UNISCI Discussion Papers

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FECHA:	Enero 2004

"The European Union has the potential to make a major contribution, both in dealing with the threats and in helping realise the opportunities. An active and capable European Union would make an impact on a global scale. In doing so, it would contribute to an effective multilateral system leading to a fairer, safer and more united world."

A Secure Europe in A Better World

Javier Solana

1. Introduction

As part of the second pillar of the EU, the European Security and Defence Policy, ESDP, is predominantly an intergovernmental project, but the growing institutional mechanism under the auspices of the Council and the associate role of the Commission shows that players on different levels are heavily involved in the process. Introducing a cultural dimension to the study of security and defence politics requires a definition of culture that, on the one hand, is material enough to make it observable while, on the other hand, is both dynamic and non-deterministic.

So, there is a need for an understanding of strategy, which is compatible with the current strategic environment, in which force most often is applied in a limited way and in concert with non-military measures. Strategy is irrevocably about "the use and threat of use of organised force for political purposes"[2], but disregarding the civilian dimension will present a misleading picture of contemporary strategy. A security strategy would not only provide the

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[2] Gray, Charles (1999): *Modern Strategy*, New York, Oxford University Press, p. 1.

reference framework that is needed for day-to-day policy-making but would also bring political benefits.[3]

This article tries to underscore the importance of the security strategy text by Javier Solana – High Representative for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, CFSP – in helping the Europeans "think strategically" even if, in his views, such a document could have been prepared earlier. But, it also emphasises the need not to "start backwards": the immediate focus should be on the "ark of crisis" rather than on Korea. It also notes that the current state of the debate could divide the Europeans rather than unite them.

But I would like to make several remarks:

- The genesis of the Solana strategy lies to a large extent in Europe's sense of failure in the Iraq crisis. Indeed, strategic cultures tend to be formed from crisis to crisis. Although a strategic culture will not in itself change as a result of one single paper, such conceptual work can help.
- One of the characteristics of the current document is that it is one of first EU texts to be threat-driven. Given the size and scale of the European Union, it is appropriate that the text should emphasise issues such as Kashmir and Korea; because this is a way of thinking ahead and of preparing for a more active Europe.
- "Effective multilateralism" is a good formula for Europe.

Some authors agree with the proposition that the EU should define its strategic interests globally, while others put forward regional priorities, in the "ark of crisis" and "Wider Europe". There are diverging views about the Commission's Wider Europe Communication, wherein some people underscore its "mediocrity" while others highlight its "quality", urging for its integration into Javier Solana's forthcoming document.

There is an exchange concerning the meaning of "threat prevention" as used in the Solana security strategy: did this encompass preventive military action or was this more specifically tied to actions related to the enforcement of international obligations in the framework of "effective multilateralism"? On this score, I recall the mention of "coercive action as a last resort" in the texts of the European Council meeting at Thessaloniki,[4] which should be given due consideration alongside the Solana security strategy.

2. The conceptual framework to define the European Security Strategy

Since the Treaty of Maastricht gave defence an institutional basis within CFSP, where it included in principle "the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence"[5] – debates on the need for an EU security concept have appeared. Initially this was to remain with the Western European Union, WEU, in 1995. In fact, in June 1992 at a WEU Ministerial at the Petersberg Hotel, in Bonn, the Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers made a declaration formalizing the new defence roles of the organisation, known as

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[3] Biscop, Sven: "In Search of a Strategic Concept for the ESDP", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 7, nº 4, 2002, p. 473-490.
[4] Thessaloniki European Council, 19-20 June 2003: Presidency Conclusions. Available from Internet at http://ue.eu.int/pressData/en/ec/76279.pdf.
[5] Art. J.4.

the Petersberg Tasks, including humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.

The Petersberg Tasks reflected the official orthodoxy of the time that, with the Cold War over and no immediate sign of a large standing military threat to the territory of Western Europe, Europeans needed to reform their armed forces for frequent, but intensive, small and medium scale military operations. Others had observed that the European and US armed forces were not embracing this challenge of reform and modernization, but instead they were simply cutting their defence budgets and capabilities in the so-called "peace dividend".[6] These fears were apparently made real when European economic and diplomatic pressure proved spectacularly weak in the face of conflict in the neighbouring Balkans. The perceived weakness of European military capability was starkly displayed during the Kosovo Crisis in 1998-1999, when the US conducted 90% of the air strikes in the war against Serbia.

