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Europe needed to rethink the way in which to better promote its values, particularly when an ideological, political, and economic competition raised both in the countries of the Southern and of the Eastern neighborhood. The process allowed obtaining a more comprehensive document from the point of view of possible contributions from all parties involved in shaping the new European strategy. The new strategy will guide the EU's external action for the years to come. The strategy is a broad document that leaves the opportunity to develop further sectorial strategy and foresee a mechanism for its own updating.

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**TITLE:**

**The Process and the Reasons behind the New European Global Strategy and Its Major Implications**

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OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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## Executive Summary

**Title:** The Process and the Reasons behind the New European Global Strategy and Its Major Implications

**Author:** Major Ivan Falasca, Italian Army Marine

**Thesis:** The EU needed a new security strategy in order to face the actual threats coming from the global environment and to affirm itself as a global actor. In order to achieve this ambitious aim, the EU has chosen a process which involved all Member States in giving contribution. At present day, the EU will face both opportunities and challenges in implementing the content of the approved document that will be of outmost importance in its future posture facing either internal or external threats to EU security.

**Discussion:** In the light of the changed geo-political context and the new challenges and opportunities that the European Union (EU) has been facing, the European Council on the Defense of December 2013 gave mandate to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) to work on updating the European security strategy. The HR, in response to this mandate, has launched a working group with the task to address the process of adaptation of the previous European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003 in a broader strategy document in support of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The objective has materialized with the presentation of the new strategy at the European Council (EC) meeting held in Brussels on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2016. The innovation in the European approach to security and global issues is already evident in the title of the document, *Shared Vision, Common Action: a Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*. The Heads of State and Government of the twenty-eight Member States (MS) welcomed the final text and invited the HR, the European Commission and the European Council to ensure its effective implementation. In particular, Italy has strongly sustained the development of the new strategy, giving its own contribution based on the conviction that the new strategy is a great opportunity to boost the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). The present paper develops its arguments answering the following questions: why did the EU feel the need for a new security strategy? What has been the process that led to the final document? Does the document fit in the present and future geopolitical and strategic environment? What are the challenges and opportunities for the EU in implementing the strategy?

**Conclusion:** The new European Global Strategy will guide both the EU's external and internal security policy for years to come. It also represents the right opportunity to reinvigorate a more union in the Defense sector. Implementing the Global Strategy is a momentous endeavor by any standard, both for the EU and its Member State.

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## *Table of Contents*

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	ii
DISCLAIMER .....	iii
PREFACE.....	v
INTRODUCTION .....	1
THE NEED FOR A NEW SECURITY STRATEGY .....	2
The Path toward the European Strategy Review .....	2
The Strategy Review as Seen in Brussels .....	3
The Strategy Review as Seen by the Think Tanks .....	5
The European Global Strategy .....	7
THE PROCESS FOR A GLOBAL STRATEGY.....	9
The First Phase: The “Global Assessment” .....	10
The Second Phase: The National Contact Points Meetings.....	12
THE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION.....	13
Diplomacy, Prevention, and Peacebuilding .....	14
EU-NATO Cooperation .....	14
Strengthening State and Societal Resilience.....	15
EU’s Internal Resilience: Security and Defense .....	16
IMPLICATIONS OF THE EUGS IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY AND DEFENSE.....	17
European Union Battle-Groups (EUBGs) .....	18
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR IMPLEMENTATION .....	19
Strengthening the EU as a Security Provider.....	19
Strengthening Ruled-Based Global Governance .....	21
Strengthening the EU’s Joined-Up Approach in the Implementation of the SDGs .....	23
CONCLUSIONS.....	24
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	27

## *Preface*

Since 2015 I have been serving as Staff Officer in the Italian Defense General Staff, Plans and Policy Division, International Organization Office, European Union (EU) section. One of the biggest issues I have been working on was about the Italian Defense contribution to the new EU security strategy. Starting from this work, I started to get interested in the reasons why the EU chose to write a new strategy at that particular moment and the process it followed in drafting the document. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), Federica Mogherini, presented the final version of the strategy at the European Council held in Brussels on the 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The reason of this paper is to study the new European security strategy because it represents a fundamental document about the future EU's posture facing security challenges. In particular I have investigated on the needs for this new strategy (the "why") and the process adopted for the elaboration of the document (the "how"). In analyzing this process, the research focus also on the Italian contributions in the development of the new strategy. I am also arguing about the implications of the new strategy for Italy and for EU's main partners. I consider the proposed topic important to understand how the EU will face the future strategic and geopolitical environment as a global actor, thus implying even how it will behave with the other global powers such as United States and China.

I would like to thank the colleagues of the Plans and Policy Division of the Italian Defense General Staff for providing me with updates and recent materials about the new European security strategy. I am also indebted to Dr. John W. Gordon, my MMS mentor, for his interested and enthusiastic support of this paper from its inception to its conclusion. Finally, I need to thank my wife, Maria Di Cecilia, for her unswerving support as well as her sharp and clear criticism.

## **Introduction**

In the light of the changed geo-political context and the new challenges and opportunities that the European Union (EU) has been facing in recent years, the European Council (EC) on the Defense of December 2013 gave a mandate to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) to work on updating the previous European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003. The HR promptly launched a working group with the task of address the process of adaptation of the ESS in a broader strategy document in support of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The objective has materialized with the presentation of the new strategy at the EC meeting held in Brussels on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2016. The innovative approach is already evident in the title of the document, *Shared Vision, Common Action: a Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*. The Heads of State and Government of the twenty-eight Member States (MS) welcomed the final text. In particular, Italy has strongly sustained the development of the new strategy, giving its own contribution to boost the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). The present paper develops its research answering the following questions: why a new security strategy? What has been the process that led to the final document? Does the document fit in the present and future geopolitical and strategic environment? What are the challenges and opportunities for the EU in implementing the strategy? In the conclusion, it will state that the EU needed a new security strategy to face the current threats coming from the global environment and to affirm itself as a global actor. In order to achieve this ambitious aim, the EU has chosen a process which involved all Member States in contributing for the strategy. At present day, the EU will face both opportunities and challenges in implementing the content of the approved document that will be of utmost importance in its future posture facing either internal or external threats to EU security.

