Audit of European Strategy

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PREFACE

On 12 December 2003, the European Council approved Javier Solana's *European Security Strategy*. Few EU documents represent such a clear – and clearly-worded – advance in thinking. Since its adoption, the Commission, the Council and the Member States have all made progress on security cooperation. In June 2004, the European Council has taken further decisions in the field of security. It is not always clear though whether this represents the conscious implementation of the *Strategy* or an unstructured process of piece-meal change. In the short-term, recent developments have certainly been positive – but if they are not tied to long-term strategic goals, they may prove unsustainable.

Thus there is room for an intellectual review of the direction we have taken. **The Foreign Policy Centre** (London), **British Council Brussels, New Defence Agenda** (Brussels) and the **Royal Institute for International Relations** (Brussels) joined together to organize a seminar on the implementation of the *Strategy*. On 30 June 2004 the *Audit of European Strategy* brought together key policy-makers from within the European institutions and original thinkers on strategic issues. A first, analysts' panel debated concrete recommendations to anchor the *Strategy*'s innovative comprehensive approach to security into policy practice. A second, practitioners' panel reviewed ongoing and future elaboration of the *Strategy* in the fields of CFSP, ESDP and Community matters.

In this *Egmont Paper* contributions by the day's speakers are published.

The four organisers have been, and still are, actively involved in the debate on the *Strategy*. The Foreign Policy Centre and British Council Brussels are jointly responsible for the *Global Europe* programme, devised to promote new thinking on the EU's evolution as an international actor. The programme has been supported by the European Commission Representation in the UK as part of *The Future of Europe* project. New Defence Agenda offers a well-known Brussels platform for thought-provoking analysis and debate. At the request of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Institute for International Relations has produced a Belgian contribution to the elaboration of the *Strategy* – which has been published in this series as Egmont Paper No. 1 – and has recently published *The European Security Strategy: Implementing a Distinctive Approach to Security.*

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1. IMPLEMENTING THE EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY

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The *European Security Strategy*, which was adopted in December 2003 by the European Council, serves three functions. Firstly, it provides a frame of reference both for long-term strategies and for current political problems. Secondly, it is a basis for consultation with major partners on central strategic issues. Thirdly, it leads to concrete follow-up in five areas identified by the European Council: (1) proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, (2) the fight against terrorism, (3) effective multilateralism with the UN at its core, (4) a strategy towards the region of the Middle East, and (5) a comprehensive policy towards Bosnia-Herzegovina. Where do we stand on these five issues?

On *WMD* the European Union has adopted a comprehensive strategy which is being implemented. On *terrorism*, as a consequence of the attacks in Madrid, the European Council on 25 and 26 March 2004 agreed on a wide-ranging Declaration reaffirming the EU's determination to systematically confront the terrorist threat. The appointment of an EU counter-terrorism coordinator will help to improve coordination and visibility of EU actions in this field. Progress has been achieved on a number of third pillar directives and regulations (Directive on compensating victims of crime, Regulation on the Schengen Information System, Decision establishing the Visa Information System, Europol and Eurojust agreement) as well as on the prospect of integrating in the Council Secretariat an intelligence capacity on all aspects of the terrorist threat. In March, the European Council also brought forward the solidarity clause thus anticipating the Constitutional Treaty.

The European Council meeting in June 2004 registered the relevant progress made in the three other areas. It welcomed the focus on *effective multilateralism*, with transmission of the EU's contribution to the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change in support of a strengthened UN and the work on implementing the EU-UN Joint Declaration on Co-operation in Crisis Management of 24 September 2003. The UN is at the core of the EU's concerted efforts to re-launch multilateralism as a general and widely-accepted method to conduct international relations. The EU's action, though, focuses also

on other international and regional organisations through institution-building and transfer of expertise. Recently, in the context of its engagement in Sudan, the EU has stepped up its efforts to strengthen the African Union. ECOWAS is also supported by the EU. The participation of High Representative Javier Solana at the head of the EU delegation in the Asian Regional Forum underlined the EU's efforts to also strengthen Asian regional organizations.

The European Council endorsed the Report of the Presidency, the High Representative and the Commission on the EU's Strategic Partnership with the region of *the Mediterranean and the Middle East*, which will establish a consistent basis for the EU's policies towards the countries concerned by setting out general principles and objectives. Finally, it adopted a comprehensive policy towards *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, centred on the SFOR-follow-up mission to Bosnia to begin in December 2004 under the 'Berlin Plus' arrangements with NATO.

Many of these efforts point to the fulfilment of another of the main objectives of the *European Security Strategy*: to contribute to stability and good governance in the EU's immediate neighbourhood. The Balkans, within Europe, remain the first area of engagement for the EU with three successful operations (two policing operations in Bosnia and Macedonia and a military operation in the latter). While the focus has been mainly on Bosnia, the EU presence and action has been relevant also in Kosovo, Serbia and Macedonia.

The EU is actively engaged in crisis management in both its most immediate and far neighbourhood. As a member of the Quartet, the EU is seeking solutions to the Middle East conflict. It is also deeply engaged in Afghanistan, the Middle East, the South Caucasus and the African Great Lakes Region (a fourth military operation was carried out in Congo in 2003). Through the European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU is stepping up its action in the areas on its Southern and Eastern borders, to help increase security and stability in these regions.

Implementing the *European Security Strategy* implies that the EU must be *more active*, *more capable*, and *more coherent*. In order to be more active and capable, the EU has concentrated on the development of a range of instruments and capabilities. Following on the four successful operations conducted in 2003, the EU is strengthening its ESDP through the establishment of the European Defence Agency, the work on the 'battlegroup concept' and the Headline Goal 2010, the setting up of a Civil-Military Planning Cell and an operations centre for the conduct of autonomous EU operations. In the civilian field, the build up

of capabilities for the strengthening of the rule of law, institution building, policing and civilian protection have also been carried forward.

Early, rapid and sometimes, robust intervention is tantamount to turning the EU into a fully effective actor on the global scene. Military intervention, however, is only the last resort of EU policy. For the latter to work, coherence between means and ends is indispensable. If the EU wants to assume responsibility for global security, it must be more coherent. It must bring together the different instruments and capabilities: military and civilian capabilities from the Member States but also existing instruments such as the European Development Fund and the European assistance programmes. Implementing the *European Security Strategy* means also to proceed on the road to a more coherent and effective institutional framework. The creation of the office of an EU Foreign Minister as foreseen in the Constitutional Treaty will give the CFSP a higher profile, more continuity and greater effectiveness. The establishment of a European External Action Service will improve coherence by strengthening the representation of European interests in third countries. In fact, the External Action Service, to include staff from the Commission, the Council Secretariat and the Member States, will convert the European Commission's existing delegation offices into fully-fledged EU representations.

The analysis of the new threats to security and the corresponding strategic objectives contained in the *Strategy* make it a fundamental framework and a constant point of reference for both in-depth political consultations with partners and relations with media and public opinion. Consultations in the form of planning staff talks have been carried out with Moscow, Beijing and Washington. Both similarities and differences regarding our strategic objectives have emerged.

Against the prospect of being rapidly forgotten, the success of the *European Security Strategy*, often cited by the media and used as a reference document for politicians and diplomats, proves how much this text was needed at a time when the EU embarked on the greatest ever enlargement and the deepest institutional re-organisation of its history.

