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**THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE
EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE IDENTITY:
"STILL A LONG WAY TO GO"**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Since 1998, the development of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) gained new momentum. National interests of the major European countries seem to converge. By 2003, the European Union (EU) wants to lead military operations in response to international crisis, in circumstances where NATO as a whole is not engaged militarily. In November 2000, the 15 EU members offered some 100,000 troops, 400 aircraft and 100 ships for the EU rapid reaction force. With these forces the EU will only be able to execute peacekeeping operations, and NATO assets have to be used as well. However, for peace-enforcing and autonomous military operations the European capabilities have to be strengthened.

The further development of ESDI faces many challenges. Large investments must be made in a time when defense budgets are not likely to increase. The lack of leadership and the bureaucratic decision-making process in the EU are not favorable for the development of a European Strategic Concept. In addition, the role of non-EU NATO allies, especially Turkey, demands a political solution. The further development of ESDI brings opportunities as well. A successful ESDI will contribute to a stronger and more responsive Europe. It will also enable the Western European Union (WEU) to integrate in the EU and it will create new and better ways of European defense cooperation. In the long term, a successful ESDI will even have consequences for the transatlantic relationship between the U.S. and Europe.

There is enough political will in Europe to make ESDI successful, but much remains to be done to further develop ESDI. One thing is for sure, for autonomous European military operations it is "still a long way to go".

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THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE IDENTITY: "STILL A LONG WAY TO GO"

Since the Treaty of Maastricht in 1991 the European Union (EU) has been working on the development of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Development of a European defense policy should support the CFSP. In 1996, the Foreign and Defense Ministers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) decided that a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) should be built within NATO. The "Helsinki" meeting of the Council of the EU in December 1999 made European aspirations clear. The EU wants to strengthen European military capabilities and lead military operations in response to international crisis, in circumstances where NATO as a whole is not engaged militarily. The EU established a "Headline Goal" of providing a rapid-reaction force of 50,000 to 60,000 troops by 2003. This force must be deployable within 60 days for the execution of peace operations, and must be sustained for at least a year.¹

At the Capabilities Commitment Conference in November 2000, the 15 EU members announced their contribution to this military capacity. This military contribution amounted to some 100,000 troops, 400 aircraft and 100 ships.² The European Heads of State and Government approved the ambitious plans to create an independent European military capacity at the EU-summit in December 2000. However, in the declaration of Nice, no further details were mentioned because of a difference of opinion between the United Kingdom and France. The United Kingdom wants the EU to use NATO-planning facilities, while France is more in favor of independent EU planning for military operations.

There are several crucial questions about "NATO-EU" cooperation waiting for an answer. How will military operations be coordinated? Can the EU use NATO assets? What is the role of non-EU NATO-members? For example, Turkey has blocked the use of NATO assets by the EU, because the Turks were not satisfied with their role in the decision-making process of EU-led military operations.³ The further development of ESDI also has effects on the transatlantic relation between the U.S. and Europe. At the NATO Ministerial in December 2000, the U.S. Secretary of Defense stated that NATO without cooperation with the EU could become a relic of the past. If the EU is going to plan its military operations independently from NATO, the ties between the U.S. and Europe will loosen, he warned.⁴

With the pool of resources offered, the EU will be able to execute peacekeeping operations by 2003, but only with the use of NATO assets. For peace-enforcing operations the EU member states must improve readiness, interoperability and sustainability. For autonomous EU-led operations the armed forces lack sufficient strategic sea- and airlift, intelligence assets and command and control facilities. Currently, the EU is dependent upon the U.S. to provide these strategic capabilities. The creation of an independent EU rapid reaction force needs large investments of money and time. A lot of political work needs to be done also. Therefore it is "still a long way to go" before the EU can lead autonomous military operations.

