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UNDER WHOSE UMBRELLA? THE EUROPEAN SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract: *The tragic events which occurred during the '90s in the Balkans have reiterated the need for the European Union (EU) to assume a much more assertive role in managing security concerns in Europe, including the development of European defence capabilities. In 1998, at Saint Malo, Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac launched the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). This project has been generated due to the EU's need to adopt a strategic framework within which to develop a global defence and security component, as well as due to a growing necessity for the EU to contribute effectively to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and United Nations (UN) efforts of conducting defence, international crisis management and peacekeeping operations at an international level in conflict-prone areas. In recent years, ESDP has undergone a spectacular evolution, being now among the major issues discussed in Brussels. However, the creation of the ESDP has been greeted with caution by some NATO members being perceived primarily as a threat to the integrity of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The purpose of this paper is to examine the difficulties the ESDP has encountered since its inception and also to what extent it has affected the EU-NATO and the EU-US nexus.*

Keywords: European Union, European Security and Defence Policy, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, European security architecture

JEL Classification: Y80

Since the end of the Cold War both European and American officials have sought to *rebalance* or strengthen NATO through the development of a stronger *European pillar*. Subsequently, the replacement of European Political Cooperation by the Common Foreign Security Policy under the 1993 Maastricht Treaty of the EU addressed for the first time security and defence issues. (White, 2001, p. 94) However, the 1991 Gulf War and the outbreak of Yugoslavian conflict emphasised that Europe was still unable to act as an autonomous security entity. "By 1994, NATO had risen, Phoenix like, from its own apparent self-immolation and had re-emerged as the only show in town." (Howorth and Keeler, 2003, p. 7) The steps towards *limited autonomy* took place effectively at NATO's June 1996 Berlin ministerial meeting when, after long debates between the US and its European counterparts, an European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) within NATO

was created as a technical-military means to strengthen the European pillar of the alliance. In this sense, ESDI authorised the EU's forces to take on operations in which NATO did not wish to be involved. In order to back up ESDI, the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs) concept was launched. "CJTFs would facilitate NATO's new missions in crisis management and peace support operations by providing the flexibility needed to deploy at short notice forces specifically tailored to a particular contingency." (Cragg, 1996)

However, owing to several frictions between the US and the European members fuelled by the US' objections to allowing the Europeans access to crucial NATO assets, the 1996 Berlin formula failed to achieve its aims. The path towards European security and defence architecture was paved by the joint communiqué issued in 1998 by French President Chirac and British Prime Minister Blair sped up by the crisis in Kosovo. Everything materialised at the Helsinki European Council from 1999 which launched the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and also initiated the *Helsinki headline goals*. Among these goals was the creation of a European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) of up to 60.000 troops which were to be deployed in the operations covered by the *Petersberg tasks* (humanitarian and rescue missions, peace-keeping operations and tasks of combat forces in crisis management and of peacemaking). (Wallace and Pollack, 2005, p. 449)

By and large, ESDP is an intergovernmental policy based on consensus, where unanimity is required. According to Chivvis, "ESDP is best understood as a proven institutional capacity that allows European states to take collective action to conduct small-scale military and civilian operations around the world, if they choose, without help from NATO". (Chivvis, 2008, p. 5) However, ESDP met with scepticism on the other side of the Atlantic. The Clinton administration expressed its concern that it might weaken NATO. In this regard, the US Secretary of State Albright through her famous *3 Ds* formula expressed the US' support to the project provided there was no decoupling (the ESDP must complement to NATO), no duplication (of the NATO command structures) and no discrimination (against any non-EU NATO member). (Howorth and Keeler, 2003, p. 11)