2. THE EU, REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND SECURITY: STRATEGIC PARTNERS OR CONVENIENT ALIBIS?

Richard Gowan

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Of all the clichés surrounding debates on the *European Security Strategy*, the most common may be that even if the EU is still an uncertain actor, it is already an attractive model. Robert Kagan might argue that Europeans have become so engrossed in their mutual affairs that they fail to understand the world beyond their borders. They can respond that their need to look outwards is reduced by the fact that the world is looking in, and enviously: 'Elsewhere, what in Europe has become a reality is in many other parts of the world an aspiration. ASEAN, NAFTA and MERCOSUR [...] suggest at least the desire for a postmodern environment, and though this wish is unlikely to be realised quickly, imitation is undoubtedly easier than invention'.[2]

In the period of the Prodi Commission, European leaders have desired not only to be imitated, but to be proactive in teaching others the art of imitation. Thus Chris Patten has declared that 'the EU's ambition must be to reflect abroad what is best about our own model'.[3]

Yet this is as problematic as it is appealing. For Patten, the best feature of Europe is 'our sense of civil society'. In a period when the EU is deliberately emphasising its nascent security identity, its dialogues with regional and international organisations cannot be confined to social norms or even economic matters. They must include harder issues of order, defence and stability. As the European order alters, to what extent should it encourage other regional organisations to take up increasing security responsibilities?

This article argues that the EU is developing a strategy that gives increasing significance to other regional organizations in maintaining global stability – but

also that these may prove to be alibis rather than partners for the 'more active' Europe of the *Security Strategy*. Unless we tie the regionalisation of security to an increase in our own global reach, it may reduce rather than enhance our influence.

I.   Towards Regionalism? The Evolution of European Rhetoric

The *Security Strategy* is vague on the issue of regionalisation. While it emphasises the EU's commitment to an effective and legitimate United Nations, it is wary of the subject of regional organisations.

The first public draft of the *Strategy* highlighted the fact that 'ASEAN, MERCOSUR and the African Union are important partners' for the EU, but the final version merely noted that these organisations 'make an important contribution to a more orderly world'.[1] As I have noted elsewhere, the implication that the EU should be an agent for regionalisation has been edited out.[2]

This was not a total surprise. Had the *Strategy* dwelt on regional organisations, it might have sparked uncomfortable debates over the EU's relations with NATO in keeping the world orderly (even if it does praise NATO as well as the OSCE and the Council of Europe). Nor can the EU point to its previous interactions with other regional organisations with unmitigated pride: its 1997 decision to suspend bloc-to-bloc political dialogue with ASEAN over Burma was not merely controversial, but ultimately ineffective.

But in spite of the final *Strategy*'s relative coyness on regionalisation, it does contain a clear recognition of the phenomenon's importance. The final draft underlines the threats of both regional conflicts and failing states to global security, and warns: 'Coherent policies are also needed regionally, especially in dealing with conflict. Problems are rarely solved on a single country basis, or without regional support, as in different ways our experience in both the Balkans and West Africa shows'.

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1. The first draft of the *Strategy* was presented in Thessalonica on 20 June 2003; the final version was approved in Brussels on 12 December 2003. All quotations are from the final draft, unless indicated otherwise.
2. Mark Leonard & Richard Gowan, *Global Europe: Implementing the Security Strategy*, The Foreign Policy Centre, London, 2004.

This emphasis on regionalism as conflict resolution reflects a growing preference in the UN for devolving peace-keeping and enforcement duties to regional groupings (justifiable under Chapter VIII of its charter). It is easy – probably too easy – for Europeans to frame this preference in terms of Franco-German peace. But, more concretely, it also links to the emergence of a potentially effective regional organization in one area of concern to both the UN and the EU: Africa.

The creation of the African Union (AU) in 2002 to replace the largely sclerotic Organization of African Unity (OAU) was widely welcomed by European observers, not least because it demonstrated a particularly clear desire to 'imitate' the European model. This was institutional as well as rhetorical: the AU boasts its own Commission, and its leaders and officials have developed good relationships with their European equivalents.[1]

The European Commission has been generous in its support for the AU's institution-building. There is probably a degree of institutional self-interest in this approach. The Commission is reported to view its bilateral relationship with its African counterpart as a significant opportunity to win political leverage in Africa, too often seen as the preserve of former colonial powers such as the UK and France.

The AU's institutional ambitions hark back to earlier EU-Africa agreements: the Lomé Convention contained clauses on promoting regional cooperation. But the AU is attractive not only because it advances that cooperation, but because of its ostensibly serious desire to make Africa more responsible for its own security concerns. One goal of the AU is the deployment of observers and peacekeeping forces in regional trouble-spots – I will return to the key example of Darfur below. In April 2004, the European Commission confirmed the creation of a 250 million Euro 'Peace Facility' to help fund AU operations.

While the Peace Facility has intentional limitations (it cannot cover the cost of armaments, for example), the EU's cooperation with the AU does represent a strategic innovation. It combines a European commitment to the systemic aspects of 'effective multilateralism' with a more case-specific approach to preventing and ending conflicts. It was not, therefore, a surprise that the EU's June 2004 *Paper for Submission to the UN High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges*

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1. For a useful overview of the AU's potential see Alex de Waal, 'The African State and Global Governance', in Phoebe Griffith (ed.), *Unbinding Africa*, The Foreign Policy Centre, London, 2003.

and Change made far fuller reference to regionalism than the earlier *Strategy*: 'The Panel should also have regard to the increasing capacity and readiness of regional organizations to act in support of international peace and security. The UN should intensify its co-operation with such organizations'.[1]

Central to the argument is an acceptance that Europe should be an active agent for regionalisation. The *Paper* notes that the EU 'is ready to assist regional organizations to enhance their capacity' and is minded to go further: 'It has established an African Peace Facility and is engaged with the African Union on making it operational and is considering other possibilities to support regional organizations' efforts on peace and security'.

II. Do Regional Organizations Save Lives? The Case of Darfur

Strategic innovation on paper does not, however, mean increased security on the ground. As the Council's contribution to the High-Level Panel was under preparation, the scale of the ongoing killing in the Sudanese province of Darfur (whether defined as genocide or otherwise) was becoming ever clearer. On 28 May 2004, ten days after the *Paper* had been approved for transmission to the High-Level Panel, the AU requested 12 million Euro from the Peace Facility for operations in Sudan.[2]

This was the start of a process that would lead to the AU receiving a further 80 million Euro for operations in Darfur from the Peace Facility in October 2004.[3] This process has been a crucial trial of the AU's capacity to tie its regionalisation agenda to security and peace-making. It has also been an important test of the EU's ability to work with another regional organization on security issues. The performance of both Unions raises significant questions over their strategies.

Thorough accounts of Darfur are now widely available.[4] All emphasize the moral challenge the crisis has posed to the international community. It is worth adding that it has also represented a serious *strategic* challenge to the EU. Although ostensibly isolated, events in Sudan and neighbouring Chad may have

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1. Paper approved by the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 17-18 May, 2004.
2. http://europa-eu-un.org/articles/lv/article_3566_lv.htm.
3. http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/1306&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en

the potential to destabilise an area of significant European concern: the Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

In addition to this geopolitical consideration, the outcome of the Darfur crisis is significant to the EU's broader strategic goals. In 2003, the EU boosted both its own credibility and that of the international system through *Artemis*, its UN-mandated crisis management in North-Eastern Congo. Praised as a success 'in all respects', *Artemis* created optimism that the *Strategy*'s concepts of 'robust' intervention and 'effective multilateralism' would be validated in central Africa.[1] Failure over Darfur must weaken this hope.

