

CFSP WATCH 2003

National Report Slovenia

by Sabina Kajnc, Centre of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Methodological observations

The attitudes of the Slovenian Government in this report are extrapolated from the official documents of the government, notably the Ministry of foreign affairs, which is responsible for the current second pillar of the European Union. The attitudes expressed in speeches and interviews by the Slovenian Foreign Minister, Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, as well as those stemming from press releases of the Ministry of foreign affairs have also been included.¹ The views of the Parliament derive from the parliamentary Commission for European Affairs (hereafter referred to as the CEA). The views of the political parties that responded to our invitation to co-operate in preparing this Report – the oppositional Social Democratic Party and the United List of Social Democrats (a coalition party) are derived from their answers, which were obtained by means of a questionnaire.² The same holds true for considerations of the Young European Federalists of Slovenia (a non-governmental organisation).³ Some of the views, relevant for the issues discussed here, have been taken from the websites of individual political parties, such as the opposition party New Slovenia, and the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia, which is the senior partner in the current coalition. Relevant observations from the media are included, notably from the two main broadsheets: *Delo* and *Dnevnik*. Public opinion observations from “Eurobarometer” and “Candidate Countries Barometer” have also been considered in preparing the report.⁴

¹ The speeches and interviews of Dr Rupel are assembled on the Home Page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.gov.si/mzz/govori/default.html> and <http://www.gov.si/mzz/minister/mnenja.html>. Press releases of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can be found at http://www.sigov.si/mzz/novinarsko_sred/izjave_za_javn.shtml. Exact references are given in the report.

² A questionnaire, an adapted version of the CFSP Watch 2003 Questionnaire was sent to the cabinet of the Foreign Minister, to the Commission for European Affairs (CEO) in the Slovenian National Assembly and to a number of political parties as well as NGOs. The questionnaire was sent out on 1 July 2003, the answers were received between 25 July and 1 August 2003.

³ The views expressed by the Young European Federalists in their answers to the questionnaire largely coincide with the well-known federalist views on European integration. Hence, they have been complemented, whenever appropriate, with the views from non-governmental organisations. The latter were derived from the minutes of the debates in the Slovenian Forum on the European Convention.

⁴ In Slovenia a public opinion survey “Politbarometer” is conducted regularly by the Centre for Research of the Public Opinion and Mass Communications at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana. Interesting enough, no questions on the attitudes towards CFSP/ESDP have been asked. Questions concerning defence and military issues within the “Politbarometer” can be found, though with reference to NATO. This can be understood in line of a vivid debate on the membership of Slovenia in NATO.

1. Basic Views of CFSP/ESDP in your country. What are the priorities for your government in CFSP? What are the key issues for your country?

There are two points regarding the basic views of CFSP/ESDP in Slovenia on which a wide range of actors, including the Government, the CEA, and individual political parties as well as relevant non-governmental organisations, share consensus. These are: i) the need to strengthen the CFSP/ESDP in order for Europe to speak with one voice and to be operative; and ii) the view that the CFSP/ESDP offers a unique opportunity to Slovenia as a small state to be actively involved in world affairs. In this respect, the pattern, as it were, of Slovenian trust into the CFSP seemed consistent since it was first observed in 1999, although this has changed later on.⁵ As for the *governmental views and priorities*, the stabilisation and development of South-Eastern Europe (SEE) is on the top of the list. It is perceived that within the EU's policies towards the countries of the Western Balkans and the SEE Slovenia can contribute most of its experience, expertise and resources. Furthermore, Slovenia sees its role as a bridge for co-operation and gradual integration of the countries of SEE into the European mainstream.⁶

The second priority within the CFSP for the Slovenian Government is the active involvement in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. The accession to the Barcelona process is viewed by the Government as a means to strengthen Slovenian Mediterranean identity. It is to be expected for Slovenia to seek an active co-operation with the countries of Southern Europe as well as with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean.⁷

Among the respondents to the questionnaire, only the Social Democratic Party included the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and Slovenian involvement in it as one of the Slovenian priorities as far as the CFSP is concerned. However, a wide range of other priorities and key issues were listed in answers to the questionnaire, including: stability and security in Western Balkans; European defence strategy; transatlantic relations; co-operation with NATO and involvement in peace operations; development of New Neighbourhood Policy; and greater involvement in carrying out of the road map for the Middle East peace process.

