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# Europe in a Changing Global Order: Militarization and the New EU Global Strategy for Security and Defence

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# Europe in a Changing Global Order: Militarization and the New EU Global Strategy for Security and Defence

## AN INSIGHT IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND PREFERENCES OF THE POLICY MAKERS ON SECURITY AND DEFENCE ISSUES.

*Alessandra Giannessi*

### INTRODUCTION

The new Global Strategy for the European Union's Security and Defence Policy presented in June 2016 by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission Federica Mogherini, followed by the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July of the same year, come at a moment of high uncertainty and radical change in the international system. Traditional alliances are being questioned and both national and regional political and economic interests are taking shape along emerging fault lines, while new strategic perspectives are being outlined on various fronts.

In this context, the idea of the return of "cosmopolitics" in Europe emerge as one of the most overbearing themes in the current debate. European security and defence have been once again put on the political agenda as priority issues. Mogherini's Global Strategy, while pledging for a stronger and more independent European Union "as a global security provider", stressed that the EU has now "to cope with super-powers as well as with increasingly fractured identities" and, in doing so, it cannot be alone. For this reason, the new strategy, as well as a Joint Declaration by Donald Tusk, Jean-Claude Juncker and NATO's Secretary General, solemnly asserts the need of a strengthened cooperation and interdependence between the EU and NATO – and that, in both operational and ideological terms.

"The purpose, even the existence of our Union is being questioned. Yet, our citizens and the worlds need a stronger European Union like never before". Yet, it seems, the EU institutions' answer to Europe's "identity crisis" is a military one, where the definition of common interests and needs is built again upon an imperialist vision of the world. If the process of reconstruction of the European identity is more and more anchored to the existence of "external threats", while the measure of cooperation and solidarity among the Member States is based solely on an increasing level of

militarization, how can Europe find a credible alternative to the offence-defence dipole?

Different reactions have welcomed the new Global Strategy among the EU Member States, reflecting their respective divergent interests and preferences according to each specific politic, economic, cultural, social, and geographic situation. Despite this, all of them agreed on the urgent need of a stronger security and defence policy. In an era of potential structural changes several questions arise. How these preferences on security and defence are made? To which set of priorities should we refer? Are choices made according national priorities, or rather according to common visions and values within political families? Or, again, to a combination of both? In order to better understand the changes in the international environment, their causes and consequences, the analysis of the decision-making process in security and defence policy becomes an issue of increasing interest. When it comes to these matters, how do actors define their preferences? More specifically, at the European level, the "ancestral dichotomy" between Europeanists and Atlanticists seems to be back again, leading the political debate about the future (and the present) of European security on a slippery terrain. The new provisions in the EU Global Strategy clearly support the adoption of measures aiming at strengthening a more autonomous military capacity for the European Union, always in the framework of NATO. Some Member States have expressed the fear that such provision will harm the security of the region; some others have welcomed the news as a necessary, inevitable step in reinforcing both regional and national borders. How do the European countries which are members of both the EU and NATO deal with their double membership in this context?

It seems fair to presume that traditional categories and theories are no longer sufficient to explain the phenomenon in a global environment that becomes more and more

complex, while the balance of power on both the European and the international scale is even more likely to induce atypical, if not anomalous alliances (at least on specific issues and interests) according to the traditional dynamics of International Relations. Brexit, Trump's election and his positions towards the EU and NATO as well as Russia and Turkey, the tensions linked to the Ukraine conflict, climate and energy justice, the war in Syria, transatlantic commercial agreements: all – yet not only – these recent major events open new scenarios for potential new dynamics, unusual conflict lines as well as renewed forms of cooperation.

On top of this, institutional conflicts within the European Union itself about decision-making in foreign policy have always existed. Existing literature on the topic seems insufficient to identify how such conflicts appear also within each institution according to both political families and national interests' fractures. It results necessary to identify a new paradigm according to which such processes are being led. This would allow political researchers to better understand – and, ultimately, influence, such dynamics. Which instruments do we need? Which theoretical framework do we want to use?

Notwithstanding the absolute necessity of a clearer and updated picture of the current situation, comprehensive – if possible – of an exhaustive appraisal of all the different positions and interests put on the table by the various institutional and non-institutional actors in the game, a major long-term issue arises. It would be convenient to ask ourselves whether the reflexion should be broadened to a more structural, comprehensive analysis of the European Union identity and its role in the international system. Even more, we should take into consideration the urgent necessity of arguing the current global neoliberal system, and all the consequent narratives about security, threats, external and internal enemies, and eventually move towards the construction of an alternative international system.

Of course, this would require a major intellectual and political effort, comprehensive of a series of interdependent, multiple long-term analysis. In a more brief-term perspective, this preliminary work will try to capture some of the essential elements characterising the key issues of security and defence at the European level in the aftermath of the new EU Global Strategy and its implementation. Moving from some preliminary considerations about the above mentioned strategy as well as the NATO Warsaw Summit implications for EU-NATO relations, it will provide a brief description of the Common Security and Defence Policy

decision-making process and its main actors. A special chapter will be dedicated to an overview of the military structure of the EU, in an attempt to give a glance at this extremely complex interconnection of agencies and body, see how they work and understand the level of interconnection with the EU institutions and the Member States.

Two final sections aim to portray the European Union in the changing global context by framing the current debate on the new EU Global Strategy within a broader picture where multiple variables, events and actors play an important role in defining the Union and its role in the world.

## 1. BRIEF CONTEXTUALISATION – THE EUROPEAN CFSP AND CSDP THROUGH THE INTEGRATION PROCESS UNTIL THE PRESENT DAY<sup>1</sup>

The origins of the security and defence architecture of Europe can be found in the post-World War II context. Even though not formally declared, since its origins in the 1950s, the European integration process was built also taking into account issues of foreign policy. Some would say that European integration began with defence, as the treaties of Paris (1951) and Rome (1957) were to a certain extent driven by the geopolitics of reconciliation between France and Germany, and by the “red threat” represented by the Soviet Union. Significantly, the Treaty of Rome already incorporated, with the remit of the European Economic Community (EEC), trade and agricultural policies and recognised Europe’s overseas territories and colonial legacies.

The desire to confer a certain degree of harmonisation to the foreign policies of European states has been explicitly manifested for the first time during the Sixties, when the world system showed clear signs of economic and political instability. Those years saw the end of the Bretton Woods monetary regime with the reaction of the oil producing countries, the political problems connected to the US’ political hegemony and the East-West *détente*, especially in Europe, while in the rest of the world regional systems relatively autonomous from global dynamics were developing. By that time, trade, agriculture and development were part of the EEC, while more traditional areas of foreign policy were instead left out from the European equation – exception made for defence, which was guaranteed by and firmly subject to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Yet at a meeting in The Hague (1969), heads of state and government established to gradually develop a European Political Cooperation (EPC) in the context of political unification and with the objective of formulating proposals on foreign policy issues. The EPC was an entirely intergovernmental process, constructed outside EEC treaties and the

jurisdiction of its institutions. Since then, however, foreign and security policy has been institutionalised and then progressively incorporated within the legal framework of the European integration process. The Treaty of Maastricht (1992) created the well-known three-pillar structure which institutionalised the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and then, following the St. Malo Declaration (1998), numerous European Council meetings defined the military and civilian capabilities needed by the Community. Among these, the Cologne European Council Meeting in 1999 laid the foundations for European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which in 2003 became operational through the initiation of the first ESDP missions. In addition, the EU presented its first European Security Strategy in December 2003, outlining the key threats and challenges that Europe was facing at the time. With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009, ESDP was renamed Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

After the fall of Soviet bloc, the European security system has taken the form of a regional system of partnership and co-management. This system was built upon a set of various instruments that are held together by the explicit will of the governments to be partners in the pursuit of the common goal of guarantee the security of the region<sup>2</sup>. As far as its international dimension, this process led to a system based on the complementarity of the regional security model with both the strategic plans of NATO and with the project of common defence policy of the EU countries. This process has thus strengthened another important experience that results crucial in order to understand the common foreign and defence policies, that is the progressive “denationalization” of such policies. Since a regional security partnership is based on a tight network of formal and informal mechanisms for consultation and cooper-

1 As a main source of this section, please see Attinà, F., Natalicchi, G., *L’Unione Europea. Governo, istituzioni, politiche, Il Mulino*, 2010.

2 The construction of this system started well before the fall of the Soviet bloc and could be divided into two phases: the first, in the Sixties, with the negotiations on arms reduction and control between the two political-military blocs, and second, started in the Seventies, which took off only in the Nineties with the signature of the Paris Charter (1990), by the governments of all European countries, the United States, Canada, and the Soviet Union. The Charter was one of many attempts to seize the opportunity of the fall of Communism by actively inviting the former Eastern bloc-countries into the ideological framework of the West.

ation, alongside intergovernmental military institutions and transnational networks of military experts, the security policy of the participating States has been gradually transformed by exclusively competence of the Member States to shared competence at the European level. The definition of the characteristics and the creation of the common defence policy structures are contained in the final documents of the European Council meetings held after the Amsterdam Treaty. These documents defined the objectives, bodies and decision-making procedures, as well as the common civil and military capabilities and relations with the Atlantic Alliance. This system was later updated by the Lisbon Treaty, through the section on the Common Security and Defence Policy. The primary objective of the CSDP was the establishment of a both civilian and military operational capacity, to be used in international security operations and crisis management in harmony with the model of regional security partnership. The CSDP is also based on a relationship of interdependence and complementarity between the European Union and NATO (also through the implementation of the Berlin Plus Agreement of 2002). Moreover, national governments have committed to undertake the necessary reforms of their armed forces and to restructure their defence industry, under the guidance of the European Defence Agency.