This study will address the further development of ESDI. It will discuss main points on ESDI development through the year 2000, national interests and policies, challenges and opportunities of further development, and possible long term consequences for the transatlantic link. The study will be ended with general conclusions.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ESDI THROUGH THE YEAR 2000

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Intereuropean security and defense cooperation has been on the agenda for 50 years. In 1950, French Minister Pleven launched the idea of a European Defense Community. In the 1960s, French President De Gaulle wanted Western Europe to become a Political Union including defense and economy under French leadership. In the 1980s, the Western European Union (WEU) was revitalized. In the Treaty of Maastricht (1991), a European Defense Identity was mentioned, which in the end could lead to a European defense closely cooperating with NATO. The WEU was intended to become the defense pillar of the EU.⁵

The first real discussions on the development of an ESDI took place at the NATO summit in Brussels in 1994. Particularly important was the decision of the Foreign and Defense Ministers in 1996 to develop ESDI within NATO. In pursuit of this aim, arrangements were made for military operations under the political control and strategic direction of the WEU. Consequently, "separable but not separate" military capabilities could be employed by NATO or the WEU. Case-by-case decisions would be made by the North Atlantic Council. If the decision is made that the WEU will lead a military operation, the Combined Joint Task Force concept would be used to make NATO assets available for the WEU.⁶

A NEW MOMENTUM SINCE 1998

The development of ESDI gained new momentum as a result of the Anglo-French summit in St. Malo on December 4, 1998. The United Kingdom will not participate in the Euro currency zone. Commitment to a stronger European defense was a way to influence European integration and not to get further isolated. France expressed its longstanding desire for a European defense that could only be implemented within NATO. Therefore, Prime Minister Blair and President Chirac called for a CFSP in the EU based on the capacity for autonomous action backed by credible forces.⁷

NATO Heads of State and Government continued the development of the next phase of ESDI at their summit in Washington in April 1999. NATO remained the primary organization for dealing with security issues on the continent, but the European pillar had to be strengthened. NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson repeatedly emphasized that "More Europe" will not lead to "less NATO". On the contrary, a stronger Europe means a stronger NATO. Effective mutual consultation, cooperation and transparency between the EU and NATO should be based on the mechanisms established between NATO and the WEU.⁸

The brief war in Kosovo underscored the gap in capabilities between the U.S. and its NATO Allies. A major factor contributing to this gap is the difference in defense budgets of the U.S. and the European nations. This gap grows wider as the U.S. defense budget grows and the European budgets decline. To prevent this, the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) was launched during the 1999 Washington summit.⁹ DCI is designed to ensure that all Allies not only remain interoperable, but that they also improve and update their capabilities to face the new security challenges. DCI will contribute to the development of ESDI by strengthening the European defense capabilities, and therefore the European pillar of NATO. ESDI and DCI are mutually reinforcing.¹⁰

The Cologne meeting of the EU in June 1999 supported the Anglo-French statements of St. Malo. In addition, it was also decided at this meeting that parts of the WEU should be integrated in the EU. This was confirmed at the WEU meeting in Luxembourg in November 1999. Mr. Javier Solana, the High Representative for the CFSP of the EU, was appointed as the Secretary General of the WEU in order to facilitate the integration and relations between the WEU and the EU.¹¹

The European political will to do more for its own security was demonstrated clearly in the Helsinki Headline Goal. In December 1999, the EU members agreed on the requirement to deploy and sustain a military force of up to 60,000 troops (15 brigades) by 2003. As described in the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), the so-called Petersberg missions for this force would consist of humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and peace-enforcing tasks.

CURRENT STATUS OF ESDI

In 2000, the EU started institutional changes to enable itself to provide political guidance and strategic direction to military operations. An interim Political Security Committee, an interim Military Body and an interim Military Staff were established in March.¹² At the European Council meeting in Feira in June 2000, four areas were identified in which cooperation with NATO would be sought. These included security issues, capability goals, modalities for EU access to NATO assets and the definition of permanent consultation arrangements. Principles to allow non-EU European NATO members and other EU accession candidates to contribute to EU military crisis-management were also outlined.¹³ In November 2000, a EU "Force Catalogue" was established. This force catalogue includes the earlier mentioned 100,000 troops, 400 aircraft and 100 ships. The 15 member states, with the exception of Denmark, would participate on a voluntary basis in EU-led military operations by 2003. With the forces currently offered, the EU is capable of executing peacekeeping operations, if NATO-assets can be used. In addition, the EU is also dependent on the strategic sea- and airlift, the intelligence and command- and control facilities of the U.S.¹⁴

Non-EU NATO countries have committed themselves to contribute to the European military capacity as well. For example, Turkey has offered 4,000 to 6,000 troops, eight ships and two squadrons of F-16's for European operations. However, Turkey has blocked EU-access to NATO-assets because it was not satisfied with the proposed consultation provisions in the case of EU-led military operations.¹⁵ In December 2000, the EU-council approved the further development of ESDI, however, the French demanded independent planning. The United Kingdom disagreed with France, because it believed that independent planning could lead to a "decoupling" with NATO. There is still some political turmoil about the role of the non-EU NATO Allies, the use of NATO assets, and planning-systems. So, a lot of political work must be accomplished before a final arrangement can be made on NATO-EU cooperation.