## **The Need for a New Strategy**

### *The Path toward the European Strategy Review*

Thirteen years have passed since the approval of the "European security strategy" (ESS) in December 2003<sup>1</sup>, after the appointment of Javier Solana as the first High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy<sup>2</sup>. It was a very important milestone, which completed a long process begun in Europe half a century earlier. A path that since the signing of the Treaty of Brussels in 1948 laid the groundwork for some form of cooperation for European security. This began the main topic of discussions among European countries and between them and the United States, always in the light of NATO's military umbrella provided to the Western European Union, especially after the failure of projects such as the European defense community.

The ESS was the first European strategy paper. It had become necessary after the establishment, a few years earlier, of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) within the EU Second Pillar, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The result achieved was considered positive, so that the document has withstood the numerous changes that the field of the common foreign, security, and defense policy have registered in recent years. The first attempt to revise the ESS dates back to 2008. The initial idea to rewrite it was soon shelved and the European policy makers agreed to compile a report on its state of implementation, which obviously focused on the new challenges and threats.

After the strategic silence during the four year mandate of Britain's Lady Catherine M. Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), Federica

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<sup>1</sup> European Council. *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*. Brussels, 12 December 2003. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup>"Treaty on European Union." December 1, 2009, available at [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF).

The post of the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy was originally created under the Amsterdam Treaty. The Lisbon Treaty maintains this function as cited in article 15 and following.

Mogherini launched the European strategy review in June 2015. Mogherini acted under the mandate received from the European Council<sup>3</sup> to direct a broad process of reflection and consultation which should have led to the development of a global strategy on foreign and security policy. Such a strategy should have calibrated itself on the changed international scenarios and the upheavals that have affected many countries placed along the borders of the Union in recent years. This process obviously has reignited the debate among academics and policy makers, with a proliferation of essays made by the main European think tanks.

#### *The Strategy Review as Seen in Brussels*

No attempt of strategy review could begin without a thorough reading of the Solana document *A Secure Europe in a Better World* (ESS)<sup>4</sup>. Far from being exceeded, the document remains the most effective synthesis underlying the objectives of the EU foreign policy, which have not changed much over the years. What has changed is the sense of urgency and the realization that, in the face of changing global scenarios, these objectives must be pursued, and not left on the level of slogans.

The text sets out some principles that have become the cornerstones of EU external action:

- No European State can tackle them individually<sup>5</sup>.
- The biggest threats are increasingly transnational and global, and involve all EU States<sup>6</sup>.
- Europe will be safer in so far as the rest of the world will be better<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>European Council. *European Council 19/20 December 2013. Conclusions*. (Brussels, EUCO 217/13), p. 4. <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-217-2013-INIT/en/pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> ESS, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2-5.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10.

- Europe is inevitably a global player and as such can/must assume increasing responsibility for a positive transformation of its neighborhood and the international system as a whole<sup>8</sup> (this is the meaning of "A Secure Europe in a better world").

Starting from this premise, the paper argues for an approach more and more synergic between European partners, which should develop a common strategic culture as a prerequisite for adopting measures more active (preventive, timely, multi-dimensional, vigorous), more capable (more resources for defense, routine use of common and shared tools), and more consistent (bring together different instruments and different capacities of Member States and EU institutions) with a strong ability to work with international partners. In summary, it postulated an all-out preventive action through political, economic, and military instruments (the so-called comprehensive approach), strong partnerships, and building an effective multilateralism.

HR Mogherini in her remarks made at the Annual Conference of the EU Institute for Security Studies in October 2015<sup>9</sup>, stated the same principles of ESS. In particular she mentioned the engagement with all stakeholders in the international community (even those non-State actors), the EU responsibility for global security, and the centrality (key concept) of win-win partnerships that are part of the DNA of Europe. According to this speech, it was evident that the HR had already in mind three main objectives for the future strategy review. Firstly, to give a strong sense of direction to European foreign policy, in order to focus resources on key strategic priorities and escape from the reactive and emotional approach that seemed to prevail at the moment. Secondly, to ensure that comprehensive approach (renamed "joined-up approach") after years of trying to implement it, within a synergistic and coherent use of all EU external action instruments

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10-14.

<sup>9</sup> European Union External Action Service. *Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the EUISS Annual Conference*. (Brussels, 2015). <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/remarks-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-euiss-annual-conference>.

(enlargement, neighborhood, development cooperation, trade policy, etc.) aimed at achieving the strategic objectives. Thirdly, to enhance the engagement and buy-in of the Member States and their respective public opinions with respect to the European foreign policy with the aim to increase the share of sovereignty and more ambitious common goals.

Finally, the document *The European Union in a Changing Global Environment*<sup>10</sup> was a preparatory text making the diagnosis on the basis of which the future strategy itself will be drawn up. It is divided into three parts: the changes in the global context; key challenges/opportunities for the EU; the implications for the EU's foreign policy, with particular reference to the external action instruments.