Through the progressive realisation of CFSP and CSDP, a convergence of foreign and national military policies by means of agreements on specific issues, and the Member States have pursued the ambition to “speak with one voice” in the diplomatic conferences and negotiation processes within International Organisations. We cannot say, however, when and to what extent national policies are destined to disappear, nor can we assume that this will eventually occur.

Nevertheless, the Union declared aim was to participate in the global arena as any other international political actor, namely affirming and promoting with every means its values and interests. This position were also present in the European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003, in which a preference for an *effective multilateralism* were solemnly expressed as the foundation of a stronger international community as well as an international order based on international law - although a more “robust” answer is not to be excluded when those which are considered key values and interests for Europe are at stake.

What are, today, these values and interests? More specifically, can we still identify common values and interests of

the Union according to traditional political conflict-lines, or are they evolving towards new directions, following the various changes in the international order? How do these interests influence the current decision-making process in the field of foreign policy and common defence, at the European level?

## 2. CFSP AND CSDP TODAY: THE RETURN OF COSMOPOLITICS IN EUROPE AND THE PRESSURE FOR A STRONGER EUROPEAN DEFENCE

There is no doubt that, with regard to regional and international security, we currently live in an era of uncertainty and radical change. It is sufficient to look at the way in which 2003 ESS was formulated, in order to realise this fact: “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure, or so free”. Former HR Javier Solana’s words are, again, equally eloquent: “The preparation of the European Security Strategy has helped us to discover a remarkable convergence of views on security issues between EU Member States and to uncover an authentic and uniquely European voice on security issues. The challenge ahead is to persuade and implement.” It is evident that, at present, the regional and global contexts have deteriorated to a point where asserting the same without second thoughts would be at least quite unwise.

The idea of the return of “cosmopolitics” in Europe then occupies again a privileged seat in current debates. This could be seen as the end of two assumptions at the very basis of the “idyllic vision” formulated in 2003: the EU as a champion of soft power and a Neighbourhood Policy which would have led towards a progressive convergence of the Union to its Southern edge – and this as an incontrovertible effect of the attractiveness of the European model<sup>3</sup>.

Well, the European Neighbourhood Policy has shown all its limitations, and, as of today, we cannot help but speaking about a sonorous failure in fulfilling all the proposed goals. That becomes more true if we take into account: the loss of economic weight of the EU in the world; the increasing

evidences of a crisis that has seriously harmed the European welfare state, which one was its most precious identity; the “refugee crisis” and the rise of the far right all over Europe, as a sign of a crisis of values that makes the European project unrecognizable from its original ideal model. Considering all this, we could not be entirely wrong in saying that, today, the EU has lost all its desired and long-awaited “civilizing appeal”.

The crisis of asylum-seekers has breached the “moral framework” of the European project. A renewed East-West fracture has been imposed over the EU and its Member States’ ability to articulate a reasonable, alternative solution within the burdens of its (their?) beliefs, standards and values. Or, rather, those which were supposed to be its beliefs, standards and values.

These changes on several fronts within the global scenario – and, consequently, the uncertainty raising from them, are producing a deeper change in the perspective of the different actors.

It is in this highly changing scenario that two major events have occurred, during the summer of 2016. First, in June the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, has presented a new Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy. Second, a month later – in July – NATO has held its new Summit in Warsaw, in order to redefine its strategic concepts and priorities (dating back to the Lisbon Summit in 2010).

### 2.1. THE EU GLOBAL STRATEGY: “A STRONGER EUROPE”?

“The purpose, even existence, of our Union is being questioned. Yet, our citizens and the world need a strong European Union like never before. Our wider region has become more unstable and more insecure. The crises within and beyond our borders are affecting directly our citizens’ lives. In challenging times, a strong Union is one that thinks strategically, shares a vision and acts together.

This is even more true after the British referendum. We will have to rethink the way our Union works, but we perfectly know what to work for. We know what our principles, our interests and our priorities are. This is no time for uncertainty: our Union needs a Strategy. We need a shared vision, and common action”. With these words, the HR/VP Mogherini presents the new EU Global Strategy in June

3 Chavez Giraldo, Pedro, notes, *OTAN, UE, EE.UU., el retorno de la geostrategia*

2016, thirteen years after the idealistic declaration of Mr Solano<sup>4</sup>.

It seems quite fair to say that the earlier optimism about the past “mission of securing peace in Europe” has been almost entirely overtaken by the EU’s new “mission of building peace around the world”, which has been put into a more sober perspective in the EUGS.

Only two months later, in his State of Union Address, the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker stated as follows: “Soft power is not enough in our increasingly dangerous neighbourhood”<sup>5</sup>.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, the Foreign Affairs Council adopted its Conclusions on the implementation of the EU Global Strategy in the area of Security and Defence<sup>6</sup>, thus validating its ideal and operational goals, and setting out “the level of ambition as well as concrete actions. These actions will assist the EU and its member states in addressing further Europe’s current and future security and defence needs”.

Final Conclusions has been adopted by the European Council meeting of the 15<sup>th</sup> of December, 2016, in which the heads of state/government focused on the three following priorities:

- the EU Global Strategy in the area of security and defence
- the Commission’s European Defence Action Plan
- the implementation of the common set of proposals which follow up on the EU-NATO Joint Declaration signed in Warsaw in July 2016<sup>7</sup>

“Forging unity” across institutions, Member States, and citizens thus emerge as the main mission of this post-Brexit

strategy, in the midst of a disturbing upheaval of nationalism all over Europe, as well as the “migration crisis”, and right after the earlier solidarity crisis related to the fiscal troubles in the Eurozone. Completing the scenario, Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 and involvement in the Ukrainian crisis further underscored the sad realization of European leaders that “peace and stability in Europe are no longer a given”. It is easy to understand that, in this context, the pressure to intensify the links between the European countries and to give more consistency to the CSDP becomes more evident and explicit than ever.

European research institutes’ and think tanks’ perspective on the subject constantly highlights the increase in insecurity and evidences of the structural, massive change that has occurred: if Europe wanted to be surrounded by a “circle of friends”, they say, the truth is that, as of today, it is rather surrounded by a “circle of fire”: the “invasion” of Ukraine; the war in Syria; the fighting on the South-Eastern border of Turkey; the ever-present risks of the situation in Israel and Palestine; the raising destructive power of Daesh. If in recent years the European institutions had made a note of the fact that, to a quite high extent, the economic crisis had banished the security issue from the political agenda (and, consequently, of the lack of popularity of increasing military expenditures in times of deep cuts in social spending), today the “militarization” of the conflict with Russia and the centrality of the anti-terrorism struggle have once again repositioned security, defence, and military threats on the agenda, making increased military expenditures acceptable, when not acclaimed, for public opinion, political forces and national governments<sup>8</sup>.

## 2.2. THE EU GLOBAL STRATEGY AND THE EU-NATO RELATIONSHIP

“When that threat disappeared, as the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and the Soviet Union, and then Russia, entered into a more constructive relationship with NATO, the Alliance remained. To the surprise of many and the dismay of

some, the Alliance decided to stay together, for no other reason than a feeling of family. Having started as an Alliance against, NATO became an Alliance for. We do not need a threat to want to stay together, just like families do not

4 For the integral text of the EUGS: [https://eeas.europa.eu/top\\_stories/pdf/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf)

5 For the integral speech: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-16-3043\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-16-3043_en.htm)

6 For the integral text of Council’s Conclusions: [https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/key\\_documents/For the integral text of the EUGS](https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/key_documents/For_the_integral_text_of_the_EUGS): <https://eeas.europa.eu/>

7 For the integral text of the European Council’s Conclusions: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2016/12/15/>

8 Chavez Giraldo, Pedro, notes, *Algunas ideas en relación con la política de seguridad y defensa de la UE*

need other reasons to persist and prosper” (“The identity of NATO”, former Vice Chief of Staff at SHAPE, Lieutenant General Michel Yakovleff)<sup>9</sup>.

“NATO is the main pillar for our security in Europe. We are very much interested in having a good and close cooperation with our American allies when it comes to external security, but also to fight the challenges of international terrorism. I expect President Trump to ask us in Europe to do more for our own security and that’s why this call from America will lead, in my view, to a closer cooperation on defence and security within the European partners in the NATO framework” (David McAllister (EEP), 9 November 2016, right after Trump’s election in the US)<sup>10</sup>.

“More than ever in a changing world, soft power alone is not enough. Security begins at home and that is why the EU is committed to doing more to protect and defend its citizens, and to help those Member States who are Allies to play their full part in NATO [...]. The imperative to work together is also more acute and relevant than ever. We not only share 22 members but also the same values, the same devotion to freedom, democracy and the rule of law, and the same challenges, too” (European Council’s press release relative to a Joint op-ed by President Tusk, President Juncker and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, 13 December 2016)<sup>11</sup>.

