

CFSP Watch 2004 Greece – by Nikos Frangakis, A.D.Papayannidis, Eleni Demiri and Evangelos Vlioras

1. Basic views of CFSP/EDDP

One might term it a constant factor of Greek political life, that CFSP/ESDP has a considerable importance. In a country that for almost two decades has a pro-EU public opinion and where the main political parties (with the exception of rigidly anti-EU Communist Party/KKE) are increasingly pro-European, CFSP mechanisms have come to be expected to solve or at least help in solving major problems of foreign policy. Thus, Greece is the only country where the debate about CFSP ranges to a demand for common borders. Such has been the official Greek negotiating position all the way from Maastricht to the adoption of the European Constitution.

Greece's case is typical of a middleweight country in a EU -25 with modest means that tries to walk the straight and narrow, promoting the Community method and declaring it considers the EU a security actor and not a debating society. CFSP/ESDP carries within it the potential of being an important policy instrument for the EU, on its own right and not just an icing on the cake of the EMU, provided that Europeans take the necessary measures to that effect.

Greece has called for more frequent common positions and deeper cooperation in the field of CFSP/ESDP and for the extension of the community method in these areas. Greece's vision for the future focuses heavily on the development of a CFSP/ESDP, especially through the inclusion of a mutual assistance clause in the Treaty of the Union.¹

¹ Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece's Strategic Objectives in the Convention on the Future of Europe, online article found in http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_future/convention.html

Further to the “usual” CFSP issues which arise from challenges on the global scene, Greece had in 2004 two sets of issues prioritized: one was more-or-less expected, the other came rather unexpectedly to the fore.

➤ The first issue has to do with Greek-Turkish relations, especially under the angle of Turkey’s EU accession perspectives. Since Ankara was expecting from the December 2004 Summit the final (?) EU position concerning the start of its accession negotiations, the state of Greek-Turkish relations is deemed crucial at this stage. In fact, there have been renewed tensions at the Aegean – both in respect of disputed islets/ “grey zones” at sea and of airspace incursions. As a backdrop to this tension, one has to mention the unresolved Cyprus issue at the post-Annan Plan era. The Helsinki (1999 Summit) agreement, has tacitly lapsed whereby if no solution was found in Greek-Turkish disputes through bilateral negotiations, then contentious issues would be submitted to the ICJ. So Greece - the Government and Opposition, the elites, public opinion, the media- is uneasily approaching the decisive moment of accession negotiations, with uncertainty as to the stance that “Europe” will adopt in the eventuality of continuing and intensifying Turkish claims over the Aegean. It would be a very disturbing accident for CFSP, to have to deal at this stage with a crisis between an EU member and a candidate country (or a country engaged in accession negotiations).

➤ The second issue has to do with the Western Balkans. The recognition by the US, just after the presidential (re-)election of G.W. Bush, of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under its (constitutionally adopted) name of “Republic of Macedonia”, has reawakened this contentious issue. And while Greece was as of lately energetically pushing for the inclusion of Western Balkan countries to an ultimate round of enlargement for the EU, now there is a shift towards a foreign-relations approach at least towards the FYROM. Greece will be asking of its EU partners to continue siding with it in the dispute over the symbolically burdened issue of the name of “Macedonia”, with all that it entails in Balkan restlessness.

Were renewed tensions to surface, either in the FYROM or in Kosovo, especially insofar the Albanian minority/local majority issue is concerned, then CFSP would be sucked back into the Balkan arena, where it was hoped that the perspective of enlargement would be now the name of the game.

2. National perceptions

a) A Perceived Success/ Failure of CFSP/ESDP

Greece continues to view the CFSP/ESDP construction as a very promising part of European integration, albeit one that grows with far less enthusiasm on the part of its main actors than was hoped for.

Europe as a whole, its CFSP dimension in particular, is considered to have dithered and to have sat on the fence in the Iraq issue. At the same time, at least Greek public opinion and the media, but also the political elites in a role of following-rather-than-leading-the-pack, have been usually opposed to any NATO role especially in Iraq.

The debacle over Iraq and the near failure to produce a common position and address issues of international significance, underlines the fact that current and perspective members of the Union view the CFSP framework as ineffectual and slow and opt for a discussion of major security issues on Euro-Atlantic institutions or on an intergovernmental level, rather than European ones. The agreement reached between Turkey, the United States and Great Britain on the issue of use of NATO assets in ESDP operations on which no EU institution was consulted² should be viewed as the background of the recent Turkish blocking of the participation of Cyprus to European defense structures, at the very same moment that Ankara was trying to open accession negotiations with the EU.