#### *The Strategy Review as Seen by the Think Tanks*

All major think tanks in Europe agreed on the need for a new European security strategy. The debate within the community of policy analysts that started since 2013 concerned then the reasons for a new strategy and its content. Regarding the diagnosis, the three papers are “Europe's Strategic Cacophony,” “Why Europe Needs a Global Strategy,” and “The Path to an Upgraded EU Foreign Policy.” The three reports analyze the policy from different perspectives which focus, respectively, on the lack of direction, on the scale of global changes, and on the structural deficiencies of the external action of the EU.

“Europe's Strategic Cacophony<sup>11</sup>” argues that, despite all the progress made in terms of European integration and coordination of foreign and defense policies, European States are far from having a shared approach to common threats. From a detailed examination of the national strategies of the

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<sup>10</sup> European External Action Service. *The European Union in a changing global environment. A more connected, contested and complex world.* (Brussels, 2015). <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/strategic-review-european-union-changing-global-environment>.

<sup>11</sup> Olivier De France, and Nick Witney, *Europe's Strategic Cacophony* (London: ECFR, 2013). [http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR77\\_SECURITY\\_BRIEF\\_AW.pdf](http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR77_SECURITY_BRIEF_AW.pdf).

twenty-eight Member States, the authors remark that countries still live under the illusion that they can meet current challenges independently. As a result, the European dimension is absent or otherwise entirely secondary in their strategy papers. In addition, the report argues that there is a clear lack of strategic culture among European Nations. Therefore, an EU Global Strategy pursues a twofold task: to induce States to think strategically and to put the EU at the center of national policy arguments.

“Why Europe Needs a New Global Strategy<sup>12</sup>” supports the urgent need to develop a real European strategy paper in light of the extraordinary changes in the global scenario of the last decade and the inability of Europe to face them. The traditional soft power, alleged advantage of the EU and its Member States, appears less dazzling in a continent characterized by low growth, high unemployment, increasing inequality, and the crisis of the same model of integration, until recently considered a regional model for all international organizations. The weakening of Europe is in contrast to the strengthening of authoritarian States’ influence. These countries – such as China, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf countries – bring different development models based on substantial financial resources which have opened up important spaces. The EU hard power, which has always been very limited because of fragmentation of the armed forces into twenty-eight independent organizations and limited defense budget, is likely to slip even further into irrelevance. This is even a consequence of the growing American reluctance to shoulder the burden of being the armed wing of the Europeans, and the parallel increase in military spending by China and the emerging powers who have already surpassed Europe in terms of total volume of defense expenditure.

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<sup>12</sup> Susi Dennison et al., *Why Europe Needs a New Global Strategy* (London: ECFR, 2013).  
[http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR90\\_STRATEGY\\_BRIEF\\_AW.pdf](http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR90_STRATEGY_BRIEF_AW.pdf).

In “The Path to an Upgraded EU Foreign Policy,<sup>13</sup>” former Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) highlights a third reason why it is essential to develop a genuine European strategy: the structural limits of the *modus operandi* of European foreign policy. In particular, he argues about three limits. Firstly, despite progress in the CFSP and in the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), the creation of the EEAS and the major powers of the HR/VP as provided in the Lisbon Treaty, the Member States have transferred little sovereignty to EU foreign and defense policy. Unanimity remains the rule, the States retain their national representation in international organizations and the EEAS, in the absence of a strong input, cannot carry out actions. Secondly, major powers in terms of external action belong to the European Commission, not the EEAS, and coordination is insufficient. This explains why the EU looks more like a soft power rather than as a classical power acting through the instruments of *realpolitik*. Thirdly, the EU has never developed a clear concept of its added value in foreign and defense policy, with the result that some interventions are implemented without objective reason; while others, who might be more crucial for European security, are left out. Therefore, it seems there is not a clear prioritization.

#### *The European Global Strategy (EGS)*

Given the limits of the ESS of 2003 and the apparent lack of interest of the HR Ashton and the Member States for an update/rewrite of the strategy, the Foreign Ministers of Italy, Spain, Poland, and Sweden had commissioned in 2012 four think tanks of their respective countries (for Italy the International Affairs Institute) to prepare a document entitled *European Global Strategy* (EGS).

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<sup>13</sup> Pierre Vimont, *The Path to an Upgraded EU Foreign Policy* (Brussels: Carnegie Europe, 2015).  
[http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Vimont\\_EU\\_Foreign\\_Policy\\_Posting.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Vimont_EU_Foreign_Policy_Posting.pdf).

This document<sup>14</sup>, presented in May 2013 in Rome, identifies common values and interests, the resulting strategic objectives, and the main tools to deal with them.

The EGS assumes that the EU is first and foremost a community of values and shared interests, which are substantially: economic and social development; peace and security; a democratic neighborhood based on the rule of law and human rights law; certainty in access to natural resources and environmental sustainability; minimal restrictions on the movement of people, ideas, goods, and services; a fair and effective system of regional and global governance. These interests and values define three categories of strategic objectives that Member States should pursue in perfect synergy. The first<sup>15</sup> is economic growth, which has a dual and unavoidable external dimension considering that the EU is a trading power scarce in raw materials. It aims at the further development of a multilateral trading system, through free trade agreements and protection of sea lanes and cyberspace, and a robust energy security policy with the creation of an internal energy market, diversification of sources and expansion of renewable and non-conventional energy.