“There was a signed agreement between the European Union and NATO to strengthen cooperation and we have [...]

done more in the last 6-7 months than what we’ve done in all the previous years because I think we have finally realized both in the European Union and in NATO that we have to get rid of the ghosts of the past and concentrate on the risks of today and our cooperation is vital, especially to cover the” threats “that are new in this dangerous scenario we’re facing” (Federica Mogherini, during a Panel discussion with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017)<sup>12</sup>.

During the months that preceded the launching of the EU Global Strategy, some Member States had repeatedly express their fear that a stronger and more autonomous EU would harm NATO, of which 22 EU countries are also members, and called for a strong role for NATO in the upcoming strategy. These concerns seem to be formally addressed by the strategy, as NATO features strongly as “the primary framework for most Member States”. While acknowledging that, Mogherini’s strategy states that “a more credible European defence is essential also for the sake of a healthy transatlantic partnership with the United States”. The view taken by the strategy is then described by European institutions as “compelling” and “clearly in line with the increased EU-NATO cooperation seen over the past few years, of which the signing of the EU-NATO Joint Declaration at the Warsaw Summit was the most recent and perhaps the strongest proof”<sup>13</sup>.

### 2.3. NATO SUMMIT IN WARSAW – GENERAL IMPLICATIONS<sup>14</sup>

“We believe that the time has come to give new impetus and new substance to the NATO-EU strategic partnership [...] Today, the Euro-Atlantic community is facing unprecedented challenges emanating from the South and East. Our citizens demand that we use all ways and means avail-

able to address these challenges so as to enhance their security” (Joint declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 2016)<sup>15</sup>.

9 <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2017/Also-in-2017/the-identity-of-nato/EN/index.htm>

10 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20161107STO50439/us-elections-%E2%80%9Cwe-are-not-sure-what-exactly-trump%E2%80%99s-foreign-policy-agenda-is%E2%80%9D>

11 <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/12/13-tusk-juncker-stoltenberg-opinion/>

12 [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_140226.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_140226.htm)

13 European Parliament, *Does the new EU Global Strategy deliver on security and defence?* [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/570472/EXPO\\_IDA\(2016\)570472\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/570472/EXPO_IDA(2016)570472_EN.pdf)

14 As a main source for this section, please see Amélie Zima, *SOMMET DE L’OTAN À VARSOVIE : UN BILAN*, published by the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, in “Politique Etrangère”, 2016/4.

15 [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133163.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm)

Yet on closer inspection, it could seem that the “family” of the Alliance has thus declared a renovated ideological war of the liberal democratic West against the illiberal threats coming from the East and the South<sup>16</sup>.

In July 2016 in Warsaw, the Allies decided to strengthen NATO’s Eastern flank. For the Alliance, this has three main implications: first, it shows unity and solidarity among the Allies; second, it highlights and consolidates the need to face the tensions with Russia; third, it and maybe obviate (in part) to the partial failure of its partnership policy. However, a question has been eluded at this summit: the credibility of the model promoted by the Alliance in the light of the illiberal drift occurring in some of its members. The NATO summit in Warsaw first focused on the relationship between the Alliance and Russia. If all the participants have been more or less careful to not presenting this meeting as a return the Cold War, it is clear that Eastern Europe is one of the main security concerns of NATO. Face to the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of a “hybrid war” in Donbass, the Alliance committed (during the 2014 Newport Summit) to support the countries of this Eastern region. The Warsaw Summit took place in a highly complex international framework including Brexit, the war in Ukraine, the Syrian conflict and the “fight against terror” – and, only a few months later, Trump’s election in the US. As such, it has been described as “historic”. Yet if the term may seem exaggerated (no new strategic concept has been adopted, nor new accession), the decisions taken are, however, quite serious. First, an agreement was signed between NATO and the European Union. Both organisations formally declared their wish to increase their cooperation in the following areas: combating hybrid threats; improving resilience; strengthening of defence capabilities; cyber-defence; maritime safety and military training.

But the main decision taken in Warsaw concerns Europe itself. As already said, NATO decided to reinforce its military presence in the Eastern flank countries: the Baltic States and Poland at first. This reinforcement is presented as a necessary precautionary move in order to face the Russian aggressive policy (a deployment of troops to the East had already been envisaged by some NATO members after the annexa-

tion of the Crimea and the outbreak of war in Ukraine). This reinforcement is announced for 2017 and it will be realised through the deployment of four battalions of approximately 1000 men in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. No permanent basis will be established, the troops will rotate for an indefinite period – as long as there will be “actual threats” on the Eastern flank. The adopted solution of a rotating presence results from a compromise among allies. Several of them, such as France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, did not want the creation or installation of NATO bases in these territories (even if the reasons for their refusals diverged). For the requesting countries, first and foremost the Baltic States and Poland, the installation of bases was presented as a means to break with their status of “second category” members, and with the idea of their membership in NATO considered as merely “political”, or formal. Since its accession in 1999, Poland claimed stationing troops on its territory – which NATO had refused, considering it as a potential obstacle to cooperation agreements with Russia. For other Eastern countries, however, the Atlantic solution is not a preferred one. For many former and current leaders, such as Polish Duda or Sikorski, or Hungarian Viktor Orban, the EU must develop its own military capabilities to offset the reduction of European forces due to the Brexit and to compensate for any – effective or potential – “American failures”. In other words, all these leaders shared a vision according to which, if Donald Trump was elected president and chose to agree with Vladimir Putin on a “Yalta 2.0”, Europe should be able to defend itself<sup>17</sup>. These theses are described as a real strategic shift: in the 1990s, it was the American presence in Europe, through NATO, that was considered as a mean of alleviating possible European defections. The reinforcement of the East flank however is not a wish shared among all the Central European countries. Czech Republic and Slovakia rejected the proposal of permanent bases, mainly on the basis of the memory of Czechoslovakia’s invasion in 1968 by the Warsaw Pact’s troops (Czech and Slovak governments’ objections, however, did not mean disengagement from the Alliance). In fact, the Warsaw Summit ultimately demonstrates that the lines of tension are more complex, these being guided by both strategic and memory-linked arguments. Warsaw

17 The expression “Yalta 2.0” has been used Radoslaw Sikorski

16 More interesting insights about this vision can be found within a paper published by the official think tank of the EEP group in the European Parliament, the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies: <http://www.martenscentre.eu/sites/default/files/publication-files/europe-security-challenge.pdf>. The paper has been published on the Centre’s website under the label “How to maintain the Western liberal order” (last access 01 February 2017).

summit demonstrates that a tense relationship with Russia constitutes once again the *raison d'être* of the Atlantic Alliance. And, of course, the Russian question divides the members. If no explicit dissent has been displayed (excluding the Greek Prime Minister's plea for a partnership with Russia in the Syrian crisis), fault lines are emerging outside the Atlantic arena. In opposition to its government's opinion, the French National Assembly voted in April 2016 a resolution calling for the lifting of sanctions against Russia, and a request in this direction had already been made by the Hungarian Prime Minister in 2015 during an official visit to Warsaw; the Italian government does not want them to be automatically renewed and the former Italian Prime Minister described them as counterproductive. Czech President Zeman stated, a month after the annexation of Crimea by Russia that it was an irreversible process. These diverging positions show that the Russian issue divides not only the Atlantic Alliance, but also the EU members. The "return of the Russian question" also demonstrates the partial ineffectiveness of the partnership network built by NATO after the end of the Cold War.

In conclusion, the Warsaw summit wanted to demonstrate the unity and solidarity among NATO allies in a complex political moment thanks to the agreement on strengthening the Eastern flank and the participation of countries of this side to ongoing operations at the Southern borders of the Alliance. Nevertheless, deep differences remain between allies on the Russian question. They however have been expressed mainly in national arenas and have for now no influence on the cohesion of the Alliance which seems keeping a firm line while remaining officially open to dialogue with Moscow through the NATO-Russia Council ("political and military channels of communication remain open")<sup>18</sup>. Nevertheless, it seems clear that NATO seeks to "lock" Russia into its physical-political space and aspires to become the only military referee at a global level. The strategy against Russia is aggressive and offensive in so far it clearly wants to prevent any return of Russia to a situation of strategic parity at the global level. On the other hand, the agreement between NATO and the EU expresses all the limits of European defence policy. The conflict between the two visions, a first claiming more autonomy and a second seeking more dependence on the United States has been clearly oriented toward the latter, both in political and military terms.

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18 [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_50090.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50090.htm)

### 3. THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY: BUILDING A STRATEGY<sup>19</sup>

It is noteworthy that the EU's notion of itself as a security actor is increasingly framed as interdependent on a series of other actors (and factors) in the process of describing and building its own notion of security, and, ultimately, providing a strategic diagnosis of the international order and presenting a specific tale of its own role in global affairs over time. For example, the increasing emphasis on relationality and inter-subjectivity can be seen as well-reflected in the processes of drafting the European External Strategy in 2003 and the new EU Global Strategy presented in 2016. Whereas the first was written in a relatively close

environment, without formal negotiations on the text in the EU institutions outside of Javier Solana's office, the drafting process of the EUGS is presented as an exemplary case study of a very "participative approach" where various European think tanks were consulted along with the EU member states through different EU committees and networks, as well as the other European institutions. Nevertheless, a more in-depth analysis about the main decision-makers in the EU's foreign and security policies remains necessary according to the purposes of this preliminary study.

#### 3.1. INSTITUTIONAL ACTORS

Supranational actors have been given in general a limited role in framing EU foreign and defence policy. A very brief insight on these actors follows.