² Agence Europe, Document on use of NATO capacity under CFDP is "unacceptable", 30/01/2003

The prevailing view in Greece seems to point towards taking steps to remedy the situation rather than abandoning the CFSP framework altogether. The new security agenda in the post 9/11 environment³ demands effectiveness, swiftness and coherence in foreign policy. The missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina/ Operation Althea, FYROM/ Operation Proxima and the Democratic Republic of Congo/ Operation Artemis although undoubtedly steps in the right direction, are taken to indicate that the CFSP/ESDP process is going through its childhood illness phase, faced with budgetary and other concerns.

b) Position towards NATO

It should be remembered that Greece welcomed the reaching of agreement on the Berlin-plus agenda, with an assumption of initial operational capability by the military leg of the ESDP⁴ at the end of the road. It is clear, however, that there will be times when the UN or NATO or OSCE will be unwilling or unable to intervene in crises unfolding in Europe's periphery. In the short to medium term, Greece thus views the development of ESDP as an indispensable policy instrument, even more so in the light of experiences acquired in Iraq where the over emphasis in prosecuting and winning the war has cost the peace.

The hard lessons taught by the Iraqi crisis, which found Greece at the helm of the Presidency, bringing much frustration to the Greek diplomatic apparatus may have helped to sway a deeply rooted mistrust towards NATO. Still, the preference for a European Defense Option has not been enough to ensure Greek participation in the BE/F/DE/L initiative last year, notwithstanding initial positive noises to that effect.

Greece has taken a cautious stance towards NATO out-of-area operations keeping its presence in Afghanistan at a bare minimum/ one Engineering and

³ See Javier Solana, A Secure Europe in a Better World, Report to the European Council, Thessaloniki 20/06-2003.

⁴ Joint Press Conference of G. Papantoniou and J. Solana following the informal Meeting of the EU Ministers of Defence, Athens 15/03/2003

Logistics Company/ turning down NATO requests for the dispatch of more sophisticated hardware such as Apache attack and Chinook transport helicopters.

As far as Iraq is concerned, Greece has offered to train members of the new Iraqi National Guard, although not on Iraqi soil, and is contributing funds to the reconstruction efforts in Iraq.⁵

c) EU crisis management

Greece has contributed to the military leg of ESDP a force of 4700 men, 46 aircraft and 13 warships. Greece participates in the European on-call police force with 180 police officers, 20 of which are assigned to the rapid deployment police force⁶. Greece is also taking part in the EU police mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina, FYROM and the UN police mission in Kosovo with 33 police officers in total⁷. The EU's preventive diplomacy is considered to have a wide scope for extending its action on the basis of international legitimacy and UN Resolutions. The EU as the biggest donor of aid can further coordinate all its external actions to serve the aims of preserving and extending democratic practices, good governance and respect for Human Rights. Furthermore, the EU's greatest leverage in the field of conflict prevention is that the EU is perceived by its periphery and third countries as an area of security, rule of law, accountable democratic public institutions and protection for minorities⁸. Greece feels that EU conflict prevention efforts must be focused in specific volatile regions such as the Balkans and the Euro-Med area⁹.

⁵ Briefing of diplomatic journalists by Foreign Ministry spokesman Mr. George Koumoutsakos, 18/11/2004, found in http://www.mfa.gr/arxeion-web/hweb.exe?-osession:alter_nls_language&-V=mfa_press_uk&-A=3158,briefing_view.html

⁶ Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The European Security and Defense Policy, online article found in http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/keppa.epaa/epaa.html

⁷ Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2004), Greece's Participation in Peace keeping missions in the Balkans, online article found in http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/balkans/gr_missions.html

⁸ Bruno Coppieters and others, European institutional models as instruments of conflict resolution in the divided states of the European periphery, CEPS working document no.195, July 2003, p. 11.

⁹ Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Priorities of the Greek Presidency, online article found in http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/the_presidency.html

Greece's driving force and impetus for promoting EU CCM is in no way different from that of other EU member-states. Greece views its participation in EU civilian crisis management and conflict prevention through the prism of its EU membership and as beneficial to the country's national interests. It is in fact in Greece's direct national interest to do its utmost in order to enhance the security of its periphery.