The reality of European weakness in defence was evident in the Treaty of Amsterdam where the Petersberg Tasks were introduced but defence proper was kept apart. Nevertheless, the political and military weakness of Europeans shown by the Balkans conflicts stirred the UK and France to respond with a declaration in December 1998 at Saint Malo, in France. They stated that the EU should develop "…the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises".[7]

These developments breathed life into the Treaties' references to defence. The Member States and the European institutions adopted the "spirit" of Saint Malo at the Cologne European Council and began the necessary processes to create autonomous decision-making structures[8], develop capabilities[9] and culminating in actual military operations – Concordia[10] and Artemis[11] in 2003. The focus upon creating the means and institutions for the Rapid Reaction Force to become operational was an important first step by the Member States and consistent with those under the WEU. However, the Helsinki Headline Goal numbers and the Petersberg Tasks themselves have been, respectively, described as arbitrary and ill-defined and proven to mean different things to different member states.[12]

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[6] Bolton, David: "Defence in Transition: Options for Change", *RUSI Journal,* Autumn 1991, p. 411.
[7] The French version of the Saint Malo Declaration is available from Internet at http://www.defence.gouv.fr/dga/fr/pdef/saintmalo.pdf
[8] *Report presented to the Nice European Council by the Secretary General/High Representative and the Commission.* Nice, 8 December 2000.
[9] In the *Presidency Conclusions of the European Council of Helsinki, 10-11 December 1999,* was established the Headline Goal, meanwhile the *Presidency Conclusions of the European Council of Laeken, 14-15 December 2001,* established the European Capabilities Action Plan.
[10] The European Union launched a Military Operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, FYROM, on 31 March 2003. The operation was code-named Concordia. The core aim of the operation was, at the explicit request of the FYROM government, to contribute further to a stable secure environment in order to allow the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, August 2001.
[11] The European Union launched a Military Operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC, in June 2003. The operation was code-named Artemis. The European military force worked in close coordination with the United Nations Mission in DRC, MONUC. It was aimed, *inter alia*, at contributing to the stabilization of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Bunia.
[12] Clarke, Michael; Garden, Tim; Quille, Gerrard (2001): *Making Sense of the Helsinki Headline Goal*, Discussion Paper, London Centre for Defence Studies, King's College.

The absence of a clear statement on the purpose of the ESDP was also causing tensions with the United States. Supportive of EU integration, the US was nevertheless sensitive to any suggestions on defence integration that might undermine NATO. The latter was going through its own identity crisis following the end of the Cold War, but it had adopted its own Strategic Concept twice.[13] The argument reasoned that if the EU could create its own Strategic Concept it would provide a framework within which the ambiguous ESDP and its Petersberg Tasks could be understood and evolve. This would also reassure the US and NATO about the purpose and direction of the EU's defence efforts. This argument stemmed from those who saw the ESDP as a reaction to conflicts on the EU's "periphery". In this respect the Petersberg Tasks were clearly defined for intervention in order to ensure and/or create the conditions for stability and the strengthening of economic and political relations between the EU and its neighbours.[14]

Whilst the EU is more deeply involved in the political and economic fabric of its neighbourhood, in particularly the Balkans, it is also a *de facto* global political player in other spheres, such as through its special representatives, its role in the Middle East through the Quartet, and in Africa under the Cotonou Agreement. Meanwhile France has traditionally envisaged an EU military function as an alternative to NATO, the UK has traditionally opposed such a vision. This has meant that the EU Security Concept has not emerged simply to state that ESDP is a neighbourhood policy, an alternative to NATO, or a global security instrument. These multiple drivers have in turn created tensions with the US, manifest in its hot and cold attitude to ESDP and with EU and NATO representing a form of competition between Europe and the US.

2.1. Towards a better comprehension of the transatlantic relations

NATO has been a key element in maintaining the stability of this relationship during the Cold War and the 1990s, but will the Atlantic Alliance keep its primacy in the future? The development of the ESDP expresses the willingness of European countries and the EU to assume more security responsibilities, but will the ESDP become a rival to NATO?