##### 3.1.1. *The European Commission*

Even if the EC has been "fully associated" with the works of the common and foreign security policy as well as granted a shared right of initiative relating to these matters by the Maastricht Treaty, such treaty institutionalised the CFSP mainly through the expansion and strengthening of the Council. The treaties of Amsterdam and Nice then established new actors within the same Council - namely, the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, which became the High Representative of the Union for

Foreign Affairs and Security Policy under the Lisbon Treaty. With the creation of the European External Agency Service, this latter treaty further reduced the Commission's resources and power (significantly, the Member States have decided to build a new agency, rather than strengthening the Commission). Even though the HR/VP has become also one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission, this institution appears as a whole further away from the central stages of the CFSP/CSDP decision-making process. Moreover, the establishment of the EEAS has led to contrasts, if not "turf wars", between this agency and the Commission itself. Furthermore, it seems that within the Commission and the EEAS some further tangible improvements of CFSP/CSDP decision-making have been recently introduced. The HR/VP has intensified her coordination effort inside the Commission by what she calls "Operationalizing the comprehensive approach"<sup>20</sup>. The

19 As a main source for this section, please see Chelotti, Nicola, *The Formulation of EU Foreign Policy. Socialization, negotiations and disaggregation of the state*, Routledge, 2016.

20 More on this issue and the comprehensive approach to EU external action: the comprehensive approach to EU external action was recently described as a methodology involving "an interinstitutional and interdepartmental analysis of the root causes of potential conflict, the main actors, the trends, and the risks of action or inaction on the part of the EU. On this basis, a common strategic vision is being developed as the foundation for comprehensive EU action. The model example of this is the Crisis Platform, which has been set up within the EEAS. In response to specific needs and crises, all relevant EU actors come together on this platform, i.e. crisis management institutions such as the EU Military Staff (EU MS), the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD) and the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC), as well as representatives of Commission departments such as ECHO, DG DEVCO and the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI). Together, they will strive for a common understanding of the problem and a definition of a collective approach" <http://www.feps-europe.eu/assets/bcb09908-9c09-46db-aaa2-4fd195d6cd12/new-developments-of-eu-external-policy.pdf>

principal innovation in this direction appears to be the re-activation, in 2014, of the Commissioners' Group on External Action (CGEA) as a political facilitator between the Commission and the EEAS. A quite innovative study have been recently published on this issue, which is worth to be further investigated: Ludvig Norman's "The mechanisms of institutional conflict in the European Union"<sup>21</sup>. In his analysis, Norman uses a constructivist approach to explain the dynamics of institutional conflicts in international organisations, mainly focusing on the European Union case. Norman's work is an attempt to analyse "The intricacy of social interactions occurring in the EU institutional settings", in an "attempt to take these seemingly contradictory tendencies seriously, and it was done by applying an approach that accommodates complexity and makes sense of how tensions play out in two particular fields of EU policy making, Justice Cooperation and EU External Actions". More specifically, Norman has used two categories of mechanisms driving institutional conflict, described as, respectively, rupture mechanisms and discursive lock-in mechanism, with the attempt to theorise how it is possible that agents and decision-makers can develop "widely conflicting positions on issues which have previously been the object of widespread consensus". It could be of particular interest to further investigate this study and its conclusions, in order to understand which effects such mechanisms have on the formulation of policy preferences in the security and defence fields at the European level.

Nevertheless, since taking office in 2014, the European Commission under President Jean-Claude Juncker has made defence and security a key priority. As reported in a study published in 2016 by the European Parliament<sup>22</sup>, his commitment to a "stronger Europe" was confirmed by the appointment, in 2015, of former Commissioner Michel Barnier as Special Adviser for European Defence and Security Policy. Such figure has the prime task of assisting the Commission president in preparing its contribution to the European Council's work on defence policy. In January 2016, Barnier stated that CSDP should play a pivotal role in the new EU Global Strategy, defining strategic autonomy as an important element, while also stressing coherence with NATO: "Once the strategic ambition is set in the Global Strategy ... there [will be] an urgent need to revise and determine our ambition and means of action in common

defence through a European Strategic Defence Review or White Book"<sup>23</sup>. In November 2016, the Commission proposed a European Defence Action Plan on capabilities and technology, conducted jointly with the EEAS and the EDA, which is considered, alongside the EU Global Strategy and the EU-NATO Joint Declaration, one of the three main pillars of the future "European union defence".

### 3.1.2. The European Parliament

With no doubt, the European Parliament has formally acquired considerable power in EU policy-making over the years. With regards to the foreign and defence policy, the Parliament has the right to scrutinise the CSDP and to take the initiative of addressing the HR/VP and the Council on it, and it also exercises authority over the policy's budget. Twice a year, the Parliament holds debates on progress in implementing the CFSP and the CSDP, and adopts relative reports (one on the CFSP, drafted by the Committee on Foreign Affairs and including elements relating to the CSDP where necessary; and one on the CSDP, drafted by the Subcommittee on Security and Defence). The Parliament participates in Joint Consultation Meetings (JCMs) held on a regular basis to exchange information with the Council, the EEAS and the Commission. Given the key role that the NATO plays in underwriting European security, Parliament participates also in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. The HR/VP occupies the central institutional role, chairing the Foreign Affairs Council in its 'Defence Ministers configuration' (the EU's CSDP decision-making body) and directing the EDA.

Generally speaking, even though the political framework for consultation and dialogue with Parliament is evolving and that "in order to allow Parliament to play a full role in developing the CSDP", it is fair to say that the role of the EP is hardly that of a decision maker. One thing that seems interesting to take into account is that the Parliament has attempted to compensate for its lack of decision-making powers in this field with greater scrutinising and budgetary controls. Finally, national parliaments perform relevant duties with regard to CFSP/CSDP: for example, national foreign affairs ministers can be held accountable only by them, at the national level, for activities performed in EU

21 Norman, Ludvig, *The mechanisms of institutional conflict in the European Union*, Routledge, 2016.

23 Barnier in "European Defence Matters" (EDA magazine), issue 10

22 See note 13.

foreign and defence policy (some MS need to obtain a parliamentary approval to send troops abroad - although these prerogatives vary considerably from state to state).

### 3.1.3. *The HR/VP and the EEAS*

The role of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was created by the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) and then the Lisbon Treaty introduced important changes in this position. As already said, in order to strengthen the consistency of EU foreign policy and increase its consensus capacity, the HR/VP is also part of the Commission (being its Vice-President), and has taken over the duties of the previous Commissioner for External Relations. Regarding its autonomy, or, initiative capacity within the decision-making process it's worthy to mention an important instrument, i.e. the agenda-setting: the HR/VP supervises the process of agenda-setting and prepare, together with the European External Action Service (EEAS), the policy dossiers, which the Member States then discuss, negotiate and make decisions about.

With regard to the EEAS, this new institution can be described as a large administrative body which assists the HR/VP in developing and implementing the EU foreign policy. When it was established, in 2010, it comprised officials from the General Secretariat of the Council, the Commission, as well as staff seconded from MS's national diplomatic services: the result is a hybrid institution that combines both supranational and intergovernmental elements. It has been noticed that the EEAS can be referred to as "the 29<sup>th</sup> member state that tries to be an entity separate from the member states" without effectively "being a moderator" (Chelotti, 2016).

The EEAS work in close contact with a series of military agencies and bodies, which in many cases are headed by the High Representative. A special chapter of this paper will be dedicated to an overview of the military structure of the EU, in an attempt to give a glance at this extremely complex interconnection of agencies and body, see how they work and understand the level of interconnection with the EU institutions and the Member States.

### 3.1.4. *The European Council*

On a treaty basis, decisions relating to the CSDP are taken by both the European Council and the Council of the Euro-

pean Union. The role of the European Council has always been prominent in this policy field: whenever a relevant crisis occurs, the heads of state/government take the lead in discussing and deciding foreign policy issues at the European level (the cases of Ukraine, Crimea and sanctions against Russia in 2013-2015 have recently validated this perception). It is true, then, that consistent with its general role within the EU, the European Council is charged with the definition of the Union's strategic interests, and that among these interests there is the eventual "progressive framing of a common Union defence policy. This will lead to a common defence, when the European Council, acting unanimously, so decides" (Art.42.2 TEU). Yet on most issues it is fair to say that the Council of the EU has the *de facto* responsibility for formulating EU foreign policy. This become clear following a more in-depth analysis of the whole Title V of the TEU: Article 26 and 28, among others, confer to the Council the task of framing and making operational the specific decisions: where "the international situation requires operational action by the Union, the Council shall adopt the necessary decisions [...]" (Art.28.1 TEU).

### 3.1.5. *The Council of the EU*

As a matter of facts, the foreign security and defence policy is formally and largely intergovernmental, and the Council is ultimately the main decision-maker in this field. Clearly, referring to the Council means referring to the Member States of the Union. According to this, and regarding the role of the national foreign ministers in the formulation of foreign and defence policy, a realist approach would describe the national governments as the key actor, the Council being the reflection at the European level of the policies that have been elaborated in each national state. It follows that national representatives and diplomats gathering in the negotiation processes at the EU level serve as the "operational arm" of their national executives, of which they merely implement the visions. Yet Chelotti study argues that national officials in Brussels have a margin of autonomous action, as well as a certain degree of power in both formulating and negotiating the positions of their respective governments to be discussed at the EU level and also in choosing the specific negotiation tactics that they will use in the various Council committees. According to this vision, the national state is described as "disaggregated" with respect to the EU level: a first "disaggregation" process occurring from the political to the administrative level

and within the latter, and a second, consequently, from the national-based officials to those that have been allocated to the national Permanent Representations to the Union or, in general, to those representing their own national state to the European Union during negotiations (Chelotti, 2016).