Greece's approach to crisis management can be said as being one of complementarity between the military and civilian track of EU CCM without atrophying one facet in order to divert all resources to the other. It is based on the assumption that in the post Cold War World- dubbed as the new world disorder- crises can no longer be tagged, branded, categorized and easily referenced as either strictly military or civilian in nature, but rather contain elements of both. The crises of our present and of tomorrow require a multi-faceted coordinated response with both military and non-military means. The fact of the matter is that these two dimensions are so blurred into each other that drawing a clear distinction is a virtual impossibility¹⁰.

d) Impact of enlargement on CFSP/ESDP

Greece considers enlargement as a leap towards European integration and thinks that under no circumstances should it be allowed to create new dividing lines. The enlargement process can be seen as the most powerful EU External Action Exercise so far conducted, having a potential to extend the EU's area of peace, security, stability and prosperity to Central and Eastern Europe and quite possibly to the Eastern Mediterranean.

Greece's aim is that enlargement serves as a point of departure for building stronger relations in the wider European space from Russia to the

¹⁰ Eleni Demiri and Evangelos Vlioras, The Greek Contribution to CFSP and Civilian Crisis Management, paper presented at the BECSA/FORNET conference on the "Regional Dimensions of the CFSP/ESDP" found in <http://eeep.pspa.uoa.gr/upl/Fornetvol8.pdf>

Mediterranean, based on common values and economic interests. Alongside the arduous process of negotiating and implementing conformity with the *acquis*, there is a wider political condition relating to respect of democratic values, minority protection and resolution of outstanding border disputes.

It is the prevailing view in Greece's academia that the parallel processes of EU and NATO enlargement, although conducive to increasing stability security and democracy, particularly in southeastern Europe¹¹, increase difficulties in decision-making and policy coordination. In this light, enlargement was not a matter of choice but one of necessity.

On the other hand, enlargement is heightening tensions in transatlantic relations, since it is becoming apparent that the EU and the United States have divergent world views and do not see eye to eye on issues of international importance such as Iran or the Middle East Peace Process.

The “old Europe/new Europe” dichotomy has been experienced in Greece mainly as a case of American interests – and – priorities gaining the upper hand in European affairs. “New” countries have (genuine or perceived) security concerns that need to be addressed. Many countries have joined (Finland, Greece) or are joining the EU for security-related as well as economic reasons¹². The EU should provide policy alternatives for new member-states and actually come up with common positions, which the new and aspiring member-states can adopt, before pointing an accusing finger to them for aligning with the US.

e) European Security Strategy

More than military capabilities, what Europe lacks today, is a clear security strategy, reflecting a collective approach to the European security interests. To

¹¹ Andreas Kintis, CFSP/ESDP: The atrophy of the non-military aspect of crisis management, ELIAMEP Yearbook 2002 (in Greek).

¹² Stelios Stavridis, "Militarising" the EU: The Concept of Civilian Power Europe Revisited, The International Spectator, vol. XXXVI no.4, December 2001.

this end, the *Security Strategy of the Union*, presented by High Representative Javier Solana, at the Rome European Council meeting, last December, establishes a base for further consideration by the Member States, in order to reach a final conclusion, on when, where and with what means the EU should intervene in the international field. Strategic targets should be specified, responding to the new asymmetrical threats, such as the international terrorism and the weapons of mass destruction, which, in many cases, are directly connected with organized crime¹³.

Within the scope of the European Security Strategy it is the position of the Greek Government that it is of the utmost importance for the EU to draw up modalities and procedures for the specificities of applying enhanced cooperation among member states in the Defense field. Greece believes that the eventual creation of a Defense euro zone would not have the effect of undermining transatlantic ties or contravening existing competencies¹⁴. On the contrary, such a development coupled with the inclusion of a genuine solidarity clause would only strengthen US/ European ties by increasing European burden sharing.

3. Intergovernmental Conference Results 2003/4 on the Constitutional Treaty

Greece has submitted proposals in the context of the European Convention for the reform of the decision making process in the Council and the inclusion of a solidarity clause in the Treaty¹⁵. In the context of the convention proceedings, Greece has declared its intention to support recommendations that will further

¹³ See the position of Greek Defense Minister Spilios Spiliotopoulos, Current Greek and European Defence and Security Topics, online article found in http://www.dgap.org/bfz/veranstaltung/Rede_Spiliotopoulos_20031119.pdf

¹⁴ Government Policy Speech in Parliament on Foreign Policy Issues by the Greek Prime Minister, Konstantinos Karamanlis, http://www.primeminister.gr/gr/lang/en/pdf/platform_speech_1.pdf