To assess the possibility and the character of European Security Strategy, ESS, it is important to outline the probable structures of security relations within Europe and between Europe and the US. In this context, three basic possible reconfigurations of transatlantic relations may be useful to analyse the future of European security:

1. The restoration of transatlantic defence and security solidarity.
2. NATO's decline and the rise of European defence and security institutions.
3. The decline of the transatlantic and European security identities and the formation of *ad hoc* "coalitions of the willing".

The first presupposes that growing globalisation and interdependence will lead in the final analysis to a restoration of transatlantic solidarity in defence and security areas. Such a development is possible if common perceptions of threats and a common strategy for preventing such threats are formed by the US and Europe, which means that sooner or later

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[13] Rome, November 1991 and Washington, April 1999.
[14] Staden van, Alfred et al. (2000): *Towards a European Strategic Concept.* The Hague, Clingendael Institute.

Europeans will have to share the same basic attitudes of current American strategic thinking.[15] In the framework of this configuration, NATO would return to its former role as the central defence and security institution of the West; however, a deep transformation of the North Atlantic alliance would be necessary. So, NATO would require new missions and effective capacities to fight terrorism, to prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, WMD, to implement peace missions and to handle dangerous regimes that lie south of Europe.

The second presupposes a further decline of the transatlantic defence and security structures and the development of Europe as a relatively independent position of power that is able to defend itself against a variety of traditional and new threat. In this scenario, Europe would also have a role in maintaining peace and stability in the wider European area, such as the Balkans and the Black Sea regions, as well as in the neighbouring areas of the Mediterranean and the Near East. The implementation of this scenario is possible if:

- Transatlantic differences grow in security doctrines, concepts and strategies.
- European nations are able to develop common threat perceptions and strategic doctrines.
- The EU security and defence institutions are effective enough.
- The European member states are able to increase their defence expenditures and build armed forces that are equipped with high-technology weapons and C4IR[16] systems comparable with those of the US.

The third postulates the further development of the trends that appeared with the Iraqi war. These include:

- The growing differences in threat perceptions, security concepts and interests between and the US and a group of European nations.
- The decline of NATO and EU security institutions due to the split between "old and new" Europe.
- The formation of a set of bilateral security and defence relations between the US and some European countries in form of "coalitions of the willing" or in more stable and institutionalised forms.

3. The uncertainty of the European Security Strategy

The EU remained without a Strategic Concept and it appeared that the regular calls for one would remain unanswered – that is until 11 Sept 2001 and then the Iraq War in 2003. September 11 stirred the US into a purposeful reappraisal on how it views, and is willing to shape the international security environment following the devastating terrorist attacks. The EU, and especially its member states, has not been immune from the effects of this new stance. Therefore, after CFSP failed once more during the Iraq crisis to produce a common EU stance on a major crisis, the member states gave the High Representative for CFSP the mandate to lead efforts to finally address the issue of where the Union stands as a global player and how it

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[15] However, different perceptions concerning with the new risks and threats still remain after September 11th in Europe and the US, even more stressed after the Iraqi crisis. It is important to achieve common definitions to avoid wrong perceptions and mistaken actions.

For a further study on these different perceptions, see Vázquez, Manuel: "La PESC antes de la crisis de Irak: ¿utopia o realidad?", *Revista UNISCI,* nº 2, May 2003, p. 25-29. Available from http://www.ucm.es/info/unisci/Manuel.pdf.

[16] C4IR means Command, Control, Computers, Communications, Intelligence and Reconnaissance.

sees its evolving security instruments meeting that vision. The process to create a Security Concept is being used to heal wounds over Iraq and to provide direction for a multiple of security instruments that make up the EU's security "toolbox".

The current uncertainty is, in many respects, the result of the divisions between NATO member states on the war in Iraq. In addition to the transatlantic differences, a boundary line among European states has emerged concerning with basic strategic issues. The latter split has been called a division between "old and new" Europe. Yet many people believe that the Iraqi war was not the basic reason of these divisions but has accelerated and fuelled the decline of Western defence and security unity – including the identity crisis in European security – which began after the end of the Cold War. In this light, the formation of a set of bilateral security relations between the US and the European member states is often seen as more important than the presumptive disintegration of multilateral institutions, being the North Atlantic alliance the first one.