In conclusion, despite the fact that the EU foreign and defence policy is by nature extremely complex and thus subject to many inputs and influences, the decision-making in this field still remains highly intergovernmental, and then highly, it seems, a national prerogative. Even though the Parliament, the Commission, and third actors are all to a certain extent involved in the decision-making process, and the HR/VP and EEAS's potential to shape it should be further investigated, yet the forge of the entire foreign policy field still lies

in the Council. The Council is structured along several layers: at the top of the structure are the (27) ministers of foreign affairs - they generally meet once a month, but they also regularly convene informally to discuss particular issues; at the bottom of the Council's hierarchy there are around 30 working groups (or parties), organised along geographical or thematic lines and who structure the documents that ministers will have to approve. Among them, a few more senior bodies, such as the Political and Security Committee, deal with specific administrative tasks. It becomes then an issue of particular interest to analyse the functioning of this institution, in order to better identify where the potential conflict-lines between the different positions appears and how such positions are made.

### 3.2. OTHER ACTORS

An important role is played by the various types of actors working constantly in the attempt to influence European policy processes: transnational actors, lobby groups and NGOs. With regard to those working in EU policy-making process, they flourish especially in the MS' national capitals, as well as, of course, in Brussels, where national governments, political parties, private companies, and so on, have been transferring political activities since the early days of the Treaty of Rome. Also in the field of security and defence, it represents an exercise of particular interest to examine all the interconnections between such actors in order to better understand which policies are likely to be influenced by a certain actor and, consequently, which specific options or preferences serves which specific interest. For example, in the fields of defence procurement, Chelotti points out that, the fact that companies such as the Airbus Group, BAE or Finmeccanica are closely connected with certain national governments results in their attempts to influence these governments' policies, as well as the activities of the Euro-

pean Defence Agency. The EU political system is then growing more complex, and the networks around the European institutions have been extended, the interconnections multiplied. Yet foreign and security policy is presented as a still relatively "isolated" sector, if compared to other policy areas. If any of those actors want to have an input into the outputs of EU foreign policy, then they need to address to the Council. Several think tanks, universities, and national research institutes actively contribute to the debate on CFSP/CSDP. A non-exhaustive list of European think tanks influent on security and defence matters could include the following: the European Union Institute for Security Studies (Brussels), Centre for European Reform (London), European Policy Centre (Brussels), Centre for European Policy Studies (Brussels), Egmont Institute (Brussels), European Council on Foreign Relations (Pan-European), Carnegie Europe (Brussels), etc. It is extremely interesting to look at the list of each institute's funders and donors in order to better understand their interests in shaping the European foreign and defence policies<sup>24</sup>.

### 3.3. THE EU MEMBERS STATES' INPUT AND REACTIONS TO THE EU GLOBAL STRATEGY

During the months that preceded the launching of the EU Global Strategy in June 2016, several EU Member States and groups of Member States shared their positions regarding

the relevance and the role that defence should play in the new common strategy. Some drafted non-papers as input into the process, either alone or as a group of Member

<sup>24</sup> As a mere example, within the list of Corporate Donors of the Centre for European Reform figures companies such as Airbus, BAE Systems, Ford, Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan, Microsoft, Shell, and so on <https://www.cer.org.uk/corporate-donors#tabs>

States, while others made their positions on the upcoming Global Strategy known through official statements and public speeches. As reported in a briefing document published by the European Parliament in February 2017, in order to promote Member State's participation in the reflection about the new strategy, national contact points (NCP) have been established during the months preceding its official launching. These intermediary bodies had the aim of initiating a sort of consultative process through which Member States should discuss and provide input on specific defence-related issues. In the meantime, discussions between the HR Mogherini and Member States' representatives were taking place within the Foreign Affairs Council as well as within the Political and Security Committee (PSC). In general, the input provided by several Member States primarily emphasised the vital importance of a renovated common action on security and defence.

### **3.3.1. The Visegrad Group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia)**

In the Bratislava Declaration released on the occasion of the European Council of June 2015, the heads of government of the Visegrad Group countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia) stressed the key role of EU Common and Security Policy. "The security environment of Europe", the V4 assessed, "is dynamic and unpredictable, with threats growing in EU's imminent neighbourhood and beyond. In the East, more than a year after the illegal annexation of Crimea, Russia continues to violate international law, undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and pose a challenge for the European Union and the security of its member states. In the South, a belt of weak and destabilized states now stretches from North Africa via the Horn of Africa to Iraq and Yemen, creating an environment conducive to challenges like unprecedented migration flows. In this context, we underline the necessity of a balanced and inclusive approach, addressing threats and challenges that the EU faces both in the East and the South". The four countries thus declared that they would "stand ready to bear their share of responsibility for European security as a whole and play an active role in addressing the challenges in both the Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods" and that they were "fully committed to a stronger, more cohesive security and defence policy of the Union, including through enhanced regional security and

defence cooperation". As the future of CSDP should be built upon "achievable solutions with concrete ways and means required for their implementation", the Visegrad countries strongly underlined that CSDP should become the "key element" of the new EU Global Strategy. They also called for further enhancement of the EU-NATO relations, stressing the importance of "synergy, complementarity and full use of EU-NATO cooperation". In a joint statement in February 2017, the ministers of defence of the four countries also agreed on the need to fully implement the decisions taken at the NATO Warsaw Summit, "including on the strengthening of the Eastern Flank" as well as on a series of concrete measures and actions to be implemented in order to allow an effective presence of NATO in the region. Among their conclusive remarks, they thus expressed their "support for the further development of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy and agreed it should address the security challenges for all the EU members in an effective manner and strengthen NATO at the same time".

### **3.3.2. France, Germany and Others' Reactions**

In a report published by the European Parliament in September 2016, it is mentioned that in February of the same year France, Germany, Italy and Spain had released a co-authored non-paper in which the four countries called for a stronger EU position on defence matters as well as for a primary role for CSDP "in order to deal with new challenges", directly involved with both internal and external issues. They thus demanded for a stronger CSDP, that should have been seen "as a pillar of an integrated EU approach" and, at the same time, they stressed that the new Global Strategy should clearly state the need for specific financial instruments to fund CSDP programmes. Furthermore, as reported by the Parliament's report, the four MS "also proposed considering the possibility of a 'European Semester' for defence as part of the harmonization of national defence planning. Since contemporary security challenges can no longer be faced by the EU alone, the G4 emphasised complementarity with NATO and argued that the 'Global Strategy must send a clear signal to help overcome obstacles to EU-NATO cooperation". Germany's engagement towards a stronger European defence was made further explicit when a draft version of a national German defence White Paper – to be finalised and published on July 2016 – was released in May 2016. As quoted also by The Financial Times,

the White Paper strongly promoted European military integration, and called for “the use of all possibilities available under EU treaties to establish deep co-operation between willing Member States, create a joint civil-military headquarters for EU operations, a council of defence ministers, and better co-ordinate the production and sharing of military equipment”. In her preface to the White Paper, Angela Merkel underlined that:

“Germany’s economic and political weight means that it is our duty to take on responsibility for Europe’s security in association with our European and transatlantic partners in order to defend human rights, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and international law. We must stand up even more for our shared values and demonstrate even greater commitment to security, peace and a rules-based order than we have done to date.

Our security is based on a strong and resolute North Atlantic Alliance and a united and resilient European Union. We will only be able to meet the great challenges of our era successfully if we strengthen and further develop these two pillars of our foreign, security and defence policy.

At all times, our aim should be to prevent crises and conflicts. Security policy must be forward-looking and sustainable. At the same time, we must be able to react quickly to violent conflicts, to provide help and to play our part in resolving conflicts rapidly. To this end, it is vital that we combine our civil and military instruments. But we must also take an honest, realistic view of the world: We will not be able to meet all of the challenges in the crisis regions on our own. This means that our partners in other regions of the world must do their part. To this end, we will offer a wide range of measures to enable them to resolve crises and conflicts by themselves.”

Once again, the identification with the European “shared values” of democracy, freedom and peace with a stronger military integration has been made, with the aim to pave the way towards what many – both within and outside Germany – interpret as the foundation of a potential European army or at least, what has been called a “European defence union”. Speaking while presenting the new German white

paper on July 2016, the German defence minister said that Germany and France would lead talks with other EU members to assess their commitment for closer cooperation in defence. She said that the UK had “paralysed” these issues in the past, but now the rest of the EU should move forward. In fact, right afterward the British vote to leave the European Union on June 2016, the French and German foreign ministers produced a joint statement reaffirming their countries’ strong commitment to the EU. In this statement, they stated that the EU “provides a unique and indispensable framework for the pursuit of freedom, prosperity and security in Europe” and that it is “the only framework capable of providing appropriate collective answers to the changing international environment”. It was clear then that both countries were keen to boost the EU’s military role in the world. This should not come as a surprise, though, given that the two countries have long given strong vocal support to enhance defence cooperation at the Union level. As reminded also by D. Keohane in an article for the think tank Carnegie Europe<sup>25</sup>, during the last decade France and Germany have often called for the EU to have its own military command and control structures, as happened during the fallout from the Iraq War in 2003, “when Berlin and Paris said they wanted to create a de facto EU military Headquarters”. Again in June 2016, the French and German foreign ministers called for the EU to develop “a permanent civil-military chain of command”. If at the time any initiatives suggesting the creation of an EU army, or duplication of NATO structures were opposed by the UK, today such scenario seems to be no longer the fantasy of a few – even if powerful – warmonger heads of State.