The second strategic objective<sup>16</sup> is the transformation of the Eastern and Southern neighborhood as well as the strategic neighborhood (the “neighbors of our neighbors”). This geographic space encompasses many vital interests of the EU (Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Arctic). The EGS stresses the importance of completing the EU enlargement to the Western Balkans, Iceland, and Turkey to expand the domestic market, strengthen energy security and give greater strategic depth to the Union. As for the Eastern and Southern Neighborhood, it suggests to move from the conditions based approach in favor of a broad policy which should foster economic growth, good governance and human rights, thus renouncing to its paternalistic

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<sup>14</sup> Alessandro Marrone et al., *Towards a European Global Strategy. Securing European Influence in a Changing World* (Rome, ITA: IAI, 2013). [http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/egs\\_report.pdf](http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/egs_report.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8-9.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10-14.

logic of “more for more” for a co-prosperity approach. The EU should also assume greater responsibility for security in its own strategic neighborhood with all civilian and military capabilities required for autonomous, fast and effective actions at all stages of crisis prevention, humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, post-conflict institution building, and development cooperation. The EGS indents, in a functional concept of the neighborhood, even the strategic relationship with the United States – to improve through the finalization of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and deepening cooperation within NATO – and with the other two key partners, Russia and China.

Finally, the third objective<sup>17</sup> is to contribute to the construction of global governance, by updating the existing liberal order considering the needs of new actors who aspire to more space. In this process it is fundamental to maintain the fundamental principles of international law, collective security, and the trinomial human rights/freedoms/democracy. Living example of effective multilateralism, the EU is by its nature particularly suitable for this purpose, with its constant commitment to institutionalized solutions to global problems ranging from climate change to arms control.

### **The Process for a Global Strategy**

The issue of the ESS review has become increasingly important for the EU institutions and the Member States. As said, further impetus was impressed by the new HR, Hon. Federica Mogherini, soon after her inauguration on November 1, 2014. During a breakfast meeting with the Ambassadors of the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the HR has provided some guidance on how she intended to proceed on the revision of the ESS. In particular, she envisioned two main phases in the review process: analysis, conducted by a joint working group between the European

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 14-17.

Commission, the Presidency of the European Council, and the EEAS; and drafting, step that, following the outcomes of the EC 2015, gave course to task of the development of the new ESS.

*The First Phase: the Global Assessment*

With regard to the first phase, this has resulted in the preparation of a global assessment<sup>18</sup>, a fundamental document for the preparation of the European Council in June 2015. Indeed, the HR illustrated the major points of the document during the mentioned Council, after she got approval at the Council of Foreign Affairs-Defense Format of 18 May 2015<sup>19</sup>, in view of the revision of the ESS. The document is divided into three parts: a changing global environment; challenges and opportunities for the EU; and is the EU equipped for the tasks.

In the first part, a changing global environment<sup>20</sup>, the document highlights the characteristics of the global environment, defined as a more connected world because of unprecedented flow of tourism, trade, migration, and information. Furthermore, the actual environment is more challenged, characterized by fragile States, which often are at the border line of failure, population explosion, pressure on resources and environment, and growth of internal inequalities. Finally, the environment is even more complex, with an increase in the number of State and non-State actors and the emergence of new non-Western powers – China first – able to contest the current international order.

In the second part<sup>21</sup>, the document identifies challenges and opportunities for the EU in the post-cold-war European order, in the light of Russian assertiveness in the Middle Eastern, in the North African upheaval (with the serious risk of spillover of instability on the European continent), in

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<sup>18</sup> See footnote n. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Common Security and Defense Policy. Brussels, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015*, p. 2. <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/05/18-council-conclusions-csdp/>.

<sup>20</sup> *The European Union in a changing global environment*, p. 4-11.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p. 11-13.

the relationship with Africa, in the transatlantic partnership at a crossroads (also a reference to Latin America), and in the multilateral system upgrade.

In the third part<sup>22</sup>, the document considers the various EU policies stating the necessity for their modification and adaptation to the new needs. About the CSDP, in particular, it says that the EU should rethink the primary objectives and operational procedures in the light of the experience gained and considering the change in the character of conflicts. The reflection continues highlighting the issues related to the policies' implementation. For the CSDP, for example, the problems are the difficulty of finding men and financial resources for the missions and the reduction of capacity for both the Member States and the EU. Finally, it stresses the importance of the comprehensive approach as a method to give priority in the use of the instruments at the EU's disposal.

In its conclusion<sup>23</sup>, the *Global Assessment* states that the ESS 2003 – litmus of a Europe that began to approach the role as a global player – is no longer compatible with the current structure of the global environment, degraded and heavily mutated because of the deep economic crisis of 2007-2008 and given the diversity of regional experiences arising from the EU enlargement policy. In dealing with these changes – at the same time sources of disorder and opportunity – the EU needs to turn its security strategy taking account of two fundamental aspects:

- (1) New global trends are neither linear nor foreordained, but only product of human choice.
- (2) The EU cannot go back, but aim only to the future by continuing to promote its values in a more connected, disputed, and complex global environment.

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. 13-19.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19.

*The Second Phase: the Contents of the New Strategy*

On September 22, 2015, the HR presented within the Permanent Representatives Committee and then to the Political and Security Committee a *food for thought* paper that started the second phase of the process of elaboration of the EU Global Strategy. It is worth to say that the second phase initiated theoretically after the European Council of June 2015, when the chiefs of States and Government had instructed the HR to present the new strategy by the Council of June 2016. In the view of the Council, the strategy should be based on the global context assessment as per the document "The EU in a changing global environment: a more connected, contested and complex world," presented by the same HR.

In her presentation, the HR stated to the European policy makers that the new strategy must lay its foundations on the values and interests of the Union, with a global reach. As a consequence, the new strategy will have to define the interests to be protected and, therefore, the strategic objectives toward which converge the set of policies, both external and internal, and the instruments at the EU's disposal. In particular, the HR identified the policies as reviving multilateralism, rethinking partnerships, investing in regional architectures, pioneering hybrid peace, supporting State and societal resilience, and responding to the European choice. In the mind of the HR, the new strategy would also point out how to achieve the goals. The new strategy will refer to a medium to long term period (approximately 6-8 years), for the implementation of which will be necessary to provide a method for review and update that make it flexible enough and strong enough to respond to the evolution of international events.