"The old transatlantic community is being slowly dismantled by both sides, giving way to ad hoc bilateral military links between Washington and some Europeans…When the dust settles over Iraq, it will become clear that the dispute between Europeans and Americans has merely accelerated a process of decay in their relations, which began slowly and almost imperceptibly, with the collapse of communism."[17]

If this vision is true the development of a sustainable and coherent European security strategy is hardly possible because of the split among European nations with respect to fighting terrorism, handling "rogue states" and the like. At the same time, there is also a theory that growing globalisation is leading, in the end, to a deeper defence and security cooperation among the advanced democracies of the West. In this context, the principal question arises as to whether the current crisis in Euro-Atlantic relations is a tactical, short-term phenomenon or whether the community of democratic nations is fundamentally dividing with respect to primary international security issues.

In this light, the ESS, produced in a document entitled "A Secure Europe in a Better World", has recently been adopted in Brussels, 12-13 December. The ESS clearly states that the EU and its member states will tackle their security priorities in a framework that emphasizes multilateral institutions and the rule of law, upholding the principle of the use of force as a last resort. It has no illusions regarding the weakness of the EU as a military power. Indeed, the EU's lack of military capability is highlighted as a major weakness in the EU Crisis Management/Conflict Prevention toolbox.

4. The Europe's strategic role

We can say that the document presented by Javier Solana – last June and more recently in December – constitutes a real effort and indeed a real step forward. The Solana document marks important progress mainly because it is probably setting in motion a dynamic that is badly needed if the EU is to become a more effective security provider.

Having already identified common shortfalls, working to develop certain common or collective capabilities may be a good way to force more discipline on individual EU members in order to rationalise the use of scarce resources and gradually elaborate a unified doctrine on

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[17] Eyal, Jonathan: "Battle of the Atlantic", *The World Today,* Vol. 59, No. 3, March 2003, p. 6.

how these resources will be employed. The critical questions that must be answered are: the EU is seeking to develop such military capabilities to do what? Why? Where? Would such capabilities be employed under what political control? It is difficult to believe that an official document *per se* is enough to radically change the course of or to overcome the complex structural factors behind current transatlantic frictions.

Yet, adopting an official security strategy raises the stakes and, potentially, builds a consensus around a new transatlantic deal – less automatic than in the past but equally fundamental for our security. And one of the main purposes of the whole exercise is precisely to ease the transition from the old transatlantic link to a vastly updated transatlantic framework in which the EU takes a higher profile.

4.1. A new approach to European Security

Firstly, the ESS offers a useful and accurate description of how we got here. This is essential in order to discuss where to go from here and what to do next. The climate in which the paper was produced is actually described with precision, including: the post-Cold War opportunities coupled with new dangers of local conflicts; actual violence in the Balkans; an increasing need for troops, police, deployments in sometimes distant places; and the realisation of a potential combination of "key threats": terrorism, proliferation of WMD, regional conflicts, failed states and organised crime.[18]

The transatlantic context is also described,[19] citing not only US preponderance in most dimensions of power and influence, but also American – as well as European – vulnerability and the consequent requirement of sustained multilateral cooperation in order to achieve more effective international governance.

Along with all of the dimensions of risk and threat, the document is in practice a "wake-up call" designed to counter a sense of complacency among Europeans. Indeed, complacency and introversion seem to be the underlying concerns – and rightly so. But this has the interesting effect of bringing the stated EU approach much closer to the official US policy than it has appeared so far.

Undoubtedly, there are elements of convergence in the ESS with recent US policy statements,[20] as well as with established NATO policies – about which Lord Robertson has been quick to remark in recent speeches.[21] So, four main points must be achieved:

- That international terrorism is recognised as a strategic threat to Europe, as well as to the US and others.[22]
- That a broader European contribution to global security and stability is called for and more specifically there is a "need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention".[23]

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[18] Solana, Javier (2003): *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, 12.12.2003, Brussels, p. 4-6. From now on, it will be expressed as ESS.
[19] Ibid, p. 14.
[20] For further details, see: *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. September 2002. Available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf.
[21] For further information, see such speeches at http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/sp2003.htm.
[22] ESS, p. 4.
[23] Ibid, p. 12.