### **3.3.3. Public Consultation, “Citizens’ Dialogue” and “the Think-Tank Community”**

In 2016, a public consultation process with the aim to prepare and support the drafting of the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy kicked off with an international conference organised by the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS). A series of events followed, addressing specific issues – including security and defence, climate, cybersecurity, and developments in specific regions – which have been organised across the EU and in cooperation with na-

25 Keohane, D., “Policy or Project? France, Germany, and EU Defense”, Carnegie Europe, August 2016 <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=64222>

tional governments, influent think tanks and research institutes. The HR/VP Mogherini participated personally in many of these meetings, as well as to a series of “citizens’ dialogues” organised with the European Commission. Such dialogues are conceived as public debates, where European citizens can discuss with Commission members in open sessions where they can “have their say about what is happening in the European Union”<sup>26</sup>. Significantly, on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017, Mogherini participated in one of these citizens’ dialogue in Rome, on the occasion of the celebrations for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. As reported on the Commission’s website page dedicated to the event, “the debate started off with an acknowledgment of how far the Union has come since World War II, with peace presiding across the continent. Additionally, 9 months after Brexit and in spite of predictions to the contrary, the Member States are now re-launching the European promise, showing that solidarity has not been called into question”. Unless this means that Ventotene had been just a “false promise”, we certainly cannot agree on that the wealth of European solidarity can be measured by an increasing level of militarization. As an integral part of the consultation process that, a number of European foreign policy analysts and commentators have been asked to provide their personal views on the highly-anticipated strategy. Contributors included experts, academics, think tankers and policymakers from across the European Union, as well as representative analysts from non-EU countries. The opinion pieces were published between January and April 2016 on both the EUISS website<sup>27</sup> and the EU Global Strategy website.

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26 European Commission, Citizens Dialogues, <http://ec.europa.eu/info/events/citizens-dialogues>

27 European Union Institute for Security Studies, EU Global Strategy expert opinions, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/topics/eu-foreign-policy/eugs-expert-opinions/>

## 4. THE MILITARY COMPOSITION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION. CSDP STRUCTURE, INSTRUMENTS AND AGENCIES

“Our Union is under threat”. “We live in uncertain times”. “We need a stronger Europe”. These are the most recurrent statements we listen to on a daily basis in Europe when it comes to security and defence today, like a repetitive, catchy refrain in an old war ballad. “The European Union’s geopolitical environment is axiomatically complex”, we can read in an online article about “strategic anticipation in the EU”<sup>28</sup>. Yet, another element that seems at least quite complex, if not impenetrable, to an inexperienced eye – and not only –, is the military structure of the European Union. Such structure has been institutionalized especially during the last twenty years. In particular, in the framework of the strengthening of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and in particular of the common policy on security

and defence (CSDP) provided for in Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union, the European Council meeting in Nice on 7-11 December 2000 reached agreement on the establishment of permanent political and military structures. A Byzantine configuration of different interlinked agencies and tools form the current military structure of the European Union. In addition to the other groups of scientists and technology experts, networks of high-level diplomats and military officers play a crucial role in the EU foreign and defence policy making to varying degrees. It is worth then to provide a brief overview of such bodies, in order to understand how do they work, what purposes do they serve and how do they influence the EU’s institutions and governments in shaping security and defence policies.

### 4.1. THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Set up by the Council in 2000, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) has been described as “the linchpin of the European security and defence policy”, dealing with all its aspects and playing “a central role in the definition of and follow-up to the EU’s response to a crisis”. Yet, comparative little attention has been given to such a key actor. According to Jolyon Howorth, this new body has been created as a remedy to those who were considered as two specific weakness of the previous institutional configuration of the European foreign and security policy making: the lack of permanent personnel involved in key organisms, and the instability of meetings, whose location shifted from one semester to another, following the six-monthly roster of each presidency. Under Article 25 of the Treaty of Nice, the Political and Security Committee:

“[...] shall monitor the international situation in the areas covered by the common foreign and security policy and contribute to the definition of policies by delivering opinions to the Council at the request of the Council or on its own initiative. It shall also monitor the implementation of agreed policies, without prejudice to the responsibility of the Presidency and the Commission”.

Moreover:

“This Committee shall exercise, under the responsibility of the Council, political control and strategic direction of crisis management operations. The Council may authorise the Committee, for the purpose and for the duration of a crisis management operation, as determined by the Council, to take the relevant decisions concerning the political control and strategic direction of the operation [...]”.

The Committee is formed by Members States’ permanent representatives with the rank of ambassador and meet on a regular basis in Brussels with the specific tasks of monitoring the international situation, as well as actively contributing to the formulation of policies by drafting opinions for the Council and also overseeing the implementation of the agreed policies.

A 2001 Council’s decision, setting up the Committee after its establishment in Nice, clarifies its role and key actions. For example, the PSC will:

- “maintain a privileged link with the Secretary-General/High Representative (today, VP/HR) and the special representatives”

28 <http://eyes-on-europe.eu/the-eu-military-staff-strategic-anticipation-in-the-eu/>

- “send guidelines to the Military Committee; receive the opinions and recommendations of the Military Committee. The Chairman of the Military Committee (EUMC), who liaises with the European Union Military Staff (EUMS), takes part, where necessary, in PSC meetings”
- “provide a privileged forum for dialogue on the ESDP [...] with NATO in accordance with arrangements set out in the relevant documents”
- “under the auspices of the Council, take responsibility for the political direction of the development of military capabilities, taking into account the type of crisis to which the Union wishes to respond. As part of the development of military capabilities, the PSC will receive the opinion of the Military Committee assisted by the European Military Staff”.

With regard to its role in influencing the EU policy making on security and defence, Mai’a Cross defined the PSC as an “epistemic community”, building upon Peter Haas definition. He described an epistemic community as “a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue area.” In other words, continues Cross, epistemic communities are bodies which have “an authoritative claim on knowledge to impact policy outcomes”. This seems to be the case for the Political

and Security Committee. According to Cross, what make the PSC an epistemic community is the fact that over the course of their careers, “those who become [...] PSC ambassadors have gained a considerable amount of knowledge on how the EU apparatus works, as well as the intricacies of member-state preferences. They work with instructions, but they also play a role in writing those instructions in the first place. They typically come to agreement among themselves then seek to persuade their politician counterparts of their internal compromises. This is the dynamic that characterizes epistemic communities. They may be closer to the policy process than traditional notions of epistemic communities (scientists and technicians), but this does not preclude them from exercising independent agency”. The same conclusion has been reached by Ana E. Juncos and Christopher Rainolds, who in 2007 wrote a paper titled “The Political and Security Committee: Governing in the Shadow”. In their article, the two scholars came to the conclusion that the PSC has such an influent role “to the point where Member State representative sitting in the PSC routinely impact upon the definition of national interests and foreign policies, rather than simply bringing them to the table to be bargained over”. They referred to this situation as a “consultation reflex”, a concept used among scholars to describes the socialization process which lead to the definition of national preferences in foreign policy, whereby national elites almost instinctively seek to discuss foreign policy issues with their partners from other governments before defining national positions” (Baun and Marek, 2013).

## 4.2. THE EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY COMMITTEE

The European Union Military Committee (EUMC) is the highest military body set up within the Council. It directs all the military activities within the EU framework and is composed of the Member States’ Chiefs of Defence, who are regularly represented by their permanent military representatives in Brussels. This body provides the PSC with advice and recommendations on all military matters within the EU. It also oversees the EU Military Staff (EUMS, see below). A Military Committee with similar functions also exists within NATO, and those countries which are members of both EU and NATO have in most cases chosen the same person as permanent military representative to both organisations. The EUMC has a permanent chair, normally a four-star general, selected by chiefs of defence and ap-

pointed by the Council of the EU. At present, the Greek General Mikhail Kostarakos is the EUMC’s permanent Chairman. As such, he holds a key position: he participates in the meetings of the Political and Security Committee, represents the primary point of contact with the operation commanders of the EU’s military operations and attends Council meetings when decisions on defence and security are to be taken. The EUMC Chairman is the military adviser to the High Representative Mogherini on all military matters. With regard to its role in the EU crisis management operations, the EUMC can issue, upon the PSC’s request, an “Initiating Directive” to the Director General of the European Union Military Staff to draw up and present strategic military options. It then evaluates such strategic military

options and forwards them to the Political and Security Committee, together with its evaluation and advice. Once the Council has selected one among the proposed military options, the EUMC authorises an Initial Planning Directive

for the Operation commander. Its role in planning military operations, as well as in influencing decisions on security and defence is thus highly elevated and strongly inter-linked to the PSC and the Council's.