¹⁵ At the stage of the Initial Draft Treaty, the positions of the P. Avgerinos (representative of the Greek Parliament to the Convention) and of P. C. Ioakimidis (alternate representative of the Greek Government) were submitted as CONV 443-2/12/2002. Earlier on, a paper from P. C. Ioakimidis summarized Greek Government Positions on CFSP/ESDP (CONV 319-7/11/2002).

the process of European integration. Greek representatives have endorsed in no uncertain terms the over-arching objective of strengthening and consolidating the CFSP/ESDP. Greece, appointed the foreign minister, at the time, G. Papandreou as representative to the Convention (replacing G. Katiforis), just after the beginning of the Greek Presidency in order to attain higher visibility for Greece's participation in the Convention. Papandreou put forward proposals for the direct election of the President of the Union as well as the fusion of the functions of the High Representative and the Commissioner for External Relations. Papandreou also promoted the reinforcement of the European and national Parliaments' control the EU'S external Action and the use of QMV in the area of CFSP¹⁶.

Greece was in favor of the other working group recommendations such as the creation of a European Diplomatic Service¹⁷, a European Diplomatic Academy and common representation in third countries and international organizations¹⁸. The Greek Government has also put on the table the idea of the creation of a European Coast Guard¹⁹ as well as the creation of a unified framework for the EUROFOR, EUROMARFOR, and EUROCORPS initiatives within the ERDF framework²⁰. The Union's policy on immigration, asylum and the management of external borders is one of the most important priorities of the Greek government and in this spirit It has hailed the proposal floated by the Commission for the creation of a European Border Management Agency, as border management is an all-inclusive enterprise requiring close cooperation and task allocation among relevant agencies²¹.

¹⁶ See EU Convention Watch - Greece, Istituto Affari Internazionali/TEPSA. p. 3.

¹⁷ With some reservations pertaining to the composition of the Diplomatic Service, see EKEM Newsletter for the European Union and the Future of Europe No. 24.

¹⁸ Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The European Convention and the Future of Europe, online article found in http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_future/convfuture.html

¹⁹ Costas Karamanlis, The Future and the Borders of the European Union (in Greek), 23/5/2003.

²⁰ Yannis Valinakis, The European Security and Defence Policy (in Greek) 13/3/2003.

²¹ Spilios Spiliotopoulos, Current Greek and European Defence and Security Topics, online article found in http://www.dgap.org/bfz/veranstaltung/Rede_Spiliotopoulos_20031119.pdf

Furthermore, Greece is a strong proponent of European Space Cooperation as another facet of ESDP²². The Greek Presidency of the Council tasked EUMC/EUMS with the formulation of a green paper outlining EU priorities and practical measures for the creation of a EU Space Policy with ESDP implications²³.

a) External representation

With regards to the institutional arrangements, Greece has declared itself, after considerable soul-searching, in favor of double hating. This is the case for the external representation of the Union, where Greece argued that the posts of the High Representative for CFSP and Commissioner for External Relations should be merged²⁴.

Overall, the Greek Government was an advocate for the adoption of the Constitutional Draft Treaty put on the table by the Convention without significant alterations²⁵. Greece has been, from day one, a strong proponent of closer integration and would look favorably at a Constitution with greater Political Ambition that would endow the EU with policy instruments essential for bolder steps in the federal direction. However, since discretion is the better part of valor, Greece realizes that in the current political climate in Europe is not ripe for such an undertaking as the prevailing wind blows in the anti federal direction.

With regards to the presidency of the Council, it is the position of the Greek Government that with the notable exception of the Foreign Affairs Council, which should have a fixed Presidency, the Presidency of the Council should follow the rotation system on an equal basis among member states. Furthermore, Greece

²² Giannos Papantoniou, European Security and Defence Policy: The Greek Presidency address delivered at the conference on The Security and Defence dimensions of Space: Challenges for the EU, Athens, 08/05/2003

²³ Alexander Kolovos ESDP and Space: The Hellenic Presidency's initiatives in the Second Pillar, National Center for Space Applications (Athens, 8-9 May 2003), http://europa.eu.int/comm/space/doc_pdf/kolovos.pdf

²⁴ See EU Convention Watch - Greece, Istituto Affari Internazionali/TEPSA. p.2.