As for the process, the HR focused from the very beginning on the importance of involving all the stakeholders, Member States, and institutions, but also National Parliaments and civil society, the general public. This involvement has not resulted in a drafting exercise in writing the EUGS

involving many people, mainly because the elaboration of the strategy has always been a direct responsibility of the HR. The involvement envisioned by the HR has developed within a consultation period, which has saw several events scheduled in the months from October 2015 to May 2016. In such view, the HR stressed the importance to provide a contact point in each Capital, so Member States could thus better secured its contribution and a constant connection with the European External Action Service (EEAS) team set up to realize the project of the global strategy. These outreach activities had a threefold purpose: collect input for the new strategy; inform Member States and public opinion on the process of preparing the document; and raise awareness among citizens about the importance of the role of the EU in the global context and its Foreign and Defense policy.

### **The Italian Contribution<sup>24</sup>**

Italy has always been conducive to the development of a new European strategy that adapts to current needs and the current geo-strategic context. The aim has been to stimulate a more mature awareness of the added value that the EU can offer in the world stage, especially compared to the need to adopt active policies (not just reactive). The strategy should have considered the different perceptions of Member States in relation to threats and vulnerabilities, by averaging their geopolitical interests, and include events which, from the processing of the ESS, have significantly influenced the European security. For these reasons, Italy welcomed with great satisfaction the strategy newly minted, more compatible and consistent with the current geo-strategic and unpredictable context, that is able to elevate the holistic approach to incident response standard of CSDP, taking into consideration the interests and strategic objectives.

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<sup>24</sup> The content of this paragraph comes from the work of the author while he was serving at the Italian Defense General Staff and it represents the official Italian contribution to the works for the EUGS. The Italian Contact Point, named by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, presented to Brussels all Italian positions about the different topics examined in the paragraph during different meeting held in second phase. There are no published papers or articles as references.

During the second phase of the work for the EUGS, Italy has promoted its own contribution, through the national contact point, that has focused in particular on diplomacy, prevention, and peacebuilding; EU-NATO cooperation; strengthening state and societal resilience; EU's internal resilience.

#### *Diplomacy, Prevention, and Peacebuilding*

Italy stressed the concept that diplomacy is key to crisis management and the EU should be strongly committed to solving the most virulent crises in the region by favoring a political transition in Syria, a national unity government in Libya, the overcoming of the current institutional deadlock in Lebanon, the restart of the Israeli-Palestinian political process, and the establishment of a modus vivendi in Yemen. In addition, the EU should invest more in conflict prevention and peacebuilding with a heightened situational awareness and early warning capacities. It needed to invest in understanding the context and spot early on potentially critical situations such as human rights abuses, unequal distribution of power and wealth, and high levels of patronage and corruption. It should empower the key players that can contribute to confidence building measure and reconciliation, including women, young adults, and religious leaders. Another crucial dimension of prevention/peacebuilding to which the EU should devote considerable attention is multicultural/interreligious dialogue: it is key to foster understanding between communities and dissipate the harmful prejudices that can degenerate into radicalization and communal violence.

#### *EU-NATO Cooperation*

Italy focused in particular on the issue of a stronger cooperation between the EU and NATO. A greater synergy between NATO and the EU should be pursued in peacebuilding/crisis management. NATO is the information dominance provider and is more capable to address

programs of cooperative security, including defense capacity building, while the EU, taking advantage of deeper civilian-military cooperation, is a provider of conflict prevention and national/regional capacity building activities. Strategic convergence is key to work together in third countries: both organizations need to share – at least approximately – the same geographic priorities, centered on their immediate neighborhood, as well as a shared approach to crisis management. A strengthened cooperation should build on existing arrangements such as Berlin Plus<sup>25</sup> and make use of joint NATO-EU exercises, with a special focus on hybrid scenarios.

A joint review of EU-NATO agreements would also support the respective strategies of both organizations. Co-operation between NATO and EU can be further developed in many areas: early warning – where NATO Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance capabilities could be used to support EU decision-making; preventive diplomacy, by making a coordinated use of the respective partnership networks, enhancing situational awareness; governance, by providing integrated support to the capacity of the most appropriate level of authority conducive to political agreement in crisis and post-conflict situation.

#### *Strengthening State and Societal Resilience*

Italy underlined as the EU's strategy towards the MENA region and towards the Eastern Partnership countries should be centered on the concept of resilience. The EU must strive to strengthen resilience in countries such as Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, but also Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, without imposing ready-made development models. Resilience is the opposite of reluctance and conservatism. It implies a long term commitment to foster reforms, good governance, strong institutions, and a level playing field for all citizens and a

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<sup>25</sup> The Berlin Plus agreement refers to a comprehensive package of arrangements finalized in early 2003 between the EU and the NATO that allows the EU to make use of NATO assets and capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations.

conducive business environment. A crucial requirement for stability is inclusive development, which is not possible without addressing the socio-economic root-causes of disorder. Building up the resilience of the countries of our neighborhood should be a priority for EU external action. It is a medium/long-term strategy to support stability and peace in these regions contributing to a new pact for the future between institutions, citizens and civil society.