### 4.3. THE COMMITTEE FOR CIVILIAN ASPECTS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) is an advisory body within the European Union dealing with civilian aspects of crisis management. It is mandated to develop procedures and common practices in EU civilian crisis management. CIVCOM role and activities therefore are related to both the EU CFSP and the "civilian side" of the CSDP. It is composed of representatives

of the EU Member States. Created as well by the Council in 2000, it provides advice, information and recommendations to the Political and Security Committee on civilian aspects of crisis management. This body meets regularly with representatives of other international organizations such as the United Nations and OCSE in order to prepare cooperation and planning documents for operations.

### 4.4 THE POLITICO-MILITARY GROUP

The Politico-Military Group (PMG) carries out preparatory work in the field of CSDP for the Political and Security Committee. It covers the political aspects of EU military and civil-military issues, including concepts, capabilities, operations and missions. It drafts Council conclusions, provides recommendations for the PSC, and monitors their effective implementation. It contributes to the development of policies and facilitates information exchange. This body has a particular responsibility regarding partnerships with third countries and other organisations, especially EU-NATO relations, as well as military exercises. The PMG is chaired by a representative of the HR/VP. In May 2015, a joint document from the Politico-Military Group and the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management has been released by WikiLeaks. It concerned PMG's recommendations to the Political and Security Committee on a "Draft Crisis Management Concept for a possible CSDP operation to dis-

rupt human smuggling networks in the Southern Central Mediterranean". Such recommendations, made on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2015, envisaged a possible EU military operation in the Mediterranean Sea, with the aim to disrupt human trafficking networks in the Southern Central Mediterranean region, including seizure or destruction of shipping vessels. In its document, the PMG noted that the objective for the CSDP Operation, as agreed at the European Council, was "to contribute to systematic efforts to identify, capture and destroy vessels before they are used by traffickers". In this regard, the PMG stressed "the importance of intelligence gathering and sharing for the success of the operation". One should maybe interpret as just a clerical mistake the fact that, only two paragraphs before the passage in question, it was mentioned that the overall aim of the European Council was "to prevent further loss of life at sea".

### 4.5 THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING DIRECTORATE

The Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD) contributes to the work of the European External Action Service, by the political-strategic planning of CSDP civilian missions and military operations, with the aim to guarantee "coherence and effectiveness" to EU operations. Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the old Council's DG Defence and Crisis Management were merged to

a new unit, which in the Council's view should become a single civilian-military strategic planning structure for EU peace-keeping and humanitarian operations and missions. Launched in 2010 as an EEAS department, this body is thus supposed to ensure better coordination between civil and military operations planning. The CMPD works under the political control and strategic direction of the Political and

Security Committee. It has a mandate to cooperate with EU different partners in the crisis management field. They can be international organizations, such as the UN, NATO, the African Union, OSCE, or third countries. Such partnerships

are usually based on so-called Framework Participation Agreements (FPAs), which provide a legal basis for members' participations and contributions in/to missions and operations.

#### 4.6. THE EUROPEAN UNION MILITARY STAFF

The European Union Military Staff (EUMS), working under the direction of the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and under the authority of the High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP) is "the source of military expertise within the European External Action Service". Established in 2001, its role is to provide early warning, situation assessment, strategic planning, Communications and Information Systems, concept development, training and education, and support of partnerships through military relationships. The EUMS's key role is thus to propose the Council strategic options, which in turn are evaluated by the EU Military Committee. The EUMS is led by a Director General who is assisted by the Deputy Director General and the Chef of Staff. At present, the EUMS's Director General is the Finnish Esa

Pulkkinen. As the source of the EU's military expertise, the EUMS assures the link between the EUMC on the one hand and the military resources available to the EU, on the other. This body coordinates the military instruments, with particular focus on operations and missions (both military and those requiring military support) and the creation of military capability. It has the responsibility to monitor, assess and make recommendations with regard to the military forces and capabilities made available by the EU Member States, especially on training, exercises and inter-operability. The EUMS work is done through a series of "Directorate missions" with specific tasks: concept and capabilities, intelligence, operations, communication and information systems, and others.

#### 4.7. THE CIVILIAN PLANNING AND CONDUCT CAPABILITY

The Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC), is another operational branch of the EEAS. It is a permanent structure responsible for the operational conduct of the so called "civilian" operations conducted in the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy. Under the political control and strategic direction of the PSC and the overall authority of the HR/VP, the CPCC supervises the planning and conduct of civilian crisis management operations, as well as the implementation of all mission-related tasks. The CPCC Directorate is the EEAS Directorate which is the Operational Headquarters for the civilian CSDP missions. The mandates of the civilian CSDP missions are agreed by the Council and delivery is driven by the strategic leadership of a Civilian operations commander and under the political direction of the PSC and HR/VP. There are currently 9 civilian EU missions around the globe (Afghanistan, Georgia, Kosovo, Libya, Mali, Niger, Palestine, Somalia, Ukraine), which employ more than 2.500 persons. Civilian-military cooperation is at the core of the new EU Global Strategy for foreign and security policy, which enthusiastically presents civilian-military cooperation as a distinctive element

of the European project, literally a virtuous example of a renovated "level of ambition" for the EU, where "hard and soft power go hand in hand".

##### 4.7.1. *The "Civilian Security Sector" and the European Gendarmerie Force*

As reported and denounced by Statewatch and the GUE/NGL group in the European Parliament in different occasions, these "civilian" missions have partly been planned and conducted in cooperation with NATO and, in most cases, they consist in fact in training for police and para-military forces. Let's take the EU mission to Ukraine as an enlightening example. On the mission's website, the reader is briefed about this operation as follows: "The European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine is a non-executive mission of the European Union that formally began operations from its headquarters in Kyiv on 1 December 2014, following the Maidan revolution of 2013/14 and an invitation issued by the Ukrainian government. EUAM Ukraine

aims to assist the Ukrainian authorities towards a sustainable reform of the civilian security sector through strategic advice and hands-on support for specific reform measures based on EU standards and international principles of good governance and human rights. The goal is to achieve a civilian security sector that is efficient, accountable, and enjoys the trust of the public". Such "civilian security sector" is composed of agencies such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, national police, security services, State border guard services, and so on. In practice, this kind of mission provides strategic advice, intelligence and training to national governments and police forces. In some cases, these missions are carried out in parallel with the activities and operations of the European Gendarmerie Force, as it is the case

in Mali, for example. As documented by T. Schumacher in a 2010 article for the Statewatch Journal: "The increasing deployment of para-military gendarmerie forces abroad is due to a changing threat analysis resulting in new requirements for operational forces. The control of the population through permanent gendarmerie deployment is a central component of this threat analysis, leading to a para-militarisation of forces, as is illustrated by the multi-national European Gendarmerie Force (EGF / EUROGENDFOR). Due to this unit's dual nature (the EGF can operate under military as well as civil command, inland as well as abroad) and through common training, the para-militarisation of police forces in [...] the EU and worldwide is inevitable. The logo of the EGF is LEX PACIFERAT ("The law will bring peace")".

#### 4.8. THE EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY

Identified as one of the most crucial actors within the new EU Global Strategy for foreign and security policy, the European Defence Agency (EDA) is the EU's agency facilitating defence cooperation among the Member States, including cooperation in research and technology as well as procurement or training. Established in 2004, this intergovernmental agency operates under the control of the Council. The European Defence Agency's mission is to develop defence capabilities; promote defence research and technology (R&T); foster armaments co-operation and to create and strengthen a European defence equipment market, aiming at enhancing the European Defence sector by promoting a common defence equipment and technological and industrial base in Europe. The agency is based in Brussels and its Steering Board meets at the level of defence ministers (EDA is the only EU agency whose Steering Board meets at the ministerial level). Within the board, Defence Ministers decide on the annual budget, the three year work programme and the annual work plan as well as on projects, programmes and new initiatives to be taken. In addition to ministerial meetings, EDA's board also meets at the level of national armaments directors, as well as R&T directors and capability directors. Furthermore, networks of national points of contacts (POCs) have an important role in the coordination of the agency's work with the Member States. Currently, all the EU Member States except Denmark participate in EDA. Member States contribute to the agency's annual budget according to a GNP-based formula and approve its work plan and decide whether or not to partici-

pate in the agency projects according their national needs and priorities. The Head of EDA is the High Representative for foreign affairs and security policy, which chairs the Steering Board. In 2015, the HR/VP Mogherini appointed the Spanish Jorge Domecq as EDA Chief Executive. Led by its Chief Executive, the agency currently employs more than 100 persons in an organisational structure that comprises of three operational directorates (Cooperation Planning and Support; Capability and Armaments Technology; and European Synergies and Innovation). Since its creation, EDA have been signed administrative arrangements with non-member States, such as Norway, Switzerland, Serbia and Ukraine, enabling them to participate in its programmes and projects.

##### ***4.8.1. The European Defence Agency and the Commission's Preparatory Action for Defence Research***

The current €80 billion EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Horizon 2020) still restricts European funding to civilian or dual-use R&T only. Therefore, an "incremental process" – in which the European Defence Agency has a crucial role – has been launched by EU institutions in 2015 with the aim of establishing in the future an autonomous European Defence Research Programme (EDRP) as part of the EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework.