This impression has been reinforced not only by the EU's support for the AU, but also by developments in European military thinking. The February 2004 proposal that the EU should develop joint 'battlegroups' for peace operations, initiated by the UK and France, is of particular relevance to Africa. The size of the battlegroups – 1,500 soldiers each, with an operational lifetime of three months – appears to be calibrated for missions such as *Artemis*, rather than future Bosnias or Afghanistans. In EU military circles, they are typically associated with Africa.

The battlegroups can be seen as a natural adjunct to the Peace Facility. The concepts were devised and approved separately, but it is easy to imagine how they might be drawn together, with the small but state-of-the-art EU force acting as a flexible precursor to a larger but less technically advanced AU contingent. The G8's June 2003 initiative to support an African Standby Force, to be ready by 2010, represents another step towards such security cooperation.[2]

Although the battlegroups will not exist until 2007, a similar type of European force could have been put together on an *ad hoc* basis for Darfur. France and Britain have built up considerable experience of operating with ECOWAS peace-keepers in Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire, a good basis for partnership

4. See those of the International Crisis Group (http://www.crisisweb.org/home/index.cfm?id=1230&l=1) and Human Rights Watch (http://www.hrw.org/doc/?t=africa). See also Greg Austin & Ben Koppelman, *Darfur and Genocide: mechanisms for rapid response, an end to impunity*, The Foreign Policy Centre, London, 2004. This article was originally written in late August 2004, and reviewed in September and early November – its comments on the crisis should be read in this context.
1. Jean-Yves Haine *et al*, *European Defence, a proposal for a white paper*, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 2004.
2. See Vanessa Kent & Mark Malan, 'The Africa Standby Force', *African Security Review* Vol. 12(3), 2003 at http://www.iss.org.za/pubs/ASR/12No3/E2.html.

with the AU. In April 2004, the outgoing head of the EU Military Staff expressed his interest in an *Artemis*-style venture in Sudan.

Thus Darfur provided an opportunity to prove not only the worth of the *Strategy*, but also of more concrete European initiatives. In reality, the European States have demonstrated little political will to take this opportunity. There have been no sustained efforts to prepare an *Artemis*-type force for Sudan. Moreover, relations with the AU have indicated the current limitations of support for regionalism.

Throughout 2004, discussions of Darfur have been constrained by the desire to sustain peace negotiations to resolve Sudan's larger Southern civil war. But European officials have also argued that Darfur is an opportunity for Africans to make peace in Africa, and that the AU should be encouraged to take responsibility for the crisis. The European Commission encouraged and funded the AU's 2003-2004 peace-keeping mission in Burundi – Darfur has presented a chance to develop this precedent.

When, following a deeply flawed ceasefire, the AU made its May request for Peace Facility support for a monitoring mission to Darfur, the EU's members released the requested funds within two weeks. European Commissioner for Development Poul Nielson underlined the significance of this commitment to regionalism: 'The Peace Facility is a new instrument that could become an important tool in the construction of the new peace and security agenda in Africa. Member States have today shown that they are willing to allow this new instrument to play just that role and that the EU will be a credible partner in the African Union's aspirations to assume the necessary leadership of this peace and security agenda'.[1]

To underline the EU's commitment to that strategy, it designated a small number of monitors to accompany the AU mission. Here was a practical demonstration of European financial generosity being combined with a wish to give others strategic primacy for the sake of security. The much larger October grant indicated that this approach is not merely of symbolic value, but is a real, considerable and sustained strategic initiative.

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1. See http://europa-eu-un.org/articles/lv/article_3566_lv.htm.

Nor is it an unwise strategy. Independent observers of Darfur have typically concluded that 'the political commitment shown by the AU leadership is commendable, despite a sometimes uneven performance'.[1] However, two factors militated against this commitment being translated into a rapid improvement of the situation in Darfur.

One has been practical. Even with the current level of European support, the AU's limited resources have proved to be a constraint. Although a first group of monitors are now on the ground, 'voices in the international community are concerned whether the AU is sufficiently robust to carry out its mandate, given the massive geographical size of the Darfur region'.[2]

The second – and greater – problem has been political. The AU has refrained from taking a tough line on Darfur without the co-operation of the Sudanese government. Given that the government is almost certainly the ultimate cause of the crisis, this has been a highly problematic approach. While the AU's presence in Darfur is expanding (with a force of 3000 projected at the time of writing), it continues to prioritise maintenance of relations with Khartoum. The latter has duly indicated that it prefers the AU's efforts to solve the crisis 'in an African context' to the involvement of the UN.[3]

These efforts have not been fruitless. As this article goes to press, AU-sponsored talks have resulted in agreements between the Sudanese government and rebels on security and humanitarian issues in Darfur.[4] But, while the international community has welcomed this 'breakthrough', it comes in a context of continued breaches of international law (including the forcible movement of refugees) and the estimated Darfur death-toll at 70 000. The AU's political engagement with Sudan should not be dismissed lightly, but diplomatic gradualism has had a heavy price.

III. Regionalism's Flaws – and Europe's

The Darfur crisis has thus underlined two simple but sizeable dangers in the strategy of promoting regionalism. The first is to assume that relatively under-

1. International Crisis Group, *Darfur deadline: a new international action plan*, 23 August 2004.
2. Austin & Koppelman, *op. cit.*
3. BBC, 'Sudan grudgingly accepts UN vote', http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3670590.stm.
4. BBC, '"Breakthrough" deal for Darfur' http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3996859.stm.

developed regional organizations have the institutional capacity and resources to manage major crises. The second is to forget that the political imperatives within such organizations may prevent them from taking even those steps within their capacity.

If 'effective multilateralism' is to be based on regionalization, we must recognise that the political problem will persist. Ultimately, regional organizations will often follow the dictates of local politics, not those of international pacts and treaties (as demonstrated by Europe's own Stability Pact). In the field of peace and security, regional political co-operation can obstruct as well as enable effective action: 'The UN norm is that regional actors should be encouraged to engage in all types of peace operations, but the remit and authority should derive from the Security Council. For regional actors, the norm is slightly different: they will engage selectively in different types of peace operations'.[1]

For the AU, this sort of selectivity remains tied to the sheer number of ongoing conflicts affecting the continent, and the Great Lakes region in particular. Individual interventions and peace operations cannot provide a political solution to interlinked conflicts spread across so many States. Commitments to regional peace-keeping are not guarantees of good intentions: the two African countries readiest to offer monitors for Darfur have been Rwanda and Nigeria, both known to use regional instabilities to their advantage.

Political considerations can also exacerbate pre-existing problems of capacity. 'Even if there is a will to develop a clear and operational common defence policy and standby capacities', it has been warned, 'the political nature of African bureaucracies may negatively influence the military professionalism of African forces'.[2] Strategic partnership with the AU may be necessary and desirable, but its member's tactics must be treated with caution.

But the Darfur experience should act as a reminder that Europe can also be political in its approach to security. The internal process of European policy-making, with States and institutions, has militated against an assertive response to the crisis.

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1. Louise Fawcett, 'The Evolving Architecture of Regionalization', in Michael Pugh & Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu (eds.), *The United Nations and Regional Security*, Boulder, London, 2003.
2. Kent & Malan, *op. cit.*

If, as suggested above, the European Commission has worked closely with the AU to gain leverage relative to powers such as France, Paris is generally thought to have been an obstacle to a harder line on Sudan. More generally, the possibility of European military commitment might have strengthened the AU earlier in the year, but the *Strategy*'s belief in early and robust intervention was overlooked. While the EU's members have discussed sanctions against Sudan, their threats have lacked breadth and conviction.