NATIONAL INTERESTS AND POLICIES

NATIONAL INTERESTS AND ESDI IN GENERAL

National interests and policies are once again dominating the process of European defense cooperation. The European Community became a European Union in 1991, but the process of integration has been relatively slow and very incremental because national interests make it very hard for countries to reach consensus and relinquish sovereignty. However, the development of ESDI has rapidly progressed since 1998. There are three main reasons for this unusual quick development. In the first place, the relevant national interests and policies of the three major European powers, France, Germany and the United Kingdom seem to converge and are dominating the agenda. Secondly, there is a growing feeling in Europe that the willingness of the U.S. to contribute personnel and weapons to solve European problems is waning. Thirdly, was the unsatisfactory performance of the European countries in the Kosovo-crisis.

NATIONAL INTERESTS AND POLICIES OF MAJOR EUROPEAN POWERS

France sees the development of ESDI as an opportunity to fulfill the longstanding desire of a European defense, as independent from the U.S. as possible. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany, France has had less influence in Europe. The Franco-German axis is relatively less important than during the period of Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterand. Because of decreasing budgets, France has been forced to cooperate with NATO more and more. France has accepted that ESDI can be developed within NATO only, but still continues its efforts to minimize the influence of the U.S. in Europe.¹⁶ The need for enhanced European capabilities was made clear by Alain Richard, French Minister of Defense in February 2000, when he said: "Improvement of our national capabilities will be of significant benefit to the [NATO] Alliance as well as to the EU. The capacity to commit our forces will increase the Alliance's and the U.S. spectrum of options... Taking up greater responsibilities as Europeans will enable us to act as collective partners in an Alliance of democratic countries."¹⁷

Until four years ago, Germany was not permitted to deploy forces abroad because of its national constitution. However, after a change in the constitution, Germany has committed troops in Bosnia and Kosovo. Reunified Germany wants to have a strong voice in Europe, in accordance with its economic power and large population. For Germany, ESDI is an impulse for the European integration and an opportunity to continue its role as a leader in Europe.¹⁸ Rudolf Scharping, German Minister of Defense, gave the German point of view regarding the

strengthening of the European pillar within NATO in November 1999: "The problem is not too much America in NATO, but too little Europe. Enhancing Europe's ability to take action and assume responsibility means strengthening NATO as a whole and reorienting transatlantic cooperation towards the challenges of the future."¹⁹

For the United Kingdom, the further development of ESDI provides an opportunity to influence European integration, despite its non-participation in Europe's common currency, the Euro. The United Kingdom is a strong advocate of continuation of the transatlantic relationship. The United Kingdom wants to work on a more egalitarian partnership within NATO and a lesser dependency on the U.S. in a military technological way.²⁰ The British view that Europe's economical strength is not backed by credible military capabilities was expressed by Geoffrey Hoon, British Minister of Defense, in April 2000: "Our vision is clear. Europe must prepare to do more-to pull its weight. And it must develop capabilities in ways that support action in NATO as well as under European leadership. There is an expectation on both sides of the Atlantic that we will make progress...We cannot afford to fail".²¹

U.S. INTERESTS AND POLICY

A stable Europe is vital to the stability of the U.S. Two strategic goals are set in the "Integrated Regional Approach to Europe and Eurasia". The first goal is to build a truly integrated, democratic, prosperous and peaceful Europe. The second goal is to work on global challenges together with the Atlantic allies and partners.²² The U.S. policy towards ESDI has been ambivalent. On one hand, the U.S. wants more defense cooperation within the EU. On the other, the U.S. is dedicated to preserving NATO's primacy as an instrument for military security and consultation. The U.S. wants a "droit de regard" and U.S. interests have to be respected.²³ The current U.S. policy towards ESDI is mainly driven by the desire for more burden-sharing by the European nations. Despite some skepticism in America, the U.S. officially supports the further development of ESDI, as President Clinton's reaction on the EU Feira summit outcomes of June 2000 demonstrates:

"I welcome the progress that the European Union made at the Feira Summit to develop a common European security and defense policy. It will strengthen Europe's ability and responsibility to act in times of crisis. It will improve cooperation between the European Union and NATO. It will advance European unity while maintaining the vitality of the transatlantic alliance. I look forward to early

implementation of the agreed steps, including the establishment of NATO-EU working groups and regular meetings with non-EU Allies."²⁴