The *public*, as well as *academia* have been included into the debates concerning the CFSP. The government initiated the establishment of a Forum on the Future of Europe, which was set up from representatives of the civil society, including those from the University.⁸ CFSP was one of the topics debated in the Forum. Furthermore, the Social Democratic Party has launched an idea of Slovenian Convention on the Future of Europe, whose task would be to discuss the future of Slovenia as the EU member. The public is expected to be included on a wide basis. According to opinion polls, 74 percent of the Slovenian public believe such a Convention would be needed.⁹ If the Convention is indeed set into motion, the CFSP will be one of the topics of the agenda. The academia regularly attends government meetings concerning the CFSP and provides its views on relevant subjects.

⁵ See below. On the 1999 data, see Zlatko Šabič: "The Reform of Voting Arrangement for the CFSP in the Light of EU Enlargement: Views of Candidate States." Paper prepared for the TEPSA/Clingendael Conference The Hague, 9-12 December 1999, 12-14.

⁶ Foreign Minister Rupel in a speech delivered at the University of Nitra, Slovakia, 14 May 2003, <http://www.gov.si/mzz/govori/03051401.html>.

⁷ Foreign Minister Rupel in a speech delivered at the Summit of Francophone in Bayruth, 18 October 2002, <http://www.gov.si/mzz/govori/02101801.html>.

⁸ The web page of the Forum: <http://evropa.gov.si/aktualno/teme/2002-02-27/forum/>.

⁹ "Konvencija naj vodi nepolitični svet modrih", Delo, 1 August 2003.

Public opinion trends regarding the support for the CFSP as displayed in the “Candidate Countries Barometer”¹⁰ show a strong support for the CFSP and for a post of the EU foreign Minister (only in Cyprus is a percentage in favour of the CFSP and of a EU Foreign Minister higher than in Slovenia). Similarly, the support for a joint EU decision-making is among the highest, following only Cyprus and Slovakia. Comparing the data of 2003 with those of 2002, a slight fall (of 3%) in the support for the joint decision-making can be observed. Very similar are the results on the support for a common defence policy, though it is observed here that the percentage of those in Slovenia who are explicitly against it is significantly higher than elsewhere (9%). Support for the creation of the European army as well as for the EU (rather than national government or the NATO) to be entrusted with the matters of European defence is also above average of the EU-25 and above the average of the candidate states.

2. National Perceptions and Positions with regard to CFSP/ESDP Issues

On perception of *success/failure* of the CFSP/ESDP, the views of respondents focused on (or were referring to as an example) the split among the European states over the Iraqi crisis. The reactions are strikingly similar. They call for a strengthened CFSP and welcome the arrangements for the CFSP/ESDP as proposed by the European Convention. The changes are viewed as necessary for the EU to consolidate its role as an important global player in the international security and political arena and a trustworthy Transatlantic partner as well as a guarantor of stability and development in the European continent and the international community at large.¹¹

The Social Democratic Party concentrated on the EU’s response following the events of the September 11. According to their opinion, the EU’s response concentrated more on doing away with the causes of international terrorism and not with its consequences, which brought about a rift between Europe and the United States on how to deal with international terrorism. On the other hand, the Social Democratic Party expects, and supports, the evolution of the “European Security strategy” with a view to resulting in an easier co-operation with the American administration and an enhanced security in the EU and its neighbourhood.

With regard to the *relationship between NATO and ESDP* the Government stresses that these two security frameworks are complementary in nature and that Slovenia does not consider the strengthening of the ESDP as an alternative to NATO. NATO remains, in the eyes of Foreign Minister Rupel, the prime guarantor of peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.¹² It is acknowledged, however, that the CFSP could be more effective if the EU managed to upgrade its defence component,¹³ and be more proactive internationally. The United List of Social Democrats also stressed the need of strengthening the EU component within NATO.