Effective multilateralism has appeared not to be a principle for all seasons – and killing has continued in Darfur.

IV. Can Regionalism be Credible?

Comparing the EU's developing paper commitment to regionalism as a security policy with events in Darfur, it is possible to reach one of two conclusions. The pessimist will argue that crises such as Darfur undermine the ambitions of the *Strategy* and the *Paper* submitted to the High-Level Panel. The optimist might respond that, tragic as such crises are, the general trend towards regionalization represents underlying progress towards the 'postmodern environment'. If that environment 'is unlikely to be realized quickly', it may be better to allow it to develop through failures as well as through its successes.

This is not a morally satisfying position. Nor is it a strategically advisable one. An accumulation of crises in the Great Lakes region and its periphery might allow the AU to develop new crisis management capacities – but it might also undermine the AU itself.

If the EU is to develop security partnerships with other regional organizations, it must search for policies that allow it to affect their responses to crises. I have previously suggested that the EU should do more in terms of *de facto* military assistance to the AU and other suitable organizations. This should not only expand their capacities but be tied to projects for military professionalism. While the Peace Facility is clearly a positive reform in this direction (and the passage from the *Paper* submitted to the High-Level Panel cited earlier demonstrates a constructive approach to this question), Darfur suggests that the offer of money may not always be enough to galvanise the political will of others.

The EU cannot, of course, be seen to develop a 'new colonialism', asking others' young men to die for its security concerns. In the case of Sudan, an early EU military commitment (even if threatened rather than immediately deployed) might have made a significant impact, but it might also have been politically offensive to the AU. In dealing with regional organizations, the EU must develop trust in its intentions towards post-colonial areas.

One way to achieve this must be to pursue substantive security discussions with them, to discover the nuances and limitations of their commitments – and our own. The AU, with a new Peace and Security Council in place, remains a good place to start. Discussions might include:

- Formalised joint long-term analyses of potential crises, possibly conducted within a joint EU/AU secretariat responsible for directing the already large sums of European money available for conflict-prevention in Africa;
- Regular multilateral military staff conferences between leading African and European States, co-ordinated by the European Union Military Staff, to discuss and plan interventions in States at risk of failure;
- In the short term, efforts should be focussed not only on the overwhelming priority of ending the killing in Darfur, but on a joint AU-EU 'lessons learned and analysis' exercise.

Ultimately, none of these innovations can make the impact on African stability that more politically difficult European gestures such as trade reform could achieve. But, as the EU and AU both develop as security actors, they must ensure that their partnership is effective. This would be another success that other organizations might wish to imitate.

3. VENUS WITHOUT MARS: CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR ESDP

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Europe is at a crossroads. Among the clouds of abstention, apathy and doubts about the European integration project displayed by the last European election, the new Commission has to restore the credibility and the efficiency of an institution whose legitimacy is contested by the European public and, more crucially, by some Member States. Moreover, the precarious ratification process of the Constitution will yet again launch the Union in an introspective exercise, which by nature would favour the critics more than the converts. The series of referenda would ultimately be decided by national electoral geography rather than by a truly European debate. Discussions about the Union's budget, agricultural and tax reforms or trade liberalisation will be strenuous given the poor state of public finances in a majority of countries. The next wave of enlargement, because it will primarily concern Turkish membership, will trigger a renewed debate about Europe's *raison d'être* and core values and will in all likelihood increase tensions and disagreements among Member States. Briefly put, there is the danger of an ever more inward-looking Europe in a very uncertain and fragile international context that demands a more responsible and active Union. This gap represents by far the most difficult challenge for the Union: how to deepen its integration process without limiting its external action, how to reconcile this introspection with increased responsibilities? With the recent enlargement, remote theatres like Moldova or the Caucasus have become Europe's direct neighbourhood. The crisis over Iraq is still throwing its shadow over the project of a more coherent foreign policy and, more broadly, divergent attitudes regarding US foreign policies still divide the Union. All these issues will increase opportunities for the sceptics to disapprove of and even reject the European integration process. And yet, the European project is the fundamental basis of our prosperity, and increasingly of our security.

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1. The author is writing here in his personal capacity. His last book, *Les Etats-Unis ont-ils besoin d'alliés?*, published last March by Payot, received the France-Amérique Prize 2004.

I. Soft Power Plus

Widely discussed among experts and officials but barely noticed by the European public, the *European Security Strategy* is nonetheless a crucial step toward a more responsible Union in security affairs. For the first time, the Union has begun to think strategically. The process of European integration has resulted in a 'post-modern' system where a genuine democratic peace was built, an institutional order was progressively constructed and an increasingly 'amalgamated security community' has emerged.[1] With the *Strategy*, the external dimension of this process is addressed for the first time. The document in essence was a wake-up call after the deep divisions among Union's members regarding Iraq and an attempt to bridge the gap with Washington on global issues. The opening premise of the document is a basic recognition that 'the European Union is *inevitably* a global actor [...] Europe should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world'.[2] In short, the Union could not have postponed its strategic dimension any longer, it could not anymore seem to be a 'pole of indifference', especially when the 'pole of power', i.e. the US, was engaged in a global and revolutionary agenda for world affairs.[3]

A strategy document is always a tentative exercise by nature. It is more about a vision than about strategic interests, more about attitude than policies. The *European Security Strategy* is no exception in this regard. While it offers relatively specific definitions of the threats faced by the Union, it is rather vague and cautious on the ways to address them. For example, the concept of 'pre-emptive' engagement was replaced by a 'preventive' one, because the original wording was deemed too controversial for some members, especially Germany. Likewise, some countries underlined the persistence of old Bosnian-type security risks while others were keen to stress the new rising threats of terrorism and WMD proliferation. As far as the instruments were concerned, there was an intense debate between a hawkish perception of world problems and a softer view of

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1. The term was first coined by Karl Deutsch, 'Political Community at the International Level: Problems of Definition and Measurement', *Foreign Policy Analysis Series*, Princeton University, September 1953, n°2, pp. 1-25. It was subsequently developed in Karl Deutsch *et al.*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the light of Historical Experience*, Princeton University Press, 1957.
2. Emphasis added.
3. See the seminal article by Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration, Essays in International Politics*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1962, pp. 81-102. On the revolutionary character of Bush's foreign policies, see among others, Ivo H. Daalder & James M. Lindsay, *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington, 2003.

the exercise of European power. These debates were for the most part healthy and fruitful. They helped to enhance the consciousness among European leaders and officials that, in order to fulfil its full international role, the EU cannot reduce itself to its civilian component, however important. Such concepts as 'preventive engagement' and 'effective multilateralism' are by nature elusive notions that will receive a more precise content in concrete situations. They represent nonetheless a significant departure from a civilian only Union: the use of force, albeit as a last resort, is deemed necessary in specific circumstances. This message, 'soft power plus', should be welcomed in Washington.[1]