- That the worst possible scenario is identified as consisting of a combination or linkage of the main key threats discussed in the document.[24]
- That the European security depends on an "effective multilateral system".[25]

Beyond the specific wording, the points above are not particularly surprising or even contested in policy circles, but if fully adopted by the European Council they may contribute to a smoother transatlantic discussion on issues that are by their very nature controversial, such as counter terrorism operations, counter-proliferation policies and particularly "pre-emptive strikes" on potential sources of threat.

Indeed, since the American security role is inevitably a point of reference for the evolving ESS, it is instructive to read the whole Solana document in parallel with the US National Security Strategy. Nevertheless, we should not exaggerate the similarities; unlike the US Security Strategy, the Solana document is not intended primarily as the full stop to a policy review process, but instead as the starting point to a relatively slow policy production process. In other words, there is not much in terms of existing or past security policies on which Solana's team can build. There are disparate, though sometimes overlapping, national policies and traditions, as well as a precious but limited EU experience in peacekeeping missions, but no common strategic culture. In fact, the development of a shared strategic culture is precisely one of the central functions that the document and its future versions can perform.

The ESS stresses that priority security objectives should be addressed through "effective multilateralism". In other words, by supporting the UN system, strengthening national responses through EU synergies and by addressing root causes such as poverty and weak governance by drawing upon community instruments and regional dialogue. The characteristics of the emerging ESS stand apart from the US National Security Strategy and furthermore by the EU reference to civilian conflict prevention. The "effective multilateralism" outlined in the ESS does not preclude the use of force as a last resort and may even be interpreted as permitting "pre-emptive" action under certain circumstances. For this reason, some have criticized the concept as ill defined, even contradictory. The ESS should be read in context.

Sven Biscop and Rik Coolsaet argue that "what a security strategy would do is bring these policies together within a conceptual framework that would establish a link between the various external policies of the Union, including short-term conflict prevention and crisis management. These are the areas where the EU today too often lacks a common approach, as the Iraqi crisis so forcibly demonstrated. This conceptual framework emerging from existing policies can be referred to as *comprehensive security*".[26]

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[24] Ibid, p. 6: "Taking these different elements together – terrorism committed to maximum violence, the availability of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, the weakening of the state system and the privatisation of force – we could be confronted with a very radical threat indeed". This statement is remarkably similar to the expressions adopted in the US National Security Strategy of September 2002 and several other US administration statements.

[25] Ibid. p. 10: "We are committed to upholding and developing International Law. The fundamental framework for international relations is the United Nations Charter… We want international organisations, regimes and treaties to be effective in confronting threats to international peace and security, and must therefore be ready to act when their rules are broken".

[26] Biscop, Sven and Coolsaet, Rik. *The World is the Stage. A Global Security Strategy for the European Union.* Groupement d'Études et de Recherches. Notre Europe, Policy Papers nº 8, 2003, p. 8.

Whilst identifying security priorities, which meet current US concerns, it does not amount to a European endorsement of US methods. Rather, it is a broad document that highlights European strengths and values. The ESS provides a framework within which traditional EU priorities[27] are balanced with the new member state priorities of responding to WMD proliferation and international terrorism. By concentrating on underlying causes the ESS aptly emphasizes the common approach that should be applied to both new and old priorities.

The SG/HR stressed that "Europe can no longer remain hesitant and divided if it is to meet the promise of its origins, as a community of democracies interested in building a stable regional security community, in its external relations".[28]

4.2. What are the limits and possible improvements for the ESS?

The definition of what the EU wants in the world, and what it is ready to stand for, is not spelled out – beyond stating a commitment to cooperation, openness, legitimacy and legality. For instance, when assessing the impact of "regional conflicts", the cases cited are Kashmir, the Great Lakes Region and the Korean Peninsula. The ESS asserts that these conflicts "impact on European interests directly and indirectly, as do conflicts nearer to home, above all in the Middle East".[29] The potential implications of this statement should deserve more careful consideration, since it is not immediately evident that these conflicts are – or should be – perceived as directly affecting any major EU interest. Even the Middle East, taken as a whole, is a somewhat vague reference.