The first step towards the creation of such defence and research programme was made when, based on a European Parliament initiative, the Council and the Parliament agreed to earmark expenditure for a defence-related research Pilot Project in the EU budgets 2015 and 2016. This Pilot Project has been run and managed by the European Defence Agency on behalf of the European Commission, paving the way for the launch of the so called Preparatory Action for Defence Research (PADR) by the Commission. The Commission's main goal in establishing this Preparatory Action was "to demonstrate the added-value of EU funded research in the defence sector". Set to start in mid- 2017 and running over a three-year period (2017-2019), this preparatory action plan has thus been conceived by the Commission as a sort of test-bed in order to prove the relevance of defence research at the EU level and – more importantly – to lay the foundations for a new,

autonomous EU defence R&D programme in the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2021-2027. Such programme is presented to the EU Member States, partners, and of course, to the European citizens, as an inevitable consequence of the current uncertain political environment, and perfectly coherent with the EU Global Strategy's mantra "United we are stronger". On 11 April 2017, the Commission adopted a Decision on the financing of the Preparatory Action on Defence Research for the year 2017. The budget for the PADR related actions in 2017 is €25 million and it will be run by the European Defence Agency. On 31st May 2017 the agency signed a delegation agreement by which the Commission entrusts the EDA with the management and implementation of the research projects to be launched within the Preparatory Action.

#### 4.9. THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE COLLEGE

The European Security and Defence College (ESDC), established in 2005, provides Member States' personnel with training and "strategic-level education" in security and defence matters. The college's training audience includes civil servants, diplomats, police officers, and military personnel from the EU Member States and EU institutions involved in CSDP. Such body is defined as "a network college", in which several national universities, defence academies,

national foreign affairs and defence ministries, and other defence-related institutes participate. At present, such network is composed of around 100 well known MS's civilian and military educational and research institutions, as well as foreign and defence ministries and other EU institutions and agencies involved in defence matters.

#### 4.10. THE EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES

The European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) is an EU agency that could be described as the "political foundation" of the EEAS. Set up in 2002 "as an autonomous agency under the Common Foreign and Security Policy", this institute provides analysis of foreign, security and defence policy issues. Based in Paris, with a liaison office in Brussels, the EUISS is an integral element of the Union's security and defence structure and plays a quite influencing role in supporting the elaboration and projection of the EU's foreign policy. In fact, the EUISS's core mission is "to provide analyses and fora for discussion that can be of use and relevance to the formulation of EU policy". In carrying out that mission, it is also considered as an interface between European security and defence experts and decision-makers at all levels, acting as a sort of academic-based

political tribune for the promotion of the EU foreign and security policy. The EUISS is funded by the Member States in proportion to their GNP. It is governed by a Board, chaired by the HR/VP, which lays down the institute's budgetary and administrative rules and approves its work programme and activities. The EUISS works under the political supervision of the Political and Security Committee.

#### 4.11. THE EUROPEAN UNION SATELLITE CENTRE

The European Union Satellite Centre (EU SATCEN) is the agency which provides analysis of data from Earth observation satellites. This Centre, founded right afterwards the end of the Cold War in 1992, has been incorporated as an agency of the EU in 2002, with the task to provide geospatial intelligence services and trainings in the framework of the CSDP. Based in Spain, with an antenna in Brussels, this centre is thus the Union's operational agency in the field of space and security. As such, the centre currently cooperates with the EEAS, EU Member States, the European Commission, as well as third countries and the UN and

NATO by providing analysis and services in support of the decision-making in the field of CFSP/CSDP. Prime beneficiaries of such services are EEAS bodies and CSDP missions and operations. The Satellite Centre is funded by the EU Member States and governed by a board consisting of representatives of all EU Member States, which approves the annual budget and working programme. Like the other defence-related agencies, it works under the supervision of the Political and Security Committee and the operational direction of the High Representative.

#### 4.12. THE EU OPERATION CENTRE

The EU Operation Centre has been created in 2003, but it has been activated by the Foreign Affairs Council for the first time in 2012, with the aim to "coordinate and increase synergies" between the CSDP operations in the Horn of Africa. At present, the EU is conducting three operations in the Horn of Africa, namely in Somalia: two military operations and a "civilian" mission with the mandate to "support the development of maritime security in Somalia". Initially established for two years, its mandate has been extended and its geographical and functional scope have been expanded to the Shael region, where the EU is currently conducting three operations as well. The Head of the activated EU Operation Centre manages staff of sixteen personnel seconded by Member States, as well as Brussels-based support cells and liaison offices.

## 5. DIFFICULTIES IN ANALYSING THE PROCESS AND INTERPRETING THE OUTCOMES – HOW PREFERENCES ARE MADE?

As already said it is important here to underscore the fact that the EU foreign policy is made within a broader network of relations within international politics – that is, EU foreign policy is not synonymous to “foreign policy of Europe”, if by that expression we mean the sum of the international actions and relations of both the European Union as a whole and the Member States. Certainly, national and EU foreign policies are connected and influence one another in several ways, as well as through multiple channels, and coordination is regarded to as an important aspect of EU foreign policy by most commentators. However, particularly – even if not exclusively – in the case of larger member states, national foreign policy is in general broader and distinct from EU foreign and defence policy. Member States have continued to retain considerable resources for bilateral initiatives, as long as these are seen as providers of instruments that the Union does not provide: military power and tools, secret services, trade incentives or advantages, and so on.

Membership and relations with NATO is, of course, another relevant key issue that further makes the framework of the EU foreign and defence policy more complex. We have already pointed out that, even though the TEU states that the common security and defence policy “shall not prejudice [...] and shall respect the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realised in the North Atlantic Treaty” (Art.42.2), still some MS’ government (or officials) see a sort of functional division between national and EU foreign policy, as well as their membership in the EU and in the NATO<sup>29</sup>.

It appears sufficiently clear that describing the national and the European decision-making processes in formulating preferences about foreign policy as two distinct domains is at least inaccurate – it is impossible to think that Member States elaborate their positions by isolating from their regional context, and, in general from the international environment. Internationalists would argue that, as national preferences are not fixed, they are constructed through

interaction – which does not necessarily means cooperation –, thanks to which collective preferences and identities can be created, according to – common or distinct – political, economic, geographical interests, and, more often, to a complex combination of these and more factors. At this point we should raise the following question: to what extent can the latter conclusion be confirmed by current decision-making dynamics in the field of the European foreign and security policy? Moreover, if it’s true that interaction counts, and that they must be added to “mere” national priorities, in which measure each of the above mentioned factors influences regional and/or political interests within the European Union? How, ultimately, the current changes in the global order alter the “traditional” structure of preferences and determine the formulation of individual positions, both at the national level and within political families?

Whilst the CSDP and the new EU Global Strategy are promoted as a rational response to a changing international security environment, what is striking about it is the political and strategic ambiguity which lies at its heart. Liberalist William Wallace already said in 2005 that “without open debate about strategic priorities and geopolitical interests, the restructuring of European armed forces” is “a procedural exercise, driven by formal commitments rather than by recognition of need”. Would he say the same with regard to the new EU Global Strategy?

<sup>29</sup> One clear example of mixed national/EU foreign policy is given, as an example, by the management of the border between Finland and Russia, this border being also an external border of the EU.

## 6. POLITICAL CONFUSION, GLOBAL CONTEXT AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER

“The world is entering a period of power transition, at the outcome of which some new form of global order (or disorder) is likely to emerge [...] Many analysts have classified the EU as a declining power, a perception that has been enhanced with the triple crises of sovereignty that have rocked the Union since the mid-2000s (money, borders and defence). In this context, the publication of the EU Global Strategy was an opportunity for the EU to state clearly the nature of its ongoing and future relations with the rest of the world”<sup>30</sup>.

“Furthermore, there are powerful alternative narratives that deny the universality of an equal right to security, freedom and prosperity. They either propose a different set of universal values based on a very specific reading of religion, such as the so-called Islamic State (IS), or a specifically non-universal course based on authoritarian nationalism, such as Russia and, to some extent, China. Both alternatives have adherents in Europe, from alienated citizens swayed by the promise of fulfilment or adventure who go and join IS, to right-wing populists seeking to emulate Putin and fence their countries off from the EU and the world in order to return to mythical national roots, just like in the 1930s [...]. The EU has come to accept (though but recently) that its Common Foreign and Security Policy has to serve to defend the interests of the Union and its Member States”<sup>31</sup>.

It is argued by many Europeanist commentators that the EU problem is related to the growing gap between the weight of the EU and the limited impact of its activity in the international context: an economic giant and a political and military dwarf. A more correct view would maybe identify the problem with the very definition of what the strategic interests of the EU should be in a changing international order. Having as a central, vital goal the maintenance and defence of the European political, economic, cultural, and social system within the framework of the “globalised world” is nothing but the result of a model subordinated to global neoliberalism which, by constantly and increas-

ingly deepening the tendencies toward the degradation of human rights on every possible front, embodies the real ultimate threat to European security.

According to this, the new EU Global Strategy and the consequent debate finds its roots in a widely consolidated idea: the high fragility of our democratic liberal states, and the perception of increasing threats against them has its origins “outside” the EU. On the contrary, it seems more and more necessary to acknowledge that a quite consistent share of the problems linked to the “crisis of resilience” in our societies has to do with the fact that neoliberal policies and their social consequences have been a disaster in terms of coexistence and community building. Neoliberalism has weakened our societies, harmed the people, broken ties and increased distrust in politics to yet unknown levels. Without seeing clearly that threat “that comes from the interior,” any analysis focused on the impact of a hostile, external enemy, makes very little sense<sup>32</sup>.

In conclusion, the effects of neoliberal globalization have thus