Yet, some pundits, especially American ones, may consider that the soft power side is by far more important than the hard part of European power. The balance between realism and idealism is always precarious. Of course, every foreign policy initiative contains both dimensions, and there is always a fake antagonism between these two poles. Nonetheless, for the Union, these two dimensions represent national sensitivities. The risk of disagreements and divisions inside the Union is thus real. For example, the deliberately vague notion of 'preventive engagement' carries a message of a more proactive Europe but at the same time, it solemnly echoes UN principles. If humanitarian tasks are obvious examples of uncontroversial preventive actions, a UN *mandate* is not deemed an obligation since the intervention in Kosovo, perceived as legitimate by a majority of EU members. So the Venus-like image of a Kantian Europe has been modified towards a more realist conception of the Union's security interests. Yet, between June and December 2003, the compromise found between the English insistence on 'effective' policies and the German traditional interest in UN multilateralism shifted to Berlin's advantage. This change is partly due to the new enthusiasm of France towards the UN, partly to European public opinion's preference for UN legitimacy. For example, one of the last proposals in European defence concerned the creation of 'battlegroups' (1500 troops), a new and more flexible force package. In the draft agreement between London, Paris and Berlin reached in February 2004, the link between the UN and the deployment of these 'battlegroups' is explicitly mentioned.[2] Because this concept was a direct lesson of

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1. On this dimension, see Jean-Yves Haine, 'The EU Soft Power: Not Hard Enough?', *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 5(1), Winter 2003/ Spring 2004, pp. 69-77 and Sven Biscop, 'The European Security Strategy – Implementing a Distinctive Approach to Security'. Royal Defence College (IRSD-KHID), Brussels, *Sécurité et Stratégie* No. 82, March 2004.
2. The exact wording of the text is: 'These forces will be designed *specifically*, but not *exclusively*, to be used in response to request from the UN'. Emphasis added. Quoted in Burkard Schmitt, 'European Capabilities: How Many Divisions', in Nicole Gnesotto (ed.), *ESDP: The first five years*, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 2004, pp. 98-99.

Operation *Artemis* in Congo, the tacit understanding was that this force would mainly be used in Africa, where a UN mandate is perceived as a political obligation, especially in Germany. Current hesitations about what to in Sudan and the European willingness to choose the UN route even to the point of inaction are a good indication that the UN is indeed 'a cornerstone' for the Union.

In the same vein, the Union's approach to stability and nation-building is far more comprehensive than the military method favoured by Washington. It includes police personnel – the Union has a reserve of 5000 police officers that could be sent abroad – civil administration and civil protection officials and civilian authorities and justice officers to strengthen the rule of law. In that respect, five Member States have recently agreed to set up a European gendarmerie, that will be able to conduct peace-keeping operations that do not require the advanced skills of soldiers but are too dangerous for NGOs. According to the French Defence Minister, Michèle Alliot-Marie, who sponsored the project, 'in all crises, the purely military phase is systematically followed by a civilian-military phase where the aspect of maintaining order becomes increasingly important'.[1] The idea is to bridge the gap between military and civilian EU peacekeeping operations and to provide the EU or any other international force with a military police force, specialised in crisis management. This emphasis on preventive diplomacy in the UN fashion or post-conflict stabilization reinforces the soft side of the Union.

Yet, as far as terrorism is concerned, it should be noted that some big European players have introduced the concept of pre-emption in their doctrinal thinking and their official doctrine.[2] So it seems odd that the wording 'pre-emption' was ultimately changed. Behind this debate lies the old controversy about the application of Article 51 of the UN Charter and the elusive notion of immediate danger. A crucial test of this latent controversy about the use of force, among Europeans as well as vis-à-vis the US, will come sooner rather than later in the case of Iran's willingness to acquire nuclear weapons. The new assertiveness of the Union regarding the Iranian nuclear program was a good indicator of the progress achieved. The display of unity among the big Three sharply differed with their ongoing disagreements about Iraq. Yet the agreement reached last

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1. Quoted in Richard Carter, 'Five member states to establish European Gendarmerie', EU Observer, 15 September 2004. This European Gendarmerie Force will consist of 800 men, based in Italy, and should be deployable on the ground within a maximum of 30 days. It should be operational by the end of 2005.
2. France has recognized the concept of pre-emption in her last *Loi de Programmation militaire*.

October is now obsolete.[1] If there is a difference between the Union and the US on that matter, it lies in the distinction between reputational and strategic interest. Although no EU officials will admit it publicly, the danger rests more in the fatal blow that a nuclear Iran will represent for the non-proliferation regime than in the nuclear capacity of Tehran. For Washington, an Islamic Republic with nuclear weapons is just plainly unacceptable. In any case, theological discussions on that matter are useless, pragmatism and coordination will be the rule.

II.   Mars in Europe: Where Are We?

The area of security and defence has seen indisputable progress in the last couple of years. Despite the divisions over Iraq, the year 2003 witnessed a crucial agreement on EU-NATO relations, the EU's first police missions on the Balkans and the first autonomous military operation, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A decision has been reached to take over the NATO peace-keeping mission in Bosnia. This coming operation will represent the Union's biggest undertaking so far. In intelligence and counter-terrorism activities, new efforts towards integrated actions have been launched. In the area of proliferation, the Union has adopted a clear framework for action and pressure to strengthen the non-proliferation regimes and has initiated an unprecedented coordination effort vis-à-vis Iran. All of this would have been unthinkable just five years ago. Yet, several failures stand out. In terms of foreign policy coordination, European big powers, more often than not, keep the illusion of acting alone while small powers tend to pass the buck to the Union without providing the necessary resources to back these new responsibilities. Vis-à-vis the US, the need for a common approach is crucial, yet most members tend to favour their own special relationship with Washington. This leads to an obvious lack of effective impact, as the paralysis of the Middle East peace process demonstrates. Even when there is a genuine common approach, the inability to achieve the desired results is sometimes manifest, as the Cyprus failure has shown. Moreover, the Union is full of declaratory principles, but often short on actual implementation.

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1. On this point, see Christopher de Bellaigue, 'Big Deal in Iran', *The New York Review of Books*, 26 February 2004, pp. 30-33. On the need for a coordinated approach, see for example Robert J. Einhorn, 'A Transatlantic Strategy on Iran's Nuclear Program', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 27(4), Autumn 2004, pp. 21-32.

Most importantly, the capabilities aspect of ESDP is still lagging behind. The original objective set at Helsinki – up to 60 000 troops deployable within 60 days – has not been met. This postponement is damaging, since demands for security are increasing, both internally, as the Madrid bombings have demonstrated, and externally, as crises deepen in Sudan and Congo. Moreover, stability in the Balkans remains tentative. Several problems have plagued the Helsinki Headline Goal. First, it was merely a quantitative target designed after the Bosnian experience, and therefore, ill-suited to today's new strategic imperatives. Second, it was just a catalogue of forces, only ten per cent of which were actually rapidly deployable. Third, if deficiencies were identified, there were no real incentives to remedy them. Briefly put, efforts on capabilities have to shift from the quantitative to the qualitative.

Several recent developments took this necessity into account. First, building on the success of Operation *Artemis*, EU defence ministers have endorsed the concept of 'battlegroups'. Battlegroups of 1 500 troops, including support elements, represent a more flexible force package capable of higher-intensity operations. Deployable within 15 days, they will be fully manned, equipped and trained, and have sufficient strategic lift assets. The aim is to establish 2 to 3 battlegroups by next year, and 7 to 9 by 2007. This target must not be missed. Second, it was decided to establish a European Defence Agency to 'support the Member States in their effort to improve European defence capabilities in the field of crisis management'. The Agency will thus promote equipment collaboration, research and technology projects and procurement. All this should bring invaluable synergies and economies of scale to the way Europeans spend scarce resources on defence. In particular, the Agency should be able to coordinate efforts to fill the gaps identified by the European Capabilities Action Plan (ECAP). In order to have a real impact, the Agency must be properly funded. Third, the principle of permanent structured cooperation for defence is now recognized by the draft Constitution. The criteria governing this cooperation are stringent, at least on paper: among other things, Member States must have an adequate level of defence expenditure, take concrete measures to enhance the availability, interoperability, flexibility and deployability of their armed forces and commit resources to address shortfalls identified by the ECAP mechanism. The real novelty lies in the encouragement to coordinate the identification of military needs, to specialise national defence and to pool capabilities. Given the weakness of defence budgets and the chronic under-investment in R&T, collective procurement and multinational forces are obvious solutions. If implemented, permanent structured cooperation could offer a precious framework in which to change the dynamics of

European defence. These improvements offer the promise of a bigger bang for the Euro.