*EU's Internal Resilience: Security and Defense*

In the Italian view, Europe cannot play a credible role as a global actor without the support of an effective military. The lack of an integrated European Defense entails deep weaknesses and very high costs not only financially, but also, and above all, in political and strategic terms: a global actor cannot afford it. Hence the urgent need to concretely work to strengthen capabilities and procedures able to improve CSDP effectiveness. The EUGS should outline how to maximize civil-military synergy among structures responsible for CSDP planning and conducting activities in areas where today there is discontinuity between the political-strategic and the military-strategic levels. It is a matter of promoting a host of concrete initiatives to re-launch the stagnant European Defense integration process by using effective forms of cooperation already provided in the EU Treaties, also by reinforcing the EDTIB (European Defense Technological and Industrial Base) through targeted supporting policies such as financial incentives and tax breaks. The EU-NATO capability group should also be reinforced, with a special focus on high-end, technologically complex and financially demanding enabling capabilities. Other areas where a reinforced cooperation would lead to mutually beneficial empowerment would include logistic infrastructure – also deployable – satellites and global positioning systems. Organizing an EU-NATO capability group meeting at Minister of Defense Policy Directors level would be a useful and agile way to reinforce coherence between the respective defense planning processes.

## Implications of the EUGS in the Field of Security and Defense

The new strategy refers to a medium to long term period (approximately six/eight years) for the implementation of which will be necessary to provide procedures for review and update, that will make it flexible and strong enough to cope with to the evolution of international affairs. The HR's special advisor for the EUGS, Ms. Nathalie Tocci, remarked how this meshes well around interests (security, prosperity and resilience) that are internal but have strong external implications; principles (a more connected, disputed, and complex world, characterized by the power shift from West to East and its spread among non-State actors); and priority.

The document launched must be implemented now by the HR and the Council of the EU. In this regard, considering the outcome of the referendum that has decreed the BREXIT, it is likely the discussion will become more constructive, failing the vexed and traditional British intransigence. Therefore, *a fortiori* the Italian goal to derive a sub-strategy in Defense from the EUGS will now be more actionable. This sub-strategy in the form of an *Implementation Plan on Security and Defense*<sup>26</sup> (IPSD) will need to be coherent with both the EUGS and the preparing *European Defense Action Plan*<sup>27</sup> (EDAP) and to be able to define both the EU's level of ambition and the necessary military capabilities in order to achieve it. In drafting of such implementation, they will have to take into account the following issues: EU-NATO cooperation; development of common capabilities; role played by the European Defense Agency (EDA) in supporting multinational cooperation, the EDAP and the European Defense Industrial and Technological Base (EDTIB);

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<sup>26</sup> Council of the European Union, *Council conclusions on implementing the EU Global Strategy in the area of Security and Defence - Council conclusions (14 November 2016)*, p. 2.  
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/11/14-conclusions-eu-global-strategy-security-defence/>.

<sup>27</sup> European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Defense Action Plan*. (Brussels: November 2016).  
[https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/com\\_2016\\_950\\_fl\\_communication\\_from\\_commission\\_to\\_inst\\_en\\_v5\\_p1\\_869\\_631.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/com_2016_950_fl_communication_from_commission_to_inst_en_v5_p1_869_631.pdf).

definition of civil-military level of ambition; link internal/external security; improvement of the CSDP not only “on paper”, but even in terms of resources.

Some of the major EU Member States, such as Italy, France, Germany, and Spain have already made contributions aimed at implementing the IPSD. In particular, in a joint non-paper those States have stated that the IPSD should take into consideration, in addition to the above mentioned points, even the creation of a military-civilian mission directorate and an update of the concept of the *European Union Battle-Groups* (EUBGs).

Along this line, based on the strong political *imprimatur* received and the desire to send a positive political signal in the aftermath of the shocking referendum on BREXIT, the HR has recently presented to several high EU forum her own idea on the implementation of the EUGS structured on five main building blocks. In particular, these blocks are: building resilience and integrated approach in the management and prevention of crises and conflicts; IPSD; strengthen the link between internal and external dimension, with particular reference to migration policies and counterterrorism; update of existing EU strategies and elaboration of new thematic or geographic strategies; political/diplomatic activities.

The HR has given particular emphasis to the block relative to the IPSD, highlighting the leading position of the Member States, the full involvement of the EEAS and the European Defense Agency (EDA) and the need to enhance the EDAP and the outputs of the *EU-NATO Joint Declaration* of the Summit in Warsaw<sup>28</sup>. She has even detailed the following key elements: definition of a civil-military level of ambition coherent with the EUGS; development and strengthening of civil and military capabilities of the EU, through the review of the *Capability*

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<sup>28</sup> President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Joint Declaration. Warsaw 8<sup>th</sup> July 2016.* [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133163.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm).

*Development Plan* and the strengthening of the base of the EDTIB that should be consistent with the EDAP and texture; optimization of crisis response institutional structures and procedures; updating of mechanisms for cooperation with partners such as NATO, other international organizations (in particular the UN, OSCE and the African Union), and the US.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2016, in line with the initial road map, the EEAS released the first draft of the IPSD collecting the contributions received by the Member States. The document was then given back to Member States for a further sharing/revision. The presentation of such IPSD - at the end of a long review process - was performed at the EU Foreign Affairs Council-Defense format of 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016. In its conclusions, the Council has underlined the close link between the IPSD with the EDAP and the importance of complementary implementation of both the IPSD and the *Joint Declaration* signed in Warsaw by the leaders of the institutions of the EU and NATO.

### **Opportunities and Challenges for Implementation**

After the finalization of the EUGS and its presentation to the European Council, the attention suddenly has shifted from its content to its implementation in a troubled international environment. Discussions at both political and experts' level have focused on the EU as a security actor, developing rules-based global governance in new areas, and capacity-building as part of the joined-up approach in the case of pursuing the United Nations' "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs).