This statement confirmed the U.S. policy of the three D's. No "Decoupling" with NATO: ESDI should reinforce the transatlantic link. No unnecessary "Duplication" of forces: separate planning-systems and force-structures are inefficient. And no "Discrimination" of the non-EU NATO Allies: the non-EU countries should have a clear role in the decision-making process regarding EU-led military operations.²⁵

DUTCH INTERESTS AND POLICY

As with many other small countries in Europe, the foreign policy of the Netherlands is mainly conducted within the EU, the WEU, NATO and the UN. The Netherlands has always been a strong advocate of the continued excellent transatlantic partnership. For the Netherlands, transatlantic and European cooperation can be combined. There can be no "decoupling", as ESDI and NATO's DCI are considered two sides of the same coin. The Dutch contribution to the EU military capacity rests on two principles. First, the Netherlands makes no distinction between the EU and NATO for crisis-management (non-article 5 operations). There can be no duplication of forces, a "toolbox" of active units will be available for both organizations. An Army brigade, a maritime Taskforce, three F-16 squadrons, or a combination of these forces have been offered to the EU. Secondly, in addition to existing bilateral and multilateral agreements, the Netherlands is searching for alliances to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of national and European efforts.²⁶

Strengthening of Dutch military capabilities has the highest priority and is one of the four spearheads in the Dutch Defense White Paper of 2000. A second priority of this White Paper is to determine clear parameters of cooperation between the EU and NATO, including the role of the non-EU NATO partners. Clear arrangements on consultation and decision-making are preferred to a situation such as occurred with the Contactgroup for the Balkans. The Netherlands contributed a disproportionate share of the military forces, but was not part of the Contactgroup and therefore could not influence the real decision-making process.²⁷

THE CHALLENGES TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ESDI

ESDI FACES MANY CHALLENGES

Given the new momentum in the development of ESDI since 1998, and knowing the national interests and pursued policies of the major players, there is no doubt that ESDI will be further developed. However, a lot of political work remains to be done, such as the establishment of EU-NATO cooperation and the institutional changes within the EU. The further development of ESDI faces many challenges, of which the most important are:

- The strengthening of European military capabilities in a time when budgets are not likely to increase.
- The leadership and decision-making processes in the EU.
- The development of a European Strategic Concept.
- The role of non-EU NATO allies, especially Turkey.

STRENGTHENING CAPABILITIES WITHOUT INCREASING BUDGETS

Most European armies are organized for large scale conflicts. They look much as they did during the Cold War, designed to defend Western Europe against the Warsaw Pact's armored forces. Many of these armies are still dependent on heavy units with tanks and thus lack the mobility to deploy quickly outside their own borders.²⁸ At the Washington summit, the NATO Allies approved a new Strategic Concept in order to equip the Alliance for the security challenges of the 21st century. The guidelines in this new concept showed that current Alliance forces couldn't meet the future challenges. As a result, force goals were set and the DCI was launched. A NATO High Level Steering Group was established to monitor 58 measures to improve readiness, mobility, interoperability, effectiveness, survivability and sustainability of NATO forces. Several working groups were also established to explore the possibilities for multinational cooperation to deal with some of the shortcomings.²⁹

A review of the EU 'Force Catalogue' showed the same kind of shortcomings in military capabilities. This is logical, because NATO countries offered forces to the EU which would be used for NATO tasks also. A EU-NATO Capabilities working group, in which 23 EU and NATO countries are represented, was established to make sure that NATO force goals and EU force requirements are planned and developed in a coherent way.³⁰

In Europe, only the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands are transforming their armies to a more expeditionary type force. Germany started its total reorganization in 2000. The

European governments have acknowledged that the necessary means for autonomous EU-led military operations in the full range of the Petersberg tasks will not be available before 2010.³¹ Large investments are needed to improve strategic mobility, intelligence, command and control, readiness, interoperability and sustainability. Time and money are needed to invest in ships, aircraft, intelligence satellites, precision-guided weapons, secure and interoperable communication-systems, etc. Whether the European countries will make these investments is a big question.