¹⁰ “Candidate Countries Barometer 2003.2”, Conducted by the European Commission, Directorate for Media and Communication, fieldwork May 2003, result-publication July 2003, available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2003/CCEB2003.2_Full_Report_Final.pdf, p.126ff.

¹¹ Foreign Minister Rupel in a contribution to the European Convention, 16 May 2003, <http://european-convention.eu.int/docs/speeches/9524.pdf>.

¹² Foreign Minister Rupel in a speech delivered in Helsinki, 25 September 2002, <http://www.gov.si/mzz/govori/02092501.html>.

¹³ See e.g. Foreign Minister Rupel's contribution to the European Convention, 16 May 2003, <http://european-convention.eu.int/docs/speeches/9524.pdf>.

In this respect, it is worth stressing that the Slovenian government launched an initiative to send a EU-formed police mission in Iraq.¹⁴

When asked about the EU's role in *crisis management*, the United List of Social Democrats expressed view that the EU was rather inefficient in managing or preventing conflicts so far, which opened doors for American intervention. The Social Democratic Party acknowledged the EU's capability in providing humanitarian and other types of assistance. However, it sees the EU as incapable of managing conflicts of larger scale (both Kosovo and the Middle East have been mentioned in this regard). This is not only due to its institutional limits and due to politically diverging views in the member states, but also because the EU is often perceived as a biased actor by the parties involved into a conflict. As opposed to these rather pessimistic views, the Government sees the operation Concordia as a proof for the EU's readiness to carry out its objectives in military aspects of crisis management.¹⁵

All the respondents to the questionnaire see the impact of enlargement on the CFSP positive. Divisions such as the one on the Old and New Europe are seen as exaggerated. However, as shown in the answers from the Social Democratic Party, Europe and the US must work closer together in the solution of the many international problems, should the ominous references to eternal divisions within Europe become obsolete. In general, however, enlargement is regarded as adding new qualities and new views and resources to the CFSP, which should overcome the feared immobilisation of the policy due to the almost doubling of the nation states safeguarding their national interest in the realm of foreign policy. The constructive debate within the European Convention, where representatives from current as well as future member states took part on equal footing is regarded as an example of how the 25 countries will be able to continue integrating their foreign policies in a direction that allows for efficient operation in the new security and political situation of the 21st century. The proposed articles on the future arrangement of the Union's external presentation and foreign and security policy are viewed as very positive steps towards ensuring that enlargement will make the EU stronger and more capable internationally.

3. European Convention: Reform of EU External relations, CFSP/ESDP

On the issue of *reform in general*, the contribution to the Convention by Foreign Minister Rupel on the 10 July 2003¹⁶ shows that positions which Slovenia had endorsed largely found their way into the final document, adopted by the Convention, the Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (henceforth: Draft Constitution).

On the issue of *external representation of the Union*, Slovenia supports the *merging of the present functions of the Commissioner for External Relations and the High Representative for CFSP*. It considers that such combination of functions in one post, with the EU foreign minister being one of the vice-presidents of the Commission at the same time, may contribute to concerted action, and the transparency and

¹⁴ Interview of the Prime Minister Anton Rop with the weekly Mladina. Accessed on the pages of the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia, <http://www.lds.si/novice/default.asp?newsID=1033&nodeID=101&arhiv=>.

¹⁵ Foreign minister Rupel in a speech delivered in the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, Brussels, 28 April 2003, <http://www.gov.si/mzz/govori/03042801.html>.

¹⁶ <http://european-convention.eu.int/docs/speeches/9568.pdf>.

effectiveness of the EU in external relations. Although, according to the Draft Constitution, the foreign minister will be appointed by the European Council, the fact that he remains accountable to the European Parliament together with the College of Commissioners solves the accountability problem and successfully encounters critiques over the democratic deficit in the Union's conduct of its foreign policy. These views are supported also by Mr Alojz Peterle, a member of the Slovenian Parliament and Slovenian parliamentary representative in the Convention, who took part in the Convention's working group on External Action and who served as Member of the Presidium of the Convention.