The strategy could benefit from a more detailed geopolitical vision. This is especially clear in the case of what is usually called the "arc of instability" stretching from the Balkans to the Eastern Mediterranean, and from the Persian Gulf to Central Asia. The reference to this vast region in the ESS is concentrated in the section on "Building Security in our Neighbourhood",[30] where it is specified "our task is to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations".[31]

Geography becomes a key point: a major nuclear crisis in Korea may pose less immediate risk to the EU than a political assassination in the Western Balkans, a contested election in North Africa or a relatively minor border dispute in the Caucasus. It would also be useful to distinguish between major confrontations (such as India-Pakistan), prolonged violent clashes on a local level (such as Chechnya) and military-diplomatic standoffs that nonetheless carry great risks of escalation (such as Korea or Taiwan). In making such critical remarks, we should not lose sight, however, of the central aim of the document: to raise the awareness of the interconnection of rather disparate phenomena, often generating far away from the physical territory of the EU. The focus of the ESS is therefore a triad of new threats, defined as "more diverse, less visible and less predictable".[32]

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[27] The traditional EU priorities are conflict prevention, poverty reduction and good governance within regional dialogue.
[28] Solana, Javier: *Annual Conference of the Institute for Security Studies of the European Union*, Paris, 30 June 2003, p. 8-11. Available from http://ue.eu.int/pressdata/EN/discours/76423.pdf
[29] Ibid, p. 5.
[30] Ibid, p. 8.
[31] Idem.
[32] Ibid, p. 4.

There is a missing link with regard to the sponsors of terrorist activities, most notably state sponsors – in other words, "rogue states". As will be seen, the same can be said of WMD, as in both cases Javier Solana does not make the connection between specific types of regimes and specifically threatening international behaviours (either directly or pursued by offering assistance and support to non-state players). The proliferation of WMD is indicated as "potentially the greatest threat to our security"[33], with the specific risk of a WMD arms race in the Middle East and the spread of missile technology cited as immediate European problems. In practice, three distinct kinds of threats are conflated here: the first is the effect of the use of WMD that are not aimed at a EU country; the second is a direct attack by a state against a EU country; and, the third kind of threat is an attack carried out by a terrorist group.

There is also a practical need to manage the proliferation of WMD once it has already taken place to a significant degree – as witnessed in the recent cases of India, Pakistan and North Korea or the older problem of Israel. This reality calls for a strategy of proliferation management beyond counter-proliferation.

A central issue definitely requiring more clarity is the use of expression "pre-emptive engagement".[34] Although the EU "needs to be able to act before countries around us deteriorate, when signs of proliferation are detected, and before humanitarian emergencies arise",[35] surprisingly the statement "Preventive engagement can avoid more serious problems in the future"[36] is immediately followed. Why not use the concept "prevention", with its soft power connotation? Why not confine "pre-emption" to the exercise of hard, coercive power?[37]

However, member states have recently been investing in capabilities for so-called "Network Centric Warfare"[38], which at first sight appear more appropriate for robust "search

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[33] Ibid, p. 3.

[34] Given the frequent usage of the term 'pre-emption' in the media – especially after the publication of the US National Security Strategy in September 2002 – often interchangeably with "prevention", an excessive focus on a single word may be beyond the point. Yet, the concept of pre-emptive action, including coercive action, is just too relevant and too controversial to be left hanging. Anyway, the EU strategy should not try to paper over the issue by introducing even more confusion than already exists in this field.

    Preventing a threat or an event from materialising practically means that the threat does not come into existence, precisely because it is stopped or eliminated before it reaches a certain threshold. Pre-empting a threat, however, means something different: it refers to a particular action or intervention that eradicates a threat. The noun pre-emption is accordingly defined, in the military sphere, as "the action or strategy of making a pre-emptive attack".

    On the other hand, Biscop and Coolsaet say that "there is a minority school in international law that has a wider interpretation of Article 51 of the UN Charter, claiming it to include the possibility of pre-emptive action in case of an imminent attack, i.e. at a time between the moment when an enemy is perceived to be about to attack and the actual launching of attack, and even then only if there is an urgent necessity of self-defence against this attack and there is no alternative to self-defence. The National Security Strategy goes a lot further by allowing "anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack", a formulation that appears to do away with the condition of the "imminence" of an attack; in effect, this is not pre-emptive action, but preventive war". Op. cit. 25, p. 35.