#### *Strengthening the EU as a Security Actor*

In the words of the Global Strategy, an "appropriate level of ambition and strategic autonomy is important for Europe's ability to foster peace and safeguard security within and beyond its

borders.<sup>29</sup>” The EU’s involvement in fragile and conflict-torn states has increased in recent years<sup>30</sup> - from troop training and security sector reform activities in the mission EUSEC RD Congo and countering anti-terrorism and organized crime in EUCAP Sahel Niger, to border management with a capacity-building mandate in EUBAM Libya. Furthermore, adaptations to the EU’s common security capabilities and organizational frameworks are proposed in the EUGS, ranging from reinforced EDA benchmarking to further extending the mandates and ambition of EU military and civilian operations. This ambition is also reflected in the Global Strategy, with the first priority solely focusing on security of the Union<sup>31</sup>. This first priority on “strengthening security and defense” was reiterated in the conclusions of the EU’s Foreign Affairs Council of 17 October 2016<sup>32</sup>. As already said, this ambition was developed further in the IPSD, presented by HR Mogherini during the Council of 14 November 2016<sup>33</sup>.

A first challenge is represented by the fact that the security architecture, built over the last twenty-five years, is not only deteriorating but also falling apart. There are several current issues that need be addressed: the US presidential elections and the possible consequences for NATO, uncertainty about a resurgent Russia, the Syrian conflict, the so-called Islamic State, the fear of terrorist attacks, and the political situation in Turkey and Libya. On top of that, the EU as a project has lost its glamour and there is increasing uncertainty within the EU. Expectations about BREXIT and its

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<sup>29</sup>European Council, *A Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy, “Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe” June 2016*, p. 19.

[https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/eugs_review_web.pdf) (hereinafter: EUGS)

<sup>30</sup>European Union External Action Service, *Ongoing mission and operations*, last updated December 2016.

[http://collections.internetmemory.org/haeu/content/20160313172652/http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/index\\_en.htm](http://collections.internetmemory.org/haeu/content/20160313172652/http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/index_en.htm).

<sup>31</sup>See in particular EUGS, pp. 44-46.

<sup>32</sup>Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on the Global Strategy on the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy*, (Luxembourg, 17 October 2016, 13202/16), p. 2.

<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13202-2016-INIT/en/pdf>.

<sup>33</sup>European External Action Service, *Mogherini presents Implementation Plan on Security and Defense to EU Ministers*, 14 November 2016. [https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/foreign-affairs-council/14820/mogherini-presents-implementation-plan-on-security-and-defence-to-eu-ministers\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/foreign-affairs-council/14820/mogherini-presents-implementation-plan-on-security-and-defence-to-eu-ministers_en).

implications are that the United Kingdom would continue to play a role in European defense and security as it is in its interest to stay close to Europe. Moreover, the United Kingdom is a NATO member. The British departure from the Union would have both negative and positive effects. The negative effect would be that the biggest military spender would leave the EU - roughly 25% of the total EU defense expenditure<sup>34</sup>. Additionally, one of the more decisive and willing members on defense and security issues would leave the Union. Over the past years, London has displayed great willingness to act in crisis situations. A British withdrawal from the EU raises questions of who will step up and take on this role. At the same time, a BREXIT could result in opening of political space. However, further defense cooperation can also backfire with the European citizens. Overall, a pragmatic arrangement with London could be struck, for example a sort of associate membership on defense issues, similar to arrangements in the former Western European Union.

A first opportunity for the EU comes from the fact that pragmatic solutions were put forward as means to solve urgent crises and as a way to build credibility. The notion of “principled pragmatism<sup>35</sup>” as stated in the EUGS has to be welcomed. There are sufficient institutional mechanisms and policies, such as article 42 of the Lisbon Treaty, together with the other provisions on the CFSP and CSDP. These mechanisms and policies would provide sufficient possibilities for cooperation within the EU framework. There is therefore no need for new institutional mechanisms. Moreover, there is no lack of capacity within the EU, but, rather, a lack of political will. Political leadership in the capitals is needed if the goals in the Strategy are ever to be achieved. Other opportunities will come from the concept of implementing EU-NATO and public-private defense cooperation.

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<sup>34</sup>European Defense Agency, *Defense Data Portal*. <http://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/defense-data-portal>. .

<sup>35</sup> EUGS, p. 8.

### *Strengthening Rule-based Global Governance*

The Global Strategy emphasizes the EU's commitment "to a global order based on international law, including the principles of the UN Charter" and notes that this "commitment translates into an aspiration to transform rather than simply preserve the existing system."<sup>36</sup> The EUGS thus puts a particular emphasis on the importance of strengthening international law and international institutions. The Strategy mentions specifically cyber, space, energy, and health as fields for developing further a rule-based international system.<sup>37</sup>

In particular, in terms of creating norms for cyber governance, two main modes of norm creation can be distinguished. Each of them provides both challenges and opportunities for the EU as a shaper of global norms. Firstly, there is the traditional mode of creating international law through international agreements and working through international organizations. The other, novel mode is working through multi-stakeholder processes, i.e. informal, fluid settings involving non-state actors such as the business sector, the technical community, and users.

In terms of challenges, at the moment neither mode of governance is able to forge a global consensus on an ambitious set of cyber norms. This means that many issues of policy, law, and ethics remain to be sorted out by corporations by default. This led to describe the current state of affairs as the "privatization of justice." In addition, currently public opinion appears rather averse to new global rules in general, heeding the experience the EU had with the ratification of the ill-fated Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) and the lack of public support for new trade agreements such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Moreover, the creation of norms and their universalization would mean little if not backed up by a strong European digital industrial base and implementation and enforcement capabilities. Due to the

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, p. 39.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 42-43.

interconnected nature of the Internet, the weakest links can often be found in weak states outside of the EU, making a secure Internet also a matter of EU foreign policy.

