

CFSP Watch 2004 – Portugal – by Pedro Courela

1. Priorities and key issues in CFSP in 2004

Despite its traditional 'atlanticist' stance (particularly visible during the war in Iraq), the Portuguese political elite, namely the two mainstream parties (the centre-right *Partido Social Democrata* (PSD) and the *Partido Socialista* (PS)) is very supportive of the progressive development of a European foreign policy. An effective CFSP is perceived on the one hand as an essential element of a political Union and, on the other, as a framework for Portugal to pursue its own foreign policy objectives. The same applies to ESDP, seen as a necessary element of a credible EU foreign policy, while making sure that NATO remains the structuring framework of Portugal's security and defence system. Only the extreme left regards CFSP with scepticism and as a sign of Europe's subservience vis-à-vis Washington.

This mainstream consensus in favour of CFSP/ESDP (also widely supported by public opinion – according to Eurobarometer, 66% of the Portuguese are in favour of a stronger European foreign policy) remained in 2004 and, concomitantly, there was no significant change to the country's priorities for CFSP. Portugal has kept its active participation in all major developments related with CFSP/ESDP, while at the same time ensuring that relations with regions of the world with which the country maintains important ties (such as Africa and Latin America) stay on the EU agenda. The insistence on holding in Lisbon as soon as possible the second Europe-Africa summit is a good example.

However, some effort was put in mending the negative consequences of Portugal's support and participation in the US-led international coalition in Iraq next to the so-called 'old Europe'. This reflected a concern that after a decade of ensuring the seriousness of the country's European option in external affairs, Portugal would once again be looked upon with suspicion because of its pro-American posture. This was visible, for instance, in the decision to hold regular high-level meetings with France, something that existed only with Spain and Brazil.

2. National Perceptions and Positions with regard to CFSP/ESDP Issues in 2004

a) Success and failure of CFSP/ESDP (Iraq conflict)

Portuguese support for the US-led war on Iraq and participation in the subsequent international coalition was justified as a sign of solidarity with a traditional ally. It was also aimed at countering the negative effects that a loosening of transatlantic ties would have for Europe's security. In 2004, Portugal kept its previous commitment to the international coalition, maintaining the 120-strong National Republican Guard battalion in Southern Iraq. Following the trend of other European countries involved in the coalition, the government has already announced the intention to pull out its forces after the elections next year. There are no plans to renew this presence after the election or replace it with troops.

The worsening of the security situation in Iraq is part of the explanation for the continued lack of public support to this mission. All the other political parties are also against the Portuguese presence in Iraq, even if the current leader of the Socialist Party, José Socrates does not go as far as demanding an immediate pull-out of the forces (as it was the case with Spanish Socialist Prime-Minister José Luis Zapatero). As was the case during the war, the socialists deplored the effects that the Portuguese involvement in an "invasion war" without a clear UN mandate could have for Portugal's overall position within the EU.

Most analysts see the continued lack of a European policy on Iraq as a sign of the infant state of CFSP/ESDP and, in some cases, of the incapacity of Europeans to agree on a common strategy on major international issues. Reasons for this state of affairs vary, depending on the commentators' own political leanings. For some, this is a sign that France and Germany are no longer representative of the European mainstream and cannot expect all other members to just rally behind their positions. In any case, Portugal should stick to the more reliable partners (the United States and Britain) instead of embarking on a project with unknown consequences. For others, the lessons learned from the European crisis over Iraq should lead to a serious reflection on how to develop a more efficient EU foreign policy that is at least

able to prevent a public internal rift on what course of action to take. Events like the Iraq one will only add to Europe's irrelevance on the world stage and make it a minor partner vis-à-vis the United States.

b) NATO after enlargement (in relationship with the ESDP) and its role in Afghanistan and in Iraq

Portugal is a staunch advocate of NATO's role as main pillar of European security and any change of government should not alter this fundamental position of the national security policy. This does not mean an opposition to the progressive framing of ESDP, but it does limit the scope for plans to develop an independent European security and defence policy. Former Prime Minister José Manuel Durão Barroso described himself as a "Europeanist-Atlanticist" and the label could fit most prominent figures in the Portuguese political mainstream. The junior coalition party – the right-wing Centro Democrático Social-Partido Popular (CDS-PP) – has a clear pro-US leaning, but its input to the formulation of foreign policy is rather limited even if the Minister for Defence belongs to this party. The fact that a majority of the new Member States are also keen to maintain strong transatlantic links seems to give an added strength to the Portuguese traditional stance on security issues.