[35] ESS, p. 12.

[36] Idem.

[37] Obviously, this is one of the clearest influences of the National Security Strategy of the United States on the ESS.

[38] "Network-centric warfare and all of its associated revolutions in military affairs grow out of and draw their power from the fundamental changes in American society. These changes have been dominated by the co-

and strike" operations of a counter-terror or counter-proliferation type which clearly meet NATO and US priorities. This suggests that although the EU and NATO are not different in their global ambitions their organisational outlook makes them emphasize distinctly different military needs and visions of combat intensity. It appears from a first analysis that the strategic objectives of the two organisations create demands that emphasize different types of capability. The importance for ESDP is how it can manage to provide a framework for generating military capabilities for crisis management operations whilst the member states are under pressure to prioritise capabilities that enable them to join *ad hoc* coalitions under the banner of the "War on Terrorism".

To sum up, various interpretations are possible and are all perfectly legitimate, but these issues are just too serious and complex to allow confusion on terminology. A solid consensus on fundamentals cannot be constructed when times get tough, so it will have to be achieved in advance of the next crisis.

4.3. What are the challenges ahead?
It is known that there is a daunting security agenda for the 21st century, characterised by risks and threats that can mutate unexpectedly, as well as move geographically. Technological, socio-demographic and environmental trends may converge to produce crucial changes in the strategic landscape, in ways that no security strategy can fully anticipate.

Unfortunately, the EU countries have missed an opportunity that presented itself around the period 1999-2000, to accelerate the development of a coherent, albeit fairly limited, security strategy. The security agenda of that period was pretty well-defined and, just as important, there was a broad agreement among the key governments on the most pressing priorities: enhanced crisis management and robust peacekeeping/peace-making capabilities to be applied in Europe's immediate periphery.

It would have been natural to start from there and then perhaps aim higher as capabilities would develop over time. Instead, what happened was a slow start, characterised by uneven progress, with the readymade Petersberg Tasks adopted as benchmarks but little ability to fully implement both NATO's Defence Capability Initiative and the own EU's Headline Goal, while the Berlin Plus agreement was finalised only in late 2002. As we know too well, this phase was followed by the shock of the events of September 11th and in turn by the badly divisive debate over Iraq and the transatlantic relationship.

Today's world looks populated by shadowy threats, often deterritorialized and against which any society must feel somewhat vulnerable and at times even powerless. At the same time, Europe's key ally – the US – has developed a world view that is not, at least in the short term, conducive to the arrangements and the steady advances required by the maturation of an

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evolution of economics, information technology, and business processes and organisations, and they are linked by three themes:

- The shift in focus from the platform to the network.
- The shift from viewing actors as independent to viewing them as part of a continuously adapting ecosystem.
- The importance of making strategic choices to adapt or even survive in such changing ecosystems".

In Cebrowski, Arthur and Garstka, John: "Network Centric Warfare: Its Origins and Future". *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, vol. 1, Issue 1, 1998, p. 28.

EU security strategy. On the contrary, American policies tend to fragment the EU front and force the toughest decisions on individual European governments.

5. Conclusions

The picture drawn in this article is not intended to look at an idealised past with longing and regret, but rather to sketch some key problems we will continue to face in the future: how to consolidate the role of the EU as the main stabiliser of the area of the long "arc of instability" that lies to the immediate southeast of its current frontier, while simultaneously tackling a whole set of global phenomena that are now – rightly – high on the agenda.

What the ESS draws is a comprehensive concept of security, but the conceptual framework can still be strengthened though, in order to provide a clear and powerful link among different external policy areas. The ESS should not be interpreted as being directed against the National Security Strategy of the United States or as a competition between Europe and the US.[39]

From both a functional and a regional perspective, it would have been more effective for the EU to take over from NATO the tasks of civil-military crisis management, especially in a greater Europe, while gradually upgrading European capabilities to project civil-military forces anywhere they may be needed. The progressive accumulation of experience, self-confidence and credibility that comes with carrying out successful, limited missions close to home is now almost dwarfed by the colossal task of fighting a global terrorist network potentially armed with WMD, which acts in collusion with rogue states and takes advantage of failed states and criminal connections.