The U.S repeatedly stated that Europe should spend more on defense. For example, defense spending by the U.S. is about 60 percent of total NATO outlay, against almost 40 percent by the European NATO countries, who also spend only 25 percent of what the U.S. spends on research and development. Procurement by European NATO countries has fallen 2.2 percent since 1995, while U.S. procurement has risen by 6.5 percent. The U.S. has a defense budget of 3.2 percent of its GNP, France and the United Kingdom have defense budgets of 2.8 and 2.6 percent respectively. The Netherlands and Germany have a defense budget of only 1.8 and 1.5 percent respectively.³² There is a wide array of difference in defense spending in Europe, but there is only consensus on trying to harmonize the defense efforts.

In order to meet the future challenges, European defense budgets should increase. However, economic pressures and the peacetime preference of electorates will make it difficult for European countries even to sustain their current level of defense spending. In the Netherlands, the defense budget of the year 2000 was 200 million Dutch guilderns higher, in comparison with the year 1999. Only the United Kingdom has planned to increase its defense budget significantly in the coming years.³³ Because defense budgets are not likely to increase very much, money has to be found through more national and international efficiency. Europe has to do more with the same or perhaps a lesser amount of money. The challenge will be to develop new and better European defense cooperation. Multinational research, development and procurement, international co-financing and even task-specialization must be the way of the future.

THE LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING WITHIN THE EU

One of the most important principles of the EU is that all decisions are made by the 15 member states. The struggle for votes in the Intergovernmental Conference of the EU in Nice in December 2000 clearly demonstrated that the European countries want to compensate eventual

loss of national sovereignty with influence on the decision-making process. In addition, the possibility of a national veto remains an option. This means that every country still can make its own decisions as a sovereign nation. Building consensus is time-consuming, but in the case of an emerging crisis the decision to act militarily has to be made very quickly.

Within the EU, there are several unanswered questions on how to decide on military action. The first unanswered question is: who decides first, NATO or the EU? Regarding the current strategic reality, the U.S. should have a 'right of first refusal'. This means the U.S. will first decide in consultation with NATO whether to participate in a military operation or to give the EU access to NATO assets. If the U.S. decides not to participate, the EU can decide on its own course of action. This was mentioned in the Helsinki declaration, but France raised objections. The second question is how decisions will be made within the EU. The United Kingdom, supported by the Scandinavian countries, is of the opinion that decisions should be made by national governments and parliaments. France is in favor of a "Union of States" with some common sovereignty, but not on foreign affairs and defense issues. Germany and the Benelux (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) are more in favor of a Federation in which the European Parliament should have the responsibility on security and defense in the long term. So, it is an ongoing discussion between nationalists and federalists.³⁴

One thing is for sure, the three major European powers are not likely to share leadership in deciding European security and defense issues, in the short term. This lack of leadership and the disagreement on the decision-making process definitely reduce the ability of the EU to act effectively and in a timely fashion in response to an emerging crisis.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC CONCEPT

Since 1991, the EU has had difficulty reaching consensus on a CFSP. The ESDI-discussion has been focused on the means. Everyone in Europe agreed that the capabilities had to be improved as soon as possible. However, there probably wouldn't be a Helsinki Headline Goal if the strategy had been discussed first. The fact is that a European Strategic Concept with clearly stated objectives and strategies is still missing.

The development of a strategic concept can become an ideological debate. On the one side, France emphasizes the importance of European independence, Europe's own security interests, equality with the U.S., and the role of Europe in the world. On the other side, the

United Kingdom and Germany emphasize the indispensable transatlantic link. An other point of discussion is the area in which the EU wants to operate militarily. EU-led military operations could geographically be limited to Europe and its periphery. This is the opinion of the smaller EU-countries. France and the United Kingdom, though, want the EU to take a security responsibility on a global scale. They do not want to be limited, because of their interests which exist outside of Europe.³⁵

A possible approach could be to limit the security goals in accordance with the means available. In the short term, the EU should limit itself to peacekeeping operations, and as it improves its capabilities move on to peace-enforcing operations in Europe and its periphery. In the long term, when the EU is ready for autonomous military action, the security outlook could become global. In the meantime European countries can participate in ad hoc coalitions, if their national interests are threatened outside of Europe.