²⁵ EKEM Newsletter on the Future of Europe and the European Union (2003), No. 22, p. 2.

advocates the introduction of team presidencies made up of 3 member states and for one-year terms. The composition of the teams and the allocation of the different Council formations should be fixed in advance based on the principle of geographical and political equality among member states²⁶.

The previous socialist government had initiated a major policy shift from the traditional Greek tendency of alignment with pro-integrationist elements in previous IGCs, abandoning the front of smaller member states on the primordial question of the permanent/long term presidency and siding with the block of larger member states²⁷. This stance was reversed with the ascent to power of the New Democracy Party in 2004.

b) Decision-making

Greece is in favor of extending qualified majority voting in all areas, including CFSP with the exception of the military aspects of CFSP/ESDP²⁸. Still, this position, which finds constant public support (over 75% in successive Euro barometers), should always be seen in conjunction with an equally steady support for keeping the veto safety valve in place.

Greece put forward the proposal that five years after the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty, decisions where the implementation of CFSP is concerned, will be taken by QMV. If, however, a member-state opposes the adoption of a decision by QMV, then the matter will be introduced in the Agenda of the next European Council where Unanimity would apply²⁹. Greece gave its support to the Italian Presidency compromise deal proposing that in the field of CFSP, acting on the proposal of the Foreign Minister, decisions could be adopted by QMV³⁰.

²⁶ EKEM Newsletter on the Future of Europe and the European Union (2003), No. 24, pp. 6-7.

²⁷ See EU Convention Watch - Greece, Istituto Affari Internazionali/TEPSA. p. 2.

²⁸ Ruby Gropas, Greece and the Convention on the Future of Europe, ELIAMEP Opinions, April 2003.

²⁹ EKEM Newsletter on the Future of Europe and the European Union (2003), No. 24, p. 6.

³⁰ ELIAMEP, IGC Update, No. 3 p. 4.

c) Crisis management

In the field of crisis management, Greece has supported for many years, the updating of Petersberg Tasks to include tasks that require military resources³¹. The existing description of Petersberg Tasks in the Treaty covers a great range of missions, both quality and quantity wise. However the post 9/11 environment has shifted radically European threat perceptions and defense requirements. The Petersberg Tasks description should be amended to include new requirements such as conflict prevention, disarmament, dispatching of military advisors abroad to provide training as well as post-conflict stabilization and assisting government authorities in combating terrorism.

On the question of focus, Greece favors a more regional approach for the EU's crisis management focusing on the Union's periphery namely the Balkans, Southern Caucasus and the Mediterranean Basin. In 2003, the Greek government organized in the framework of the Greek presidency of the Council, a seminar on EU civilian crisis management and the Mediterranean with very encouraging results.

Greece attributes great strategic interest in Southern Caucasus as the region forms a natural corridor between Europe and Asia and shares in the EU's interest in the region, aiming to secure peace and stability in the region through the resolution of existing conflicts³².

d) Defense

Successive Greek Defense Ministers promoted the institutionalization of Council of Defense Ministers and of joint armaments planning and procurement. The insertion in the Treaties of an automatic solidarity clause in case of aggression,

³¹ Agence Europe, Kostas Simitis calls for Political Union and decentralized federalism and stresses importance of social cohesion, 04/02/2002.

³² Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece's General Policy Objectives in South Caucasus. http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/nak/caucasus.html

as well as the concept of common borders is a recurring theme of Greek Positions in successive IGCs.

It is considered that solidarity should be included also on a military level along the lines of relevant articles of the NATO or WEU charters. Furthermore, solidarity provisions should cover not only conventional attack on EU territory by a third country, but also new asymmetrical threats that pose a danger for international security such as terrorism, organized crime and even illegal migration. On that score the governing New Democracy party (while in the opposition) was also proposing the inclusion of an article similar to article 10 of the WEU charter, which calls for the peaceful resolution of disputes³³.

The final wording of the Constitutional Treaty leaves a lot to be desired as it is pointed out that it contains logical discontinuities and is challenged on a number of points, the most important of which is the fact that Article 41 calls for automatic solidarity procedures to take effect in the event of natural disasters or terrorist attack, answering to an overt need in the light of the 3/11 bombings, but not in the event of conventional attack on EU territory, lagging thus behind similar NATO arrangements.

It is to be noted that P.M. Costas Karamanlis, in his speech following the Rome Signature of the Draft Constitutional Treaty, underlined the importance Greece gives to the mutual defense clause.