Regarding the post of a President of the European Council, Slovenia strongly advocated the maintenance of the current system of Presidency based on a rotation. The solutions found in the Draft Treaty on the issue of the President of the European Council (Article 21) and on the presiding system in the Council of Ministers (Article 23) are considered as a notable progress towards meeting the interests of the smaller states. Foreign Minister Rupel, however, called for a further clarification of a principle of equal rotation of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.¹⁷

Public opinion results, as displayed in the Eurobarometer¹⁸ on the issues of external representation of the Union, surprisingly show that among the respondents, 54% are in favour of the EU Foreign Minister (and 32% against) and 62% are in favour of the EU President, thus favouring the post, which Slovenian Government clearly does not advocate.¹⁹

The United List of Social Democrats, though without a direct representative in the Convention, pointed out in its answer to the questionnaire that in the Course of the Convention they worked closely within the framework of the social-democratic party representatives in the Convention, advocating for a post of the foreign minister responsible for CFSP and institutionally linked to both, the Council and the Commission. They regard their views as being endorsed in the Draft Constitution.

Furthermore, Slovenia fully identifies itself with the wording of the Article 15 of the Draft Constitution. Slovenia regards effective coordination between diplomatic and consular representations of member states (as well as the EU delegations) in third countries and with international organisations as essential for productive EU action in international affairs. Further, in the future, as expressed by the Foreign Minister, the possibility should be considered for the EU delegations in certain third countries to assume the function of representing those members that may so desire.²⁰

It is worth noting that the CEA advocates *greater say of the national parliaments and of the European Parliament* in the field of the CFSP/ESDP. Prompt and regular informing of the parliaments on the developments in the CFSP is viewed as vital. The Slovenian Government shares this view. Foreign Minister Rupel, in his statement in Genval on 9 September 2001,²¹ called for the EU institutions to provide national parliaments with all the documents required for efficient control over

¹⁷ Press release of Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the participation of Foreign Minister Rupel at the meeting of governmental representatives and with the vice-president of the Convention, Mr Giuliano Amato, in Brussels, 6 June 2003, http://www.sigov.si/mzz/novinarsko_sred/szj/03060601.html.

¹⁸ "Eurobarometer 59", Conducted by the European Commission, Directorate for Media and Communication, fieldwork May 2003, result-publication July 2003, available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb59/eb59_en.htm.

¹⁹ "Slovenecm Evropska ustava spanska vas", Dnevnik, 25 July, 2003, <http://www.dnevnik.si/clanekb.asp?id=56469&poskus=prvic>.

²⁰ Foreign Minister Rupel in a contribution to the European Convention, 10 July 2003, <http://european-convention.eu.int/docs/speeches/9568.pdf>.

²¹ http://www.europa.eu.int/futurum/documents/other/oth090901_en.pdf.

European affairs, including CFSP.²² The CEA also calls for an annual debate on the foreign policy issues of the Union in the national parliaments and in the European Parliament, which would enhance in their view the democratic legitimacy of the Union in its conduct of the foreign policy.

On the *qualified majority voting* system in CFSP/ESDP; the unanimity should be retained in questions of use of military force, otherwise an increase of QMV would be welcomed in Slovenia. When a decision on the use of the military force is pending, any member state, which abstains or is against the use of military force, has a right to constructive obstruction. However, it should inform the EU foreign minister about its standpoint as soon as possible.²³

The Government strongly feels that all member states should take part in formulating the ESDP to avoid a policy of exclusion and therefore rejects any proposals that call for enhanced co-operation in this field of policy. The Government, in its press release on the "Proposal of the Four",²⁴ welcomed the call for strengthening of the *European defence* and expressed its support for it. However, it clearly stated that its support for a strengthened European defence is conditioned by a defence policy within the entire EU.²⁵ The Government also believes that in building the ESDP the unnecessary duplication of EU and NATO defence structures or duplication within national structures should be avoided, as it would represent an excessive burden for smaller countries such as Slovenia. The Social Democratic Party shares this view and advocates stronger co-operation with NATO in carrying out the *Petersberg tasks*²⁶ and consequently rejects building of a new military headquarters, an alternative to the SHAPE structure.²⁷ The current "Berlin+ package"²⁸ is considered as adequate and sufficient for carrying out the EU-lead military operations. The inability of the four countries (the "Proposal of the Four") to agree upon the financial burden sharing arrangements and on the raise in military budgets confirms these views.