I argue in favour on the ESS and the ESDP by emphasizing that its development is beneficial for NATO and the US and not only for the EU, although there are some arguments against them. For example, the ESDP complicates the relationship with some allies, so it cannot rely on a common European security culture and the realisation of a cross-pillar coherence would be problematic. Nevertheless, these problems are not insurmountable and they do not undermine the overall logic of the ESS and the ESDP. The ESDP is the logical outcome of historical forces. On the one hand, it is the result of the EU founding fathers' willingness to build an "ever closer union". On the other hand, the ESDP is also the effect of exogenous forces, namely the US demand for balanced burden-sharing both during the Cold War and the 1990s.

The development of the ESDP and the transformation of NATO are not set in a predetermined pattern leading to a specific configuration of the European security architecture. The relevance of NATO and US leadership must not be threatened by the development of the ESDP, but the importance of the ESDP for achieving a more balanced burden-responsibility

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[39] As Biscot and Coolsaet show in their paper, the ESS and the National Security Strategy share an emphasis on threats, but they have obviously different perceptions: the US *strategic priority* is to "fight against proliferation of WMD and "rogue states" and particularly of the war against terrorism"; the world is *dangerous;* the emphasis is on defence policy and the use of military means, including pre-emptively; the US document reflects unilateralism. Meanwhile the ESS deals with these threats with a much more positive and comprehensive approach; the world is *complex*; the use of force must be as a last resort; the security and prosperity depend on an effective multilateral system. Op. cit. 25, p. 34-35.

sharing in the future must be emphasized. "The transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the EU and the US can be a formidable force for good in the world".[40]

The ESS has drawn out a general scheme for the EU. The EU is defining its *raison d'être* in a dynamic manner. The ESS might provide a sense of common international purpose that has been lacking amongst the Europeans. To make it workable and effective, the EU leadership will need not only political will but also new political thinking, free from the Cold War stereotypes and phobias in order to get a wider Europe. The added value of the EU and the ESS, compared with NATO and individual member states, is that – with its multilateral approach – can make a unique contribution to reach the objectives. Member states, acting through EU, could carry out initiatives that individual member states could not. The ESS shows an inclusive, three-level approach in which NATO, EU and member states have a complementary role to play.

Europe's combined $175 billion defence budget and two million military personnel represent a vast resource and an opportunity to put effective and efficient capabilities at the service of a EU Strategic Concept. However, without thinking collectively, it will be impossible for the member states to meet their collective ambitions as set out in the ESS to act globally and have a military instrument available to support political, diplomatic and economic objectives. If the member states are not ready to do this, then perhaps we should not be embarking upon such an approach in the first place. The promise and expectation created internationally by a prosperous, numerous, and powerful Europe claiming a global role and responsibilities, but with a serious credibility gap in the military aspect of its "toolbox", could be worse than the absence of a Strategic Concept. We have perhaps already witnessed an insight into one consequence of this outcome, European division and indecisiveness on Iraq.

Whether applied to new or old threats, these countermeasures have certain common elements: recognizing that the first line of defence lies beyond EU frontiers; acknowledging that inaction is not an option; understanding that a military response is not always appropriate but might form one element of a combined response. In this way, the EU can engage in the systematic political engagement of "prevention".

The ESS constitutes a great step forward and should constitute a good basis for future action. But action must encompass more than new papers. In particular, there is an urgent need for intra-institutional coherence as well as concrete steps towards increased military cooperation and enhanced capabilities. It seems to be after all a discernible pattern for the EU's various external policies: trade, aid, diplomacy and crisis management proper. As for the global dimension, much will depend on the extent to which CFSP/ESDP turns into a driver of European policy at large and commits the member states to pooling interests and capabilities that go well beyond the immediate periphery of the EU.

Despite internal divisions over the Iraq crisis, the EU member states can share a strategic vision of the EU's regional and global roles, the EU remains for the time being a civilian player that relies on its economic and diplomatic power. In order to reinforce the role of the EU, the ESS as framework for CFSP should be mentioned in the future Constitution.

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[40] ESS, p. 14.

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