THE ROLE OF NON-EU NATO ALLIES, ESPECIALLY TURKEY

The European countries of Hungary, Norway, Poland, the Czech Republic, Turkey and Iceland are members of NATO, however, they are not members of the EU. Some of them are geographically located near (potential) crisis-areas on the periphery of Europe. Turkey is even of strategic importance to the whole western world, because it offers a kind of buffer-zone against Islamic radicalism. All six countries contribute to NATO assets which the EU eventually may wish to use for its military operations. In the North Atlantic Council, these countries can veto EU access to NATO assets. In addition, these countries have received certain rights and obligations as associate members of the WEU. In fact, these countries will be completely involved in the decision-making on crisis-management operations led by the WEU.

In the case of EU-led military operations, these non-EU countries will be intensively consulted. A council of participating countries will be established, but political and strategic decisions will be made by the 15 EU members. This situation is not acceptable to Turkey and as a result it could block EU use of NATO assets. Many European countries perceive the Turkish opposition as a maneuver to improve its negotiation position: EU-membership in exchange for access to NATO assets. A solution for the Turkish problem will not be easy. At the NATO Spring Ministerial in Florence in 2000, U.S. Secretary of State Albright underlined the importance of finding a formula for non-EU Allied participation, when she said: "...these non-EU Allies have stronger commitments to some EU member states than these EU states have to each other. To

be clear, these non-EU NATO-members are bound by treaty to defend many EU's states territory, and many shouldered these burdens throughout the long decades of the Cold War".³⁶

One should also consider that an EU-led peacekeeping or peace-enforcing operation could escalate into a conflict which would require collective defense by NATO. In this case, non-EU NATO Allies should be participating from the beginning, if the crisis area is in their region. The political way ahead is to create an atmosphere of transparency and regular dialogue. In one way or an other the non-EU NATO Allies must be involved in the decision-making process. They do not have to participate in the final decisions, but they certainly must play an important role in the "decision-shaping".³⁷

THE OPPORTUNITIES OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ESDI

Further development of ESDI faces many challenges, but there are opportunities as well. Given the present political will in Europe, a successful ESDI will:

- Contribute to a stronger and more responsive Europe.
- Enable the WEU to integrate in the EU.
- Create new and better ways of European defense cooperation.

A STRONGER AND MORE RESPONSIVE EUROPE

Until now, Europe has been unable to manage crises on the continent. The situation in the Balkans, Bosnia and Kosovo in particular, demonstrated that Europe could not agree on a common foreign policy, and demonstrated that Europe was not able to act effectively and in a timely manner. The political leadership and military capabilities of the U.S. were needed to deal with these crises. But Europe cannot depend on the U.S. all the time. Europe must become more independent and should be able to do more for its own security.

Within the process of globalization, European integration is aimed at making Europe stronger as a region. Europe will have a strong military element of power, if the EU succeeds in building the desired capacity for autonomous action backed by credible military capabilities and appropriate decision-making bodies. Decisions to act must be taken within the framework of the CFSP. The council of the EU will then be able to make timely decisions on the whole range of political, economic and military measures in order to respond effectively to emerging crises.³⁸

INTEGRATION OF THE WEU IN THE EU

In the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) agreement was reached that the EU could ask the WEU to perform the Petersberg tasks. As of 1 January 2001, the Political and Security Committee, the Military Committee and the Military Staff became permanent EU bodies. These bodies will further prepare the EU in providing political guidance and strategic direction to military operations, when necessary. The WEU will not be used for peace operations as soon as the EU can use its initial military capabilities in 2003. Several WEU bodies will disappear or will be taken over by the EU.³⁹

Article V of the Treaty of Brussels, which established the WEU obligation for collective defense, will not become part of the EU Charter. As mentioned earlier, the non-EU NATO countries are associate members to the WEU. Their rights and obligations regarding collective defense cannot be neglected. There are also non-NATO EU members, the so-called neutral states of Austria, Finland, the Republic of Ireland and Sweden, who are observers in the WEU and participate in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP). Together with the United Kingdom and Denmark, these neutral countries blocked the decision in the European Council to completely integrate the WEU in the EU. Therefore, collective defense remains a core task of NATO and the WEU.⁴⁰

The WEU organization will, overtime, become very small, less influential and less important. In fact, the WEU will become a "sleeping" organization. As a result, NATO or the EU will conduct peace operations and NATO will take care of collective defense. The disappearance of the WEU as an institutional player on the European security field will help to reduce the number of interlocking institutions in the future European security framework.

NEW AND BETTER WAYS OF EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION

The further development of ESDI, in a time when budgets are not likely to increase, forces the European countries to use their money more efficiently. An intensification of European cooperation is already taking place. For example, five, small "F-16"-countries (Belgium, Denmark, The Netherlands, Norway and Portugal) are cooperating in the procurement of very expensive precision guided ammunition in order to keep the unit costs as low as possible.