4. Mapping of Activities in CFSP-related Research

Overall conclusion on the attitudes towards the CFSP/ESDP, the priorities within the CFSP/ESDP and the institutional as well as decision-making issues within the two policies in Slovenia points into a direction of Slovenia being a relatively strong

²² http://www.europa.eu.int/futurum/documents/other/oth090901_en.pdf.

²³ These views derive from the CEA working paper on *Attitudes of the National Assembly on the institutional arrangement and common foreign, security and defence policy of the European Union*.

²⁴ A proposal presented after the meeting of The Heads of State and Government of Germany, France, Luxemburg and Belgium on European Defence, Brussels, 29 April 2003.

²⁵ http://www.sigov.si/mzz/eng/news_room/news/03050102.html.

²⁶ Petersberg tasks include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. The extension of these tasks is discussed along the lines of support for third States against terrorism and post-conflict stabilisation operations.

²⁷ SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) is the Headquarters of Allied Command Europe (ACE), stationed in Casteau, Mons, Belgium, one of NATO's two main military command (the other is Allied Command Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia). The primary role of the forces of ACE is to guarantee peace, security and territorial integrity of NATO member nations in Europe.

²⁸ "The Berlin+ package", emanated from the 2002 NATO Prague Summit facilitated mutual support between NATO and the EU, with the view of operations in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as for possible future operations. It primarily implies that the EU has assured access to NATO's military planning capabilities, has presumption of availability of NATO's other common assets and capabilities and NATO's command structure is available to support or lead EU operations.

supporter of the CFSP, with the Government as well as other actors and public opinion viewing participation in it as beneficial for Slovenia. Such comprehension is understandable taking into a consideration that Slovenia is a small country and a new state, still trying to establish its international identity. The participation in the CFSP will enable Slovenia to co-shape European actions and responses to world affairs and it will give Slovenia a stronger position in bilateral issues. Synchronising foreign policy decisions with those of the EU (e.g. in the case of the U.S. pressures for a bilateral agreement requiring not to surrender American nationals to the International Criminal Court) has become a safeguard of the Slovenian foreign policy. However, the ability to co-decide upon the EU attitudes and not only to follow them, is a clear motivation behind the support for the CFSP.

On the ESDP side, following the referendum on membership in NATO, the Government regards the two institutions as complementary, but it seemingly attaches more importance in defence matters to NATO. Public opinion, on the contrary, shows that Slovenes would prefer matters of defence to be discussed and decided upon within the European context. Still, the cost/benefit evaluation of security matters is discussed primarily within the framework of NATO and not the ESDP. General attitudes against the raise in military spending budget and against the idea of sending Slovenian soldiers to remote crisis areas are widely present (especially in a debate preceding the referendum on Slovenian accession to NATO).

4: Mapping of Activities in CFSP-related Research

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

Within the University of Ljubljana research related to CFSP is conducted at the Centre of International Relations at the Faculty of Social Sciences:
(http://rcul.uni-lj.si/~fd_cmo/contents.htm).

The website contains links to research areas and research staff. Major experts working in the field are dr. Bojko Bučar and dr. Zlatko Šabič.

Defence Research Centre at the same faculty also conducts research on security and defence in Europe:

([http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/angleščina/research.htm#Defence%20Research%20Centre%20\(DRC\)](http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/angleščina/research.htm#Defence%20Research%20Centre%20(DRC)))

Major experts in the field are dr. Anton Bebler, dr. Anton Grizold and dr. Milan Jazbec.

Institutes independent of the University, which to some extent embrace topics related to CFSP and ESDP, are:

- the Peace Institute (<http://www.mirovni-institut.si/eindex.htm>) and
- the Institute for European Studies (<http://www.evropski-institut.si/institut.htm>).

Research on CFSP and ESDP at these two institutions is mainly conducted within the broader framework of research on European integration.