreign Affairs Council is concerned, we consider that this is not a question to be dealt with in the Constitution. The Commission may be represented by its President or by a Commissioner designated by him/her, depending on the agenda points. The system should be kept flexible and pragmatic.

4.2 Decision making: Does your country opt for an extension of qualified majority voting in the field of CFSP? What is the position on forms of flexibility such as enhanced cooperation or constructive abstention?

Within the Council should continue the tendency toward expansion of the qualified majority voting.

In order to decrease the transparency of the EU policies, the co decision procedure should be put in to practice on the issues concerning border control, asylum giving, visa matters, immigration, stay and freedom of movement for citizens of third countries, judicial cooperation on civil cases and administrative cooperation.

4.3 Crisis management. What is the official position on updating the Petersberg tasks and making reference to tasks which involve military resources?

The EU ambition for developing of European identity in the sphere of security and defense corresponds with Bulgaria's interest in strengthening EU role in international aspect. Along with the other candidate states, Bulgaria could effectively take part in the discussion on the future of the European security and cooperate for the practical implementation of initiatives, connected with fulfillment of tasks on crisis preventing and management on the basis of cooperation with NATO. As a whole, the EU activity in the sphere of security and defense should rest on the transatlantic solidarity principle.

4.4 Defence. Which of the proposals raised by the European Convention is mostly endorsed by your country e.g. armament's issues, solidarity clause, flexibility?

Bulgaria welcome the texts proposed by the Italian Presidency both on structured cooperation and mutual defence. The suggested wording guarantees not only the complementarity of the European defence with NATO but also the current status of those Member States, which would like to remain neutral and non-aligned. Bulgaria also welcome the open character of the permanent structured cooperation, and the provision that joining such a cooperation will be based on objective criteria. It is important for efforts in these areas to be directed mainly towards the development of military capabilities.

5. Mapping of Activities in CFSP-related Research.

Major experts, universities and research institutions working in the CFSP field in Bulgaria:

- ***Bulgarian European community Studies Association (BECSA)***

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The Bulgarian European Community Studies Association (BECSA) is a non-governmental organization reuniting persons whose academic, research or other professional, public and creative activity is closely connected with the activities of the European Community (EC)/ European Union (EU) and with various aspects of European integration and cooperation. The founding members of BECSA are economists, lawyers, political scientists, historians and journalists.

- ***The Academic Network for The Future of Europe***

The network is coordinated by the College of Europe Alumni Association in Bulgaria and gathers leading units in the field of European integration in seven higher education establishments in this country:

American University in Bulgaria, Centre for European Programmes,
Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar", Department for International Relations and Political Science,
Veliko Tarnovo University "St. Cyril & St. Methodius", Faculty of Philosophy,
New Bulgarian University, Department of Political Science,
Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski", Faculty of Philology,
Rousse University "Angel Kanchev", Department of European Studies,
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Department of European Studies.

The activities of the Academic Network are directed at achieving the following objectives: to disseminate information on the "Future of Europe" debate going on in the EU member states and candidate countries; to generate interest for the wide spectrum of issues included in the thematic scope of the debate – the structure and the content of the future enlarged EU; to formulate informed and motivated opinions and positions based on in-depth analysis on the themes of the debate in a way that they correspond to Bulgaria's interests as a future EU member state, so that the horizon of thinking is moved beyond the barrier of accession negotiations.

Representatives of Bulgarian academic circles are among the active participants in the project – lecturers, doctoral candidates, students. This target groups has been chosen with regard to, on the one hand, its capacities of an enlightened audience with affiliation for conceptual and strategic analysis, and, on the other hand, its emphatic orientation to the future, which in the case of Bulgaria would mean participation in the "future of a united Europe".

- ***Economic Policy Institute***

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The Economic Policy Institute is a non-governmental non-profit organization, founded on 12 May 1997.

Its mission is to encourage and support the implementation of free market experience and know-how that will influence Bulgaria's effective participation in the global economy and its membership in Euro-Atlantic structures.

- ***Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS)***

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The Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS) is an independent, non-government think tank. IRIS was established on June 11, 1997 by leading Bulgarian public and political figures, NGO leaders and prominent Bulgarian scholars in international relations, Balkan studies, history, social and political science, anthropology and economics.

The Institute for Regional and International Studies initiates, develops and implements civic strategies for democratic politics on national, regional and international level. The Institute promotes the values of democracy, civil society, freedom and respect of law, assists the process of Bulgarian integration in NATO and the EU and provides public policy analyses on current domestic and international issues. IRIS represents a strategic combination of advocacy-oriented and education-oriented think tank.

- ***Institute of Public Administration and European Integration***

Mission: to enhance the qualification and skills of the Bulgarian civil servants, so that they can develop an effective and responsible public administration system in Bulgaria.

Strategic objectives

- to contribute to the professional development of public administration employees and prepare them for career promotion
- to play a major role in the process of adoption and implementation of the Acquis Communautaire and the transfer of good European practices to the administrative activities
- to support the process of building new administrative culture
- to prepare public administration employees to use the E-government model of service

- ***University of National and World Economy – Sofia***

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- **Group for European Analysis and Prognosis**

Coordinator: Assya Kavrakova

Implementation period: 2001–2005

The Group for European Analysis and Prognosis is an open analytical and discussion forum, established under the European Integration and Regional Stability Program of the Open Society Institute – Sofia to consolidate the efforts of representatives of analytical centers (i.e. think-tanks) and experts nationwide. The objective is to identify long-term issues within the context of Bulgaria's EU accession negotiations and NATO membership, and to propose possible solutions.

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- <http://www.sds.bg/> - Union of Democratic Forces (UDF);
- <http://www.dps.bg/files/predizbornaplatforma.doc> - ДПС;
- <http://www.europe.bg/> - Chapter 27– Common Foreign and Security Policy;
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