In the following years, some EU members of a more *Gaullist* orientation wanted more EU decision-making power alleging that "the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Europe's East would naturally mean the withdrawal of the United States from Europe's West" (Chivvis, 2008, p. 10). In this sense, since 2003 when it took over the civilian police mission in Bosnia, ESDP has been engaged in several missions in FYROM, DR Congo, Georgia, Iraq, Sudan, Indonesia or in the Palestinian Territories. On the whole, the personnel involved in these missions performed a variety of tasks, from law enforcement and cease-fire monitoring to security and humanitarian crisis management. In spite of the circumstances, ERRF will not be able to carry out combat operations until, at earliest, 2012. (Cameron, 2007, pp. 82-83; ESDP's operations website, 2008)

Unlike the Clinton administration, many officials who served under the Bush administration shared a *win-win* view of the ESDP. The European security was no longer seen as a peril to the harmony within NATO. "In the age of global terrorism, any capacity is welcome." (Moens, 2003, p. 35) Accordingly at the Bucharest Summit 2008, President Bush admitted that ESDP is both "useful and necessary" (Duff, 2008). Moens underlines that "there is more concern in the Bush administration with declining European defence budgets than with the potential of an ERRF competing with NATO" (Moens, 2003, pp. 34-35). Indeed, the financing of the ESDP and the shares in the budget which Europeans confer to defence casts doubt the viability of ESDP, especially after the 9/11 since the US has been hasting the European governments to increase their defence spending and tackle the *capabilities gap* (members of NATO together spend only one third as much on defence as the USA).

In June 2004, after making a re-evaluation of the activities fostered under ESDP's framework, the EU acknowledged that many issues have to be improved. The new 2010 Headline Goals put emphasis on inter-operability, deployability and sustainability. Furthermore, the European and Defence Agency (EDA) was established in order to enhance Europe's defence capabilities, promote defence, technology and armaments cooperation, and create a competitive European defence equipment market.

The years to come could contribute to ESDP's further development as soon as the Lisbon Treaty will be ratified that could settle the *intra-EU quarrel* that previously obstructed ESDP's evolution. Based on several analyses undertaken by many officials and experts in Brussels, Chivvis argues that the most possible scenario for the ESDP's future is the one which embraces the so-called *Athenian* model. This model in contrast to the soft, light *Venusian* pattern and the hawkish *Ares* model focuses either on creating capabilities for stabilisation and nation building operations or on building technological competence. Moreover, many experts claim that in order to accomplish its goals, ESDP must not only rely on the development of a *Euro-army*, but also be part of a revitalised transatlantic security system. A positive U.S. attitude toward ESDP is practically the precondition for ESDP's success. (Chivvis, 2008, p. 13)

However, strains still exist between the two sides. Five years ago, in 2003, the harmony within NATO was overshadowed by the conflict in Iraq when the *new Europe* - Britain, Italy, Spain and most of the CEECs – chose to follow the US leadership whereas *old Europe* – France and Germany – opposed to American grievances.

One major U.S. complaint about ESDP is that it creates vis-à-vis NATO an inherent competition for resources. In addition, besides the early American concern that ESDP would weaken NATO predominance, the question of building an independent European Headquarters (at

present ESDP uses the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, SHAPE) could aim according to the US' perception "at building ESDP as an alternative to NATO" (Chivvis, 2008, pp. 28-31).

Another rift has opened between some European states and the US who argue in favour of pushing NATO beyond its usual military tasks. One of the grounds behind NATO's comprehensive security approach launched at Riga in 2006 underlines that today's security threats have to be tackled with a more civil-military interface. (Riga Summit Declaration, 2006) This could be however difficult to attend by NATO for two reasons: firstly, the EU's comparative advantage is exactly its *civilian* power which makes ESDP's supporters reluctant to concede this domain to NATO and, secondly, because Turkey blocks every attempt on the side of NATO to solve the situation owing to its unclear status within this new European security architecture. (Hofmann, 2008, pp. 9-10)