III. Hard Issues to Be Addressed

Europe has developed a comprehensive approach to security, from police missions to crisis management. Fulfilling the less demanding aspects of peacekeeping operations, like the future Bosnia mission, cannot slow down the necessary transformation of European forces. In a report published by the EU Institute for Security Studies, an independent task force of security and defence experts has recommended ways to achieve a more capable Europe.[1] Noting that its capacity for autonomous action is currently severely limited by deficiencies in deployability and sustainability, and following the objectives spelled out by the *European Security Strategy*, the task force has proposed several initiatives that the Union should implement as soon as possible.

Deployability should be increased. Up to 50 per cent of European forces must become deployable at any given time for operations outside the EU or to face consequences of catastrophic terrorism. This objective should be fulfilled within 10 years. At the moment, only 10 per cent of the committed forces within the Union are deployable. European countries have almost 1.5 million men under arms but can only deploy 150 000 troops. Sustainability should be improved. The Union must be able to sustain 60 000 *combat* troops for 3 years. At present, the Union's members are unable to sustain a 50 000-troop operation (20 brigades) over a number of years. The highest priority should be put on C4ISTAR, which is a critical enabler for any EU mission.[2] The EU force projection capability should be enlarged with new force packaging. The EU political and military authorities must first be aware of forces in Europe that remain outside the catalogue. This would give them a clearer picture of the overall reality of European forces. These authorities should secondly set up a certification mechanism for EU forces according to the different missions that these forces could be called upon to undertake. This certification must be given at the EU level.

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1. See Jean-Yves Haine (Rapporteur), *European Defence. A proposal for a White Paper*, Report of an Independent Task Force, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris, 2004.
2. Command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance.

To enhance deployability and sustainability, a standing strategic headquarters is deemed necessary. A mobile deployable operational headquarters should similarly be set up. This headquarters should be able to call upon standing EU forces for peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. A nucleus of standing joint combat forces at the disposal of the Union will greatly facilitate the military planning and political decision-making processes when launching operations. This standing force should be organised at the level of battlegroups, i.e. 1 500 men, complemented by air and naval components. Planning at the European level should include network-enabled operations, which are key to European military transformation. So far, only a handful of countries have begun to incorporate this revolution in military affairs in their defence planning. The EU Military Staff could be tasked with deepening and coordinating these efforts towards European network-enabled capabilities, based on a European transformation concept.

In order to increase the harmonisation of doctrine among EU members, a doctrine centre is necessary. A European Defence College could bring together military and civilian personnel from all EU countries in order to promote a common strategic culture that incorporates new doctrines and concepts. A common culture is also an indispensable component of a common strategy for Europe. Since European operations do exist, a common doctrine should underpin them. In the interest of harmonisation, a European fund for force transformation could be set up in the Agency. Economic incentives at the European level must support national efforts. National reforms and transformation must follow European guidelines and procedures. As a minimum, co-financing of national capabilities should achieve better efficiency.

At the European level, a Council of Defence Ministers should be considered. Only regular meetings will be able to provide the necessary continuity and coherence in defence policy in the Union. As far as the NATO Response Force is concerned, it should be available to both NATO and the EU. In its current plans, this rapid reaction force is made up entirely of European forces, and it is mainly a mechanism for developing European military forces in qualitative terms. EU Member States, together with the EU's political and military authorities, should consider the drawing up of a fully-fledged European Defence White Book in order to set priorities and to collectively identify corresponding capability shortfalls and remedies.

Transformation of European forces is indeed crucial. If the lack of investment in capabilities continues, even the capacity to operate with the US will be lost. The 25 members currently spend around 160 billion Euro on defence and have nearly 1.5 million men under arms. Yet, the Union is barely able to rapidly deploy 10 per cent of that number. A single market for defence procurement could save 6 billion Euro a year. The overall aim is thus to better allocate and coordinate scarce resources. To achieve that, more Europe, not less, is needed.

A deep structural force that will push Europe to become a genuine international security actor is at play. Firstly, since the conflict in the Balkans in the early 1990s, there is a common acknowledgment among Member States that acting together is a necessary condition for success. Secondly, the American experience with pre-emption and state-building, without mentioning the spread of democracy, has produced serious disappointment and frustration in the Arab world and the Atlantic community. Recent polls show the dramatic decrease of trust about Washington's intentions. The United States thinks itself as the exceptional nation whose mission is to lead the world. But between this benevolent self-image and the way the rest of the world feels about and resents US actions, the gap is becoming wider and wider. This estrangement could have serious consequences for US foreign policy. Two different directions are likely. Having recognized the cost of acting alone, Washington could decide to reinvest in institutionalized alliances and partnerships, as indeed the Bush administration has begun to do. But an opposite scenario is also possible whereby Washington, already overstretched in Iraq, will focus on homeland defence and disengage from Europe. The worst scenario would be a new isolationist America and a still very weak Europe. Either way, Europe's vacation from geopolitics is over. Demands for more international responsibilities from inside as well from outside the Union will rise. To act now is to be prepared for the future. The credibility of the Union as an international security actor is at stake.

4. Effective Multilateralism:
Bringing the European Way into Practice

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The best way of summarizing the European Security Strategy, the 'European way', is '*effective multilateralism*', the last of three strategic objectives named in the *Strategy*. Effective Multilateralism – 'the development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order' as the *Strategy* has it – concerns the global level, the world system itself, and as such addresses the long-term, underlying factors determining peace and security, and that by multilateral means, by cooperating with others.

The other two strategic objectives in the *Strategy* are implied by Effective Multilateralism. 'Building security in our neighbourhood' is the application of the same principles in the proximity of the EU, not because of any hierarchy of objectives, but because the EU has the means, and perhaps even the duty, to directly play the leading role itself in its own neighbourhood, rather than acting through the UN and the other multilateral bodies as it will at the global level. 'Addressing the threats' demands a number of immediate measures in the politico-military field, but can only succeed in the long-term through the root causes approach of Effective Multilateralism.

I. Effective Multilateralism = Global Governance

Effective Multilateralism can best be understood as an effective system of *global governance*, i.e. a system able to ensure at the global level access to the core public goods that at the national level the State provides – or is supposed to – to its citizens: stability and security, an enforceable legal order, an open and inclusive economic order and global welfare in all of its aspects (such as access to health, a clean environment, education etc.). These are *global public goods* to which everybody should have access, including future generations. The different global public goods are inherently related: they can only be fully enjoyed if one has access to them all. Too large a gap between haves and have-nots in terms of access to global public goods is the ultimate systemic threat to Europe's security:

at a certain level of inequality the resulting political instability, extremisms, economic unpredictability and massive migration flows will become uncontrollable.[1] Although it is still very broad, the concept of global public goods renders it easier to operationalize, almost to visualize even, global governance; it also allows for a clear delineation of policy priorities. The *Strategy* does not explicitly mention the concept, but its implicit presence is evident: 'The best protection for our security is a world of well-governed democratic states. Spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the international order'.