Less visibility is afforded to the Armaments Agency. At an earlier date, (then-) Defense Minister G. Papantoniou was clearly supportive of the Agency's potential role as a European procurement nexus. (The fact that Greece is presently in the middle of politically explosive spate of military procurement scandals, but also of a power-play over the procurement of Russian missiles and their interoperability with the existing NATO arsenal may attenuate the interest of

³³ Giannis Valinakis, The European Security and Defence Policy (in Greek), 13/3/2003.

this discussion at present, but could give it much interest in future). Still, the central Greek position is that in order for a viable European Defense Industry to exist, member-states should be encouraged to cooperate in a two-fold way: Increase in defense spending (especially R&D) and streamlining of projects to avoid overlapping. A regulatory role should be given to a European Armaments Agency to serve the needs of both the ERDF and the armed forces of member-states.³⁴

It should be remembered that Greece has expressed considerable sympathy and support for the initiative of France, Germany, Belgium and Luxemburg for deeper cooperation in Defense Policy provided that a dialogue with the US were concurrently initiated and measures were taken to make it as inclusive as possible. This implies that the "4" do not have the critical mass required for a hard core European Defense. Still, if a number of like-minded member states took steps to promote structured cooperation and in such an eventuality, it could well be that Greece would be among these states.

On the question of the EUMS, the Greek Government sees the role of the EUMS as beneficial to the coordination of the EU'S military efforts but since the whole apparatus has not really been tested in real time, it is too early to pass judgment. The Greek Presidency has tasked the EUMS with the creation of a EU space policy including all potential ESDP applications³⁵.

Greece has not declared itself either for or against the creation of a full-fledged EU Headquarters.

The establishment of a mechanism of enhanced cooperation on ESDP matters along the lines of the EMU arrangement is viewed as beneficial to the Union's

³⁴ Spilios Spiliotopoulos, The Geopolitical Role of the Greek Defense Industry, online article (in Greek) found in http://www.e-spilios.gr/1/iframe.scr?category_id=9365

³⁵ Alexander Kolovos, ESDP and Space: The Hellenic Presidency's initiatives in the Second Pillar, National Center for Space Applications (Athens, 8-9 May 2003), http://europa.eu.int/comm/space/doc_pdf/kolovos.pdf

interests. Greece is not opposed to forms of enhanced cooperation in matters of CFSP/ESDP given that they do not disrupt the unity or the coherence of the Union, as this variable geometry practice, is the only feasible way the new enlarged Union can maintain its positive momentum with regards to the deepening of integration. Otherwise, the EU runs the risk of coming to a grinding halt.

4. Activities in CFSP related research

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EKEME, headed by N. Frangakis and Prof. Arg. Fatouros, is the Greek member of TEPSA and as such has participated in the Enlargement-Watch and Convention-Watch. It hosted the TEPSA/EKEME Presidency Seminar on November 2002, which was largely centered on CSFP/ESDP matters.

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The Hellenic Institute for European and Policy/ELIAMEP, headed by Profs. Th. Couloumbis and Th. Veremis - an earlier Director General was Y. Valinakis, presently Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs - also deal with CSFP/ESDP matters, publishing a highly regarded Yearbook and occasional papers.

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5. Some final remarks

➤ Ever since its accession to the (then) European Communities in the late Seventies/ early Eighties, Greece has had the hope that the evolution of Europe towards an effective foreign policy, with an equally effective security/defense component would help in providing it with a “shield” in the troubled area of the Balkans/SEEurope, where its interests lay. Greece has been measuring the benefits of its participation to the EU mainly by the yardstick of safety gained in regional terms due to its “full and equal participation” to the EU, throughout the tumultuous Nineties (the crumbling down of Yugoslavia, Albanian unrest, the FYROM issue, Kosovo, the NATO intervention in Serbia). Nowadays, these shadows and tensions come back to haunt what was hoped to be an era of stability and gradual inclusion of the region to “Europe”.

“Europe” is thought as delinquent in its collective obligation to take a stance vs. the US in the major issues of first Afghanistan, then Iraq, the “war on terrorism” in general. [At the same time, Greek media seem not to factor in their assessments the fact that Greek public opinion is virulently opposed to even the most watered-down consensus of European public opinion in such matters].

➤ The NATO role in Afghanistan, even more so in Iraq, is frowned upon in public opinion. Still, the political elites seem to have matured to the concept of including more than token Greek forces to peace-keeping operations, as a quid-pro-quo for shifting to a multilateral approach to such issues.