European Armament Cooperation is traditionally dominated by national interests. Recently, initiatives were taken by coalitions of willing countries to work more effectively together. Very important is the so-called "LOI-initiative" to break down the barriers regarding national regulations on security of supply, research and technology, property laws and export procedures. In July 1998, the Ministers of Defense of France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom signed this Letter of Intent (LOI). In July 2000, they also signed a Framework Agreement which is considered an important building block for future European cooperation. A second important initiative is the establishment of OCCAR (Organisme Conjoint de Cooperation en Matiere d'Armement) by France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. The OCCAR aims at common research and development and has resulted in several large projects, such as the "Multi Role Armored Vehicle" and the "Tiger Combat Helicopter".⁴¹

The Netherlands and Germany introduced co-financing in the world of European defense cooperation. The Netherlands will contribute 100 million Dutch guilders to the rebuilding of a German Airbus into a "multi-purpose" aircraft with "air to air- refueling" capacity. In exchange for this financial contribution, the Netherlands can use German transportation assets for the deployment of Dutch troops. At the Capabilities Commitment Conference in November 2000, the Dutch and German Minister of Defense emphasized the importance of common cost-effective initiatives and they encouraged the other EU countries to follow their example.⁴²

NATO is already sharing some expensive and scarce resources as a result of existing bilateral or multilateral agreements. Under the pressure for more efficiency, solutions such as pool-formation of strategic airlift assets are now feasible. Germany has suggested the establishment of a European Air Transport Coordination Cell within the framework of the European Air Group. The proposed coordination cell should become the driver for the formation of a European pool of transport and refueling aircraft.⁴³

The idea that every European country should have armed forces with the whole range of military capabilities is outdated, because of affordability. Multinational acquisition, co-financing, and pool-formation are new, more efficient and effective ways of European defense cooperation. Even the possibility that a country specializes on one or more specific military tasks should be considered.

LONG TERM CONSEQUENCES FOR THE TRANSATLANTIC LINK TRENDS AND FORCES AT WORK

The transatlantic link between the U.S. and Europe is under pressure. The U.S. wants Europe to do more for its own security. According to Washington, European defense budgets should increase. Europe has the feeling that the U.S. no longer wants to provide military assistance all the time. Within Europe, most of the countries are in favor of continuing the good transatlantic relations, but France wants to limit the influence of the U.S. as much as possible. The EU's desire for autonomous military capacity could have the effect of eroding NATO. The further development of ESDI is one of the factors that will determine the future transatlantic relationship. One thing is for sure, the European security environment will change as a result of globalization, European integration and NATO transformation.

Because of globalization, economic issues have and will continue to dominate the strategic transatlantic dialogue. The Clinton administration gave top-priority to the economy and the incoming Bush administration is expected to do the same. Europe is and will be a key element in America's global commercial engagement, because more than 60 percent of U.S. investments abroad go to Europe.⁴⁴ Defense related issues are less important. As a result, the strengthening of the European military capabilities is of lower importance than the economic relations between the U.S. and the EU. Economically the EU is already a major global partner of the U.S. As a result of the New Transatlantic Agenda (1995) the U.S. and the EU are working on a broader approach to security and stability. The agenda describes four priority areas for US-EU collaboration:

- Promoting peace and stability, democracy and development around the world.
- Responding to global crisis.
- Contributing to the expansion of world trade and closer economic relations.
- Building bridges across the Atlantic.⁴⁵

In this decade, the process of European integration will continue. The issue of the Euro-currency in January 2002 is a next step towards further European unity. The process of further integration will not be easy. The results of the EU Intergovernmental Conference in December 2000 once again proved that the process of European integration is slow and very incremental. There's no doubt, that by 2010 the EU will be a more viable and stronger international actor; but how united and how effective will it be? If Europe succeeds in achieving unity this decade, there still will be a "globalization gap". The U.S. is a global power and looks at security worldwide,

while the EU's security outlook is expected to remain focused on the continent and its periphery, at least in this decade. In the coming years the EU's attention will be focused on overcoming economic structures, consolidating the monetary union and gradually enlarging to include new members.⁴⁶ Because of this agenda and internal focus, the EU is not expected to be ready or willing to take on global "security" tasks before 2010. This means that for the time being the U.S. has to keep using NATO to reach its "European" security objectives.