If in the *Strategy* the EU recognizes the inseparable links between all the dimensions of Effective Multilateralism, between the different global public goods, then it must act accordingly in implementing the *Strategy*.[2] This implies accepting the *Strategy* as the strategic framework, i.e. as determining the choice of objectives and the development of instruments and means, not just for ESDP and CFSP, but for all of EU external action, across the pillars, from trade and development to international environmental and police cooperation. Here lies potentially the greatest added value of the *Strategy*: providing the stimulus for the effective integration of all EU external policies. For the EU already possesses the full range of instruments, up to the military, only they are not always put to use in a consistent manner; all too often still, policies in one field of external action are contradictory with those in other areas. The adoption of the *Strategy* has created the opportunity to structurally change this.

II.   The Regional Level: Neighbourhood Policy

At the regional level of the EU's neighbourhood, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) certainly goes in the right direction. Comprehensive bilateral action plans with an emphasis on detailed mutual commitments and 'positive conditionality' are to promote political and economic reform. Perhaps the fields of CFSP/ESDP could be included in the action plans, so as to stimulate politico-military cooperation as well, such as detaching liaison officers to the EU Mili-

1. Rik Coolsaet & Valérie Arnould, 'Global Governance: The Next Frontier'. IRRI-KIIB, Brussels, Egmont Paper No. 2, April 2004, www.irri-kiib.be/papers/egmontp2.U561.pdf.
2. Sven Biscop, 'The European Security Strategy – Implementing a Distinctive Approach to Security'. Royal Defence College (IRSD-KHID), Brussels, Sécurité et Stratégie No. 82, March 2004, www.irri-kiib.be/papers/Artikel%20V&S%20ESS.pdf.

tary Staff, observing and participating in ESDP exercises and manoeuvres, and eventually participating in EU operations. The ultimate objective in that field is an effective security partnership, i.e. joint mechanisms for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management, based on a common strategic assessment. With regard to the Mediterranean e.g., the EU has already offered extensive involvement to its partners, but so far these have been very reluctant to accept the invitation. Care should be taken when developing the ENP not to ignore the *acquis* of existing frameworks such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), notably as concerns multilateral, region-wide programmes and activities. In fact, the ENP offers a window of opportunity to revitalize the EMP, which has stagnated, obviously because of the Middle East conflict that clouds the whole of the region, but also because of a lack of effort and concessions on the part of the EU, particularly with regard to the agricultural market. For 'positive conditionality' to work, real 'carrots' must be offered and clear benchmarks must be agreed. In the end though, effective democratization can only happen when external stimuli can support local actors to start an internal process of reform.

III. The Global Level: Empowering the UN

At the global level, the EU has less direct leverage, but it can make a significant contribution both to the improvement of mechanisms and institutions for global governance and to the alleviation of specific conflict or humanitarian situations by supporting the UN and the associated multilateral bodies.

At the end of 2003 UN Secretary General Kofi Annan established a High-Level Panel with the aim of recommending, by the end of 2004, measures to enable the Security Council in particular to take swift and effective collective action in the face of threats to peace and security. In a way very similar to an earlier exercise by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), which in 2001 published its report 'The Responsibility to Protect', the Panel could lead to a political consensus on a policy framework outlining the types of situations that demand action by the international community.[1] This is the case when States harm their own populations, when national sovereignty must yield to 'the responsibility to protect' on the part of the multilateral system

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1. ICISS, 'The Responsibility to Protect'. Ottawa, International Development Research Centre, 2001, www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/iciss-ciise.

– the focus of the ICISS report – but also when States do not live up to their commitments towards their neighbours and the international community, e.g. by violating non-proliferation agreements, by actively supporting terrorist groups or by the illegal use of force. The consistent use of such a framework to judge situations should ensure that they come to the attention of the Security Council at an early stage – and the earlier the intervention, the smaller the need for military action – and in the face of public opinion would make it more difficult for the Security Council not to act. It would thus also deprive those that prefer to act unilaterally from the excuse of UN inaction.

In a May 2004 contribution to the High-Level Panel, the transmission of which the Council approved, this line of action is supported.[1] A process is suggested to the Security Council of engaging a violating State in dialogue, offering support for redressing of the situation, including through the deployment of civilian missions, but with the option of having recourse to targeted sanctions and, as a last resort, military intervention if the State does not respond. This contribution to the High-Level Panel is in effect much more unambiguous on the use of force than the *Strategy* itself; in the light of the implementation of Effective Multilateralism, it deserves the EU's unequivocal support.

In the end of course the political will of the members of the Security Council and of the UN Member States in general will determine whether action is taken or not. On the part of the EU, the will has clearly been expressed to launch opera-tions as 'subcontractor' to the UN, making use of the 'battlegroup concept' pro-viding for the creation of 1500-strong rapidly deployable force packages. The EU and the UN already closely cooperate in the field of conflict prevention and early warning and in September 2003 a joint declaration on cooperation on crisis management was signed.

Next to this global politico-military dimension, the EU must make a similar contribution in the other fields of global governance as well. For Effective Mul-tilateralism to be implemented, enhancing social, economic and environmental governance are equally important. E.g. the EU could step up its efforts to pro-mote reform of the UN's Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) so as to enable it to play a central role in crisis management in case of financial crisis, economic stagnation or famine, when a large number of different actors have to be

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1. 'Paper for Submission to the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change'. http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/EU%20written%20contribution2.pdf.

brought together, next to its traditional role of coordinating different spheres of economic and social development. In these other fields as well, the EU is enhancing concrete cooperation with the UN. On 28 June 2004 the Commission and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) announced a strategic partnership focussing on governance, conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction, with particular attention for countries that emerge from conflict. This is to be the first in a series of partnerships with UN agencies.

In the longer term, the objective of Security Council reform, which is inherently related to the task of the High-Level Panel, should be kept in mind. Legitimacy of decisions is a very important determinant of the success of collective action and is closely linked to the composition of the decision-making body. A mid-term option certainly worth exploring is a more structured partnership between the Security Council and regional organizations, which can act as 'local agents' on behalf of the Security Council. Ultimately, a composition based on regional groupings seems to be the best possible way to achieve a better balance.

IV.   A Distinctive European Approach

The links between all fields of external action that are inherent to Effective Multilateralism must not only be reflected in EU policies at the global and regional levels, but also in EU institutions and decision-making, for the elaboration of integrated policies to be at all possible. The single External Action Service that is provided for in the Constitution should thus be conceived as comprising all the relevant directorates from the Commission and the Council Secretariat, while the Union Foreign Minister could act as a very effective driving force. The implementation of the ESS is thus closely linked to the institutional reforms in the Constitution.

The question could rightly be asked whether all the very diverse dimensions of Effective Multilateralism still fit under the title of 'security'. On the one hand, a number of observers from e.g. the development sector and the peace movement, and from countries in the South, fear 'securitization', i.e. that all of the EU's external policies would be driven by 'hard' security concerns and would thus see the use of politico-military instruments. On the other hand it is feared that by widening the notion of 'security' too much, it becomes meaningless. Perhaps the solution is to turn it around. Is not the 'EU way' that we do *not* address issues as security problems, but as governance, development, environmental issues

etc., unless they pose an effective politico-military threat to the local population, to a region, to the EU or to the international community? Perhaps then 'European Security Strategy' was not such a good title after all – a Comprehensive Strategy for External Action is what it should be, and what it will be if Effective Multilateralism is effectively implemented.