In line with its Atlanticist posture, Portugal has repeatedly supported the development of NATO's crisis management capacities, in parallel with the EU's own efforts. NATO presence in Iraq is a strong sign of the new objectives of the Alliance and of its willingness to contribute to international security. Despite the strong rhetoric, the Portuguese contribution to ISAF in Afghanistan has been quite small, not reaching 20 men. Last July, Portugal had only 5 firemen and 3 air controllers from the air force. Since the end of that month, 24 soldiers, mainly from the air force, joined this small group. At the end of 2004, the government decided to reinforce its military presence in Kabul and there are plans to send 130 troops in the second semester of 2005 to conduct mainly airport surveillance functions.

As for NATO's role in Iraq, Portugal always favoured some kind of presence of the Alliance on the ground, thus „europeanising“ the international presence. It is therefore no surprise that Portugal backed the decision to launch the Training Implementation Mission in Iraq to train and equip the Iraqi forces and volunteered to

send a number of trainers. However, the deployment of military trainers requires the previous agreement of the President of the Republic (also the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces) who has openly condemned the war in Iraq and the subsequent occupation by the international coalition.

c) The role of the EU in crisis management e.g. in Europe and Africa

Partially due to its perceived pro-American stance on the crisis in Iraq, the government was keen to show throughout 2004 its full commitment to the development of an operational ESDP and its support to the launching on new crisis management operations.

Since 2003, Portugal took part in operations Concordia (Macedonia) and Artemis (Democratic Republic of Congo) and is involved in the EU Police Mission in Bosnia (EUPM). Around 300 Portuguese troops are taking part in the recently launched Operation Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This latter is a sign of continued Portuguese support for the stabilisation process in the Western Balkans, and, more generally, a political statement of commitment to European security.

The decision to launch operation Artemis was very much welcomed by the Portuguese government, mainly for two reasons: first, it shows that ESDP and EU crisis management is not solely aimed at regional crises and has a 'global' ambition; second, it may function as precedent for potential ESDP operations in other parts of Africa, namely in Lusophone countries.

On the EU "battlegroups", Portugal decided to participate with a company of marines (*fuzileiros*) in the group that also includes Spain, Italy and Greece.

d) Impact of EU enlargement on CFSP/ESDP

There is an understanding that the recent accession of ten new Member States will have an impact on the Union's external relations. Portugal's main concern is to make sure that this 'Eastward shift' of the EU will not result in a downgrading of relations with other regions of the world, namely with the Southern Mediterranean neighbours.

An example of this concern is the recently launched neighbourhood policy. The government favours the inclusive approach of the policy, namely the fact that it applies both to Eastern and Southern neighbours of the EU. However, there is some fear that in practice the neighbourhood policy will focus primarily on relations with the East. There is also some concern (especially in diplomatic circles), that the launching of the neighbourhood policy could imply a waterdown of the multilateral framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and of what was achieved in the ten years since the Barcelona Conference.

To avoid an excessive focus of EU foreign policy on the new Eastern neighbours, the government has stated the need for underlining more vigorously Portugal's Euro-Atlantic and Mediterranean nature, as well as its historic links with different regions of the world. These privileged links, namely with Africa and Latin America, are Portugal's added-value since it joined the EC in 1986 and should now be re-affirmed in an enlarged Europe.

Finally, the government feels quite comfortable with the pro-US stance of the majority of the new member states. Although for different reasons, Portuguese political elite (including to a large extent the opposition Socialist Party) views the maintenance of strong transatlantic links as a priority in the development of a EU foreign policy and of NATO as the central element of European security. In this sense, Central European countries may become allies in future rifts over the degree of autonomy of CSFP/ESDP.

e) The European Security Strategy (ESS)

The Portuguese government and most of the political and diplomatic elite view the ESS very favourably. The Strategy allows for the combined use of a wide range of instruments (military, civilian, diplomatic, economic and financial), which should make possible a more effective role of the Union in the resolution of international crisis. These, together with the stress put on multilateralism represent the EU's added value as an external actor and should now be put to good use in the prevention and management of crises.

Using the strategy as a guide for action, the Union should now be more coherent and more pro-active. The ESS also paves the way for a co-ordinated action of the Union, working together with its partners on the resolution of international crises. Partners for crisis management should include the United States, Canada, Russia and Ukraine, but also Brazil and the Mediterranean partners.

Among the key threats mentioned in the ESS, the Portuguese government considers as priorities for EU action terrorism; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; regional conflicts; failed states and organised crime. It is acknowledged that these are already the object of EU action, but efforts should be reinforced in the future.

Independent analysts, however, have identified a gap between the objectives and the means of ESDP and the key threats addressed by the ESS. Even if some of those objectives correspond to the traditional concerns of CFSP, others (such as terrorism and organised crime) would most likely be better addressed by other type of instruments which fall outside CFSP/ESDP. This results from a blurring of internal and external security which has entered the foreign policy discourse in most countries after the September 11 terrorist attacks. By adopting the same line of thought, the EU runs the risk of creating certain expectation for its ESDP that it will not be able to meet, not because of a lack of resources, but because such threats require an answer at the level of Justice and Home Affairs.