NATO transformation, especially the enlargement "eastwards" and the process of formalizing ties with Russia, will be a challenge for the Alliance. For the U.S., these developments will restrict the consultation within NATO about real and sensitive issues. The U.S. surely does not want to discuss certain topics with Russia or other Eurasian countries. Until the completion of NATO transformation and European integration, the U.S. will have to keep dealing with European and Eurasian countries on a bilateral basis.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

The U.S. and Europe are the only conceivable global partners for each other in seeking to shape the international system in the future. Without America, Europe will retreat into a continental fortress, not able or willing to act outside its boundaries. Without Europe, the U.S. would be forced to act more unilaterally or would tend to have a more isolationistic approach. Therefore the transatlantic relationship must be maintained in good harmony, in accordance with strategic reality in order to serve vital and important interests of both the U.S. and the EU.⁴⁷ So, what can further development of ESDI mean to the future strategic relation between the EU and the U.S.?

The result of globalization and European integration will be a more economically powerful Europe by 2010. A stronger EU opens new opportunities for Western consultation and collaboration. When the EU agrees on a CFSP and realizes an autonomous military capacity before 2010, Europe can act with unity, using all the elements of power to deal with emerging crises. This provides an opportunity for the U.S. to get Europe involved in global 'security' tasks. In a broader approach of stability and security, the EU then will be a more important international actor than NATO. The transatlantic link remains the basis for Western security, but because of the dominance of economic issues the emphasis will shift to U.S.-EU relations. With a 'sleeping' WEU and a less important NATO, the EU will be the main actor in the future

European security framework. The EU will become a true global partner of the U.S. and therefore the future transatlantic relation should be reconsidered.

A more realistic scenario is that the EU will need more time to complete its integration. The problem of finding enough money to realize ESDI, will probably be solved by more efficiency and spreading investments over a period of 10 to 15 years. The EU will only play a secondary 'security' role on the continent in this decade. Peacekeeping missions and perhaps peace-enforcing missions may be 'delegated' to the EU by NATO. On a bilateral basis individual European countries may support the U.S. in protecting interests outside of Europe. The desired end of a more egalitarian Alliance with more burden-sharing is more likely to be reached after 2010, when the EU is ready for autonomous military action. Therefore, a transformed NATO is likely to be the organization for 'stability and security' on the continent and its periphery until at least 2010. And through NATO, the U.S. will continue to play its 'security' leadership role on the continent.

CONCLUSIONS

The EU will not realize its Headline Goal of an independent rapid reaction force by 2003. As of 2003, the WEU will become a 'sleeping' organization. With its initial military capabilities the EU will only be able to execute peacekeeping operations, under the condition that NATO assets can be used. In the short term, a lot of political work must be done before full EU-NATO cooperation can be settled. The biggest problem is to find a solution for the role of non-EU NATO Allies, especially Turkey.

For peace-enforcing and autonomous military operations the European capabilities have to be strengthened. Large investments must be made in a time when defense budgets are not likely to increase. In order to do more with the same or a lesser amount of money, the European countries must do better in defense cooperation. Multinational acquisition, co-financing, pool-formation and even task-specialization are possible solutions to use the available money more efficiently. The investments also have to be spread out over time. Therefore, the EU will not be ready for autonomous military operations before 2010.

A European strategic concept must be developed. However, this will be a long and difficult process because of the national interests, the lack of leadership and the bureaucratic decision-making process within the EU. For the time being, the security outlook of the EU will be

limited to Europe and its periphery. In the short term, the EU is not expected to improve its ability to act effectively and in a timely fashion in response to an emerging crisis. Until at least 2010, NATO will be the organization for 'stability and security' in Europe with a leading role for the U.S.

In the long term, a successful ESDI will give the EU a strong military element of power. With a strengthened European pillar, NATO will be a more egalitarian Alliance after 2010. A more integrated and economically stronger Europe can act as a regional power on the continent. If the EU succeeds in reaching consensus on its CFSP, it can take on 'global' security responsibilities. In a broader approach of stability and security, the EU will become more important than NATO in the future European security framework. In that case, the EU and the U.S. will become global strategic partners.

There is enough political will in Europe to make ESDI successful. Whether the European countries will make the necessary investments will be the real litmus-test. One thing is for sure, much remains to be done to achieve the capacity to conduct autonomous European military operations. There is "still a long way to go".

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