5. BUILDING UP EU MILITARY CAPABILITIES: AN INCREMENTAL PROCESS

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At the December 2003 Brussels summit the EU adopted the *European Security Strategy*. The document has three basic parts. First, it calls for the EU to contribute more resources to establishing economic and political stability in its neighbourhood. Second, it calls on the EU to build an international order. And third, it calls on the EU to strengthen its civil and military capacity to deal with the threat of weapons of mass destruction and rogue states. The *Strategy* has a global and comprehensive approach to Europe's security interests and threats.

Due to the vagueness of the *Strategy* – 25 governments had to agree on the document – everybody liked it. France loved it because it would create a multipolar world to counter American dominance. Germany loved it because it would build an international order. Britain, Spain, Portugal and the 10 new EU members loved it because it stresses the importance of maintaining good relations with America and the Atlantic Alliance. Even the United States liked this part. Still we have to acknowledge that within the EU there are political divisions over how to handle the US and there is also a lack of consensus on when and in what circumstances force should be used.

The *Strategy* implicitly emphasizes the need to stabilise the arc of instability which runs around the EU's Eastern, South-Eastern and Southern flanks; and the need to prevent the worst kind of disaster in those parts of the world, notably sub-Saharan Africa. It is clear that EU policy towards its near abroad will also have to include a military component. Europeans should not expect the US to put out fires in their own backyard. After all, the principal rationale for the British-French initiative at St-Malô in 1998 was to improve the EU's poor performance in coping with the Balkan crises of the 1990s.

As the *Strategy* acknowledges, EU institutions and governments have seldom joined together their various policies on trade, aid, development, immigration and counter-terrorism. But it is an important potential strength of the EU that it can draw on a broad spectrum of soft and hard power resources. If a war does

break out, the EU needs to be able to deploy rapid reaction forces to end the conflict, and then provide peacekeepers and other essential personnel – such as policemen, engineers and judges – to help rebuild the country.

For a long time, the EU was a civilian-only organization. After a slow start in the early 1990s to develop a defence policy, since 1999 the EU is in the process of formulating and establishing the military capabilities for a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). At the EU's Helsinki Summit of December 1999, EU member states committed themselves to a military 'Headline Goal'. By the year 2003, the EU should have been able to deploy 60 000 troops for the so-called Petersberg missions. Although the Helsinki Headline Goal was declared formally met in 2003, the Thessalonica European Council in June 2003 acknowledged that the EU operational capability across the full range of Petersberg tasks was still limited and constrained by recognised shortfalls. Several problems plagued the Headline Goal. It was just a catalogue of forces, only ten percent of which were actually rapidly deployable. And if deficiencies were identified, there were no real incentives to remedy them.

The new Headline Goal 2010 focuses on the need for qualitative improvements to put existing defence capabilities at the service of the whole range of crisis management operations included in the revised Petersberg tasks. However, qualitative capabilities are difficult to measure. One may expect that the military capabilities of EU Member States will fall short of their declared ambitions for years to come. This is underlined by the Capabilities Improvement Chart 2004, listing 64 capability shortfalls and catalogue deficits. This document states that for 7 capabilities the situation has been solved, for 4 capabilities the situation has improved, but for 53 capabilities the situation has remained approximately the same. Presently the 25 EU Member States can barely deploy 85 000 out of a total of 1.2 million ground soldiers. From both a defence planner's point of view, and from that of the taxpayer, Europe's armies need urgent reform. But more capable European forces will require serious investment.

It has to be recognized that the effects that European nations can bring to today's crises are too fragmented and peppered with capability gaps; insufficiently coordinated or not properly equipped or structured for modern missions; and not cost-effective because of inefficiencies in industry and procurement. As mentioned above, attempts by the EU to remedy this situation have enjoyed limited success. Europeans' progress towards modernising and re-equipping their armies is painfully slow. But the launch of the European Defence Agency

(EDA) gives EU Member States an opportunity to make a new start. The overall mission of the EDA is to carve more effective capabilities from roughly the same collective budget, since nobody expects European defence budgets to increase in real terms. However, there is clearly a risk that the perceived obsession in Brussels with process and bureaucracy could undermine the effectiveness of the EDA. It will require strong leadership and a focus on real capability improvements from defence ministers, as well as from the Agency's own staff, to prevent this.

The sovereignty of the Member States still is a big obstacle for overcoming the EU's military capability shortfalls. Task specialisation as the ultimate solution for a much more capable EU is only possible if Member States are willing to surrender some of their sovereign authority in the area of defence. But this is still considered as a non-starter by EU Member States.

At least the EU should think more about sharing military capabilities. Pooling can be a partial solution for meeting European military shortfalls. It offers the opportunity for lower overhead costs, and the resources released might then be used to fund new enabling capabilities. Pooled forces also would drive moves to greater interoperability and common doctrine and equipment. Pooling is not a new or untried idea. NATO fields a supranational capability: the jointly owned and operated AWACS force. The budgetary advantages of governments collaborating on, for example, a common fleet of air transport planes, or air-tankers, or UAVs, are potentially huge. In this way each country could save money on bases, servicing, maintenance and training. An example of pooling is the European Air Group Coordination Cell (EACC), which coordinates the military transport flights of the UK, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands. It has led to a more efficient use of transport capacity and over time can lead to cost-savings. There are relatively few disadvantages of pooling from a political perspective. This type of cooperation has the greatest chance of success in the short term.

There is also money to be saved through role specialisation. Even the larger European countries cannot maintain every sort of military capability on limited budgets. For example, it would not make sense for several European air forces separately to develop the capacity to destroy hostile radar systems.

A recent important initiative, which is achievable in the short term, is the launch of the 'battlegroup concept'. The rationale for these EU battlegroups is to give

the UN the rapid reaction capability that it currently lacks. The aim is to provide rapid response capabilities by directing Member States towards a catalogue of high-utility force packages that can be tailored to specific missions, usable as an individual unit or combined together with units of the same nature. The experience of Operation *Artemis* in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which was the first EU-led military operation launched in June 2003 at the request of the UN Security Council, is a typical scenario for which the battlegroups may be deployed.

The key element of that force is a coherent, credible battlegroup consisting of around 1500 combat soldiers including (combat) support elements. The core of a battlegroup has more or less the size of an infantry battalion backed up with the needed combat support and combat service support, such as logistics and strategic lift capabilities. The force should be deployed within 15 days to respond to a crisis and should be sustainable for at least 30 days.

What does the EU's military operational balance-sheet look like so far? In the year 2003 the EU conducted operations for the first time: the EU Police Mission in Bosnia, Operation *Concordia* in Macedonia (300 troops) and the autonomous Operation *Artemis* in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2000 troops). Those were rather small missions. At the end of 2004 the EU will take over NATO's peacekeeping operation in Bosnia (EUFOR). This commitment will represent its largest operation so far and will involve several thousand military personnel and police forces for a longer period of time. This operation, making use of NATO assets and capabilities, will constitute the first real litmus test of EU military and civilian capabilities.

In conclusion, for the foreseeable future EU military missions are either going to be small, and in effect British and/or French-led, or the Europeans will have to rely upon NATO and/or American support, as they do in the Balkans.

6. THE PARTICIPATING INSTITUTES

http://www.irri-kiib.be

fpc.org.uk

www.britishcouncil.org/belgium

www.newdefenceagenda.org