Turkey attempted to be part of the EU's defence and security mechanism, but owing to its non-EU status its bid was rejected. The EU's offer stated that Turkey cannot be part of the decision-making of the EU, but may be involved in all aspects of the decision-shaping process. (Toffe 2003, p. 148) This is the reason why Turkey decided in spring 2000 to hinder the entire Berlin Plus mechanism by threatening to veto the transfer to the EU of the NATO assets. Therefore, in order to reach a final agreement on *Berlin-Plus*, "ESDP de facto became dependent on the Turkish exception" (Haine, 2004, p. 139). The Ankara text from 2001 represented an effort to thaw the strained situation. The document gave guarantees of non-aggression between NATO and ESDP and confirmed that ESDP would not be directed against non-EU NATO members. Moreover, at Turkey's request, Cyprus was excluded from the EU-led military operations. The Ankara agreement gave thus the possibility to non-EU NATO members to be *associated* with decisions and take part, if they wish, in the EU's missions. "The EU is ensuring the involvement of non-EU European members of NATO within ESDP" whereas NATO is giving the EU "assured access to its planning capabilities"(EU-NATO Declaration on ESDP, 2002).

However, a disfunctional problem has been created regarding the security arrangements between NATO and the EU, which have been blocked by the Turkish-Cypriot dispute. The Cypriot government tries to exclude Turkey from European defence bodies, whereas Turkey precludes the participation of Cyprus in NATO-EU meetings. The rapprochement between the Cypriot and Turkish sides needs urgently to be achieved because without a solution, Cyprus will hardly agree to Turkey's admission into the EU, which could complicate even more the cooperation between NATO and ESDP. (Kambas, 2008) Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the former Secretary General of NATO, suggested that the EU should extend its defence ties with Turkey to ease European cooperation with NATO. Additionally, he mentioned that the EU should consider inviting Turkey to join the EDA,

move which could persuade Ankara to give up its objections towards the NATO-ESDP collaboration. (Hall, 2008)

Despite these discrepancies between NATO and ESDP, Victoria Nuland, the former American ambassador to NATO, emphasised the importance of ESDP which far from being a threat, is currently an urgent necessity. "Europe needs, the US needs, NATO needs, the democratic world needs – a stronger, more capable European capacity." (The Economist, 2008) In this sense, France has made the revitalisation of European defence a priority under its presidency of the EU: "Strengthening European defence is part of a renewed political vision, based on the complementarity of European and NATO defence." (Jouyet, 2008)

The importance of a European defence pillar in NATO is even stronger today, since Barack Obama was sworn into office on January 20, 2009. Daniel Hamilton, Director of the Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University, writes: "President Obama's meetings with NATO and EU leaders in April 2009 offered a rare opportunity to press the *reset* button on relations between Europe and North America. They must seize the moment to recast the Atlantic partnership − in all of its dimensions − to tackle a diverse range of challenges at home and abroad" (Hamilton, 2009, 5).

The NATO Summit in Strasbourg-Kiel on April 3 and 4 2009 officially confirmed French return to NATO's integrated military command more than 40 years after it left (in 1966). This move announced by President Sarkozy since June 2008 will try, according to analysts, to boost the EU defence dimension. (CNN, 2008) "The more France takes its place in NATO, the more European NATO becomes" (Duff, 2008), claimed the president.

According to the Treaty of Lisbon which entered into force on the 1st of December 2009, the ESDP was renamed to Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The Treaty of Lisbon has also brought about several innovations were to address the cohesion and effectiveness problem of the EU with respect to security and foreign affairs issues.

On balance, it could be said that ESDP was, on the one hand, mostly the result of structural changes in the world political system brought about by the end of the Cold War and by several nidi of instability within Europe's boundaries or at its periphery and, on the other hand, perhaps a need to counterbalance the US' strength and capabilities. In a remarkable attempt to depict the future of ESDP between now and 2020, Keohane and Valasek stress three things which ESDP should accomplish in order to enhance its capabilities: re-organise and improve resources, develop a doctrine for comprehensive crisis-management and invest more in prevention. (Keohane and Valasek, 2008, 41-48)

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