3. The Results of the Intergovernmental Conference 2003/2004 on the Constitutional Treaty

Have there been any official contributions or proposals brought to the IGC by your country's representatives with regard to External relations, CFSP and ESDP?

None

a) External Representation

At the IGC Portugal supported the creation of a Foreign Minister for the EU, which should also be a member of the European Commission (double-hatting). The support for double-hatting has mainly to do with the need to guarantee the involvement of the

Commission in the conduct of the Union's foreign policy. The Socialist Party also supported the Foreign Minister as an important step to guarantee more coherence in the EU's external action, as well as an element of strengthening the EU's role in world affairs.

Until the end of negotiations, Portugal strongly opposed changes to the current system of rotating presidencies and the establishment of the President of the European Council. It is no surprise then that the government would rather keep the Presidency's role in external relations. Finally, the Portuguese government also supported the transformation of the current EC delegations in third countries into "EU Embassies", as a factor strengthening the EU's presence in the world.

b) Decision-making and structured co-operation

Portuguese political parties and diplomatic elite have never been strong enthusiasts of enhanced co-operation and in the past have seen it as an attempt by larger Member States to decide not only on the direction of policies but also on which states are allowed to participate in more advanced stages of integration. Successive Treaty reforms have ensured that enhanced co-operation (within the treaties framework) must obey to certain rules, but it is still a matter seen with a considerable degree of caution.

During the IGC, the only contentious issue on the matter of enhanced cooperation had to do with the defence field, but after the Franco-German-British agreement on European defence reached in December 2003 and the safeguard of NATO's role there was no further opposition from the Portuguese side.

Since then, the Portuguese position has been to guarantee its participation in any important developments. This active engagement is seen as the best way to avoid being marginalised from defence co-operation.

c) Crisis management

The Portuguese government supported the extension of the so-called Petersberg tasks to also include disarmament operations, military advice and post-conflict stabilisation. The use of military tasks is seen as necessary to guarantee the

effectiveness of certain crisis management operations and should, to the extent possible, be complemented by civilian means.

As stated above, Portugal favours a 'global ambition' for EU crisis management. Portugal has for a long time now been engaged diplomatically and militarily in the political transition and peace consolidation processes of former colonies in Africa and therefore the continent could be a possible scenario for future operations.

d) Defence issues

On defence issues, the general position of the Portuguese government was that any unnecessary duplication of NATO should be avoided and synergies between the two organisations should be sought as a matter of principle. The explicit reference to NATO in the final text of the Constitutional Treaty corresponds to the minimum guarantee the government sought during negotiations. Since the compatibility between ESDP and NATO obligations was enshrined, the inclusion in the Constitution of a mutual solidarity clause in the case of terrorist attacks and natural disasters was particularly welcomed by the government. A mutual defence clause was not seen as necessary (as NATO is perceived as the main guarantor of European security) but the government did not oppose it. The same applies to the civil-military planning cell and the headquarters.

e) The defence agency

The official position of the government on the Agency has always been a favourable one. Defence Minister Paulo Portas has stated that the decision to create it was probably the main pragmatic step in the history of ESDP. Implementation of the decision, however, requires the recognition that Member States' technological and industrial realities are significantly different and thus the success or failure of the Defence Agency will to a great extent be determined by the capacity of each state to invest in the modernisation of its defence industry.

Despite this favourable position in general, Portugal opposed the rules for participation in Agency projects of Member States that were not involved from the outset. The rules granted those that initiate a project the exclusive right to decide on the future association of other Member States. This concern was raised in Coreper at the last minute but dropped at Council level.

4. Mapping of Activities in CFSP-related Research

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

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

SOURCES:

- *Eurobarometer* 60, European Commission, December 2003
- Speech by Secretary of State for European Affairs Carlos Costa Neves at the Institute for Social Sciences, University of Lisbon, 12 February 2004
- Speech by MFA Teresa Patrício Gouveia at the Instituto for Political Studies of the Portuguese Catholic University, 22 April 2004
- Portas, Paulo, “A Agência Europeia de Defesa” in *Diário de Notícias*, 28 April 2004
- Speech by MFA Teresa Patrício Gouveia on European Security and Defence Policy at the Parliament, 4 May 2004
- Speech by MFA António Monteiro at the Conference *As novas fronteiras da Europa*, 28 October 2004
- Interview with MFA António Monteiro in *Público*, 29 October 2004
- Several articles published in newspapers *Público* and *Diário de Notícias*