In terms of opportunities, given the Global Strategy's conception of the EU's role as "an agenda-shaper, a connector, coordinator and facilitator within a networked web of players,<sup>38</sup>" it is well-equipped to play a much more active role in multi-stakeholder settings than it currently does. This does not equate replacing the Member States. Rather, it entails the EU investing in multi-stakeholder governance, showing more high-profile leadership in this area, and playing a constructive role in coordinating the Member States. Regarding the next steps for establishing policy-specific roadmaps for implementing the EUGS, the area of cyber can build on the 2013 "Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union<sup>39</sup>". As a first step, this document needs to be updated in light of the Global Strategy. Moreover, given the cross-cutting importance of cyber in today's governance, both internal and external, cyber aspects should be mainstreamed into other sectoral strategies to be adopted with a view to the implementation of the EUGS.

#### *Strengthening the EU's Joined-up Approach in the Implementation of the SDGs*

When assessing the place of the SDGs in the ambitions laid down in the EUGS as a whole, it could be affirmed that there is an apparent sense of friction between the support for the SDGs (and the civil society actors engaged in the pursuit of these goals) and the increased emphasis on the security sector. Even if it is only aimed at creating a degree of EU strategic autonomy from NATO, this nonetheless creates concerns that the CSDP will be prioritized in EU external action over development and other policies in pursuit of the SDGs. However, similarly to the SDGs, the EUGS

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<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>39</sup>European Commission, and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign and Security Policy, *Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace* (Brussels, 7 February 2013, JOIN(2013) 1 final).

[http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/policies/eu-cyber-security/cybsec\\_comm\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/policies/eu-cyber-security/cybsec_comm_en.pdf).

is also the result of complex negotiations. One of the new elements, when compared to the 2003 ESS, is the EUGS's less Eurocentric nature, which was highly welcomed. While Eurocentrism is not bad *per se* it is not helpful for engaging global civil society and for promoting universal values, thus rendering EU foreign policy less effective. This could become a credibility challenge for the Union.

In the end, all these issues translate into an uneasy marriage of values and interests in the EUGS. The principled pragmatism approach and the choice of terms such as resilience and flexibility is well founded in this regard and will hopefully prove useful when devising internal and external policies to overcome insecurity and uncertainty within Europe and beyond. A joined-up approach can facilitate joint actions at the sector level, and incorporate development initiatives and objectives, above all the SDGs<sup>40</sup>, in the first stages of EU programming. In doing so the joined-up approach can close gaps and avoid overlaps in development cooperation in support of the SDGs, as well as improving the EU's political visibility.

However, the priorities of the EUGS seem to be more aligned within the internal needs of the Union and that the SDGs are not at the center of the EUGS. Therefore, there is an apparent discrepancy between internal and external approaches, and as a result SDGs are not always strongly translated in the EUGS. Migration is a case in point, being regarded rather as a security concern. Unfortunately, the positive aspects of migration that could be used as a way of promoting sustainable development seem largely absent from the EUGS and the surrounding discourse. But experts agreed that the EUGS is a balancing exercise of prioritizing objectives and challenges of the EU, as opposed to the SDGs which are a global commitment.

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<sup>40</sup>EUGS, p. 50. See also p. 26, where the EUGS states that “[e]choing the Sustainable Development Goals, the EU will adopt a joined-up approach to its humanitarian, development, migration, trade, investment, infrastructure, education, health and research policies, as well as improve horizontal coherence between the EU and its Member States.”

## Conclusions

In the so-called global political awakening of recent years, that has not always produced democracy, but more often just freed weak States from the external influence, it was not so marked a wish to adopt European standards. The idea of European soft power is no longer what it was at the time of the various enlargement processes. It seems weakened, partly due to the soft power competition in the Neighborhood: the Middle East, in particular, has strong economic and military support provided by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, and Iran; in the eastern neighborhood the presence of Russia has grown again; in other parts of the world the influence of China strengthens. In light of this, it is clear that Europe needed to rethink the way in which to better promote its values, particularly when an ideological, political, and economic competition raised both in the countries of the Southern and of the Eastern neighborhood. Fundamentally, these aspects were at the base of the need for the EU of a global strategy capable to cope with the new challenges in the global environment.

The process that led to the new document was of a graduate discussions among European institutions in a first phase, while Member States were more involved in the second phase. This allowed to obtain a more comprehensive document from the point of view of possible contributions from all parties involved in shaping the new European strategy.

In this process, Italy has always given its own contributions, sometimes in strict collaboration with other Member States, animated from the belief that the future strategy would have been the right opportunity to foster a stronger union among the European states. In particular, not only in the Italian view the development of a new EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy was also the right opportunity to reinvigorate a more union in the Defense sector. In order to achieve this goal it was fundamental to define, at the political-strategic level, more ambitious ways of

collaboration and synergies between EU and NATO, untying the political knots which have been preventing the two organizations from stepping up their relationships. In this regard, the IPSD recognizes the importance of maximizing civil-military synergy among those structures responsible for the CSDP planning and conducting activities where, in the past, there was discontinuity between political-strategic and military-strategic levels.

As the EU's Foreign Affairs Council noted in its Conclusions of 17 October 2016, the Global Strategy "will guide the EU's external action for the years to come<sup>41</sup>." First steps have already been taken by the Council in November 2016 in one of the three focus areas of this report in the form of the cited IPSD. The calendars of the EU institutions and Member State policymakers continue to fill up with further milestones for its implementation. Existing sector-specific strategies will be updated and new ones developed. In June 2017, the HR will submit the first yearly implementation report of the EUGS to the Council. This will be a crucial moment to gauge whether the words of the Strategy have been followed by deeds. Implementing the Global Strategy is a momentous endeavor by any standard, both for the EU and its Member States.

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<sup>41</sup>*Conclusions*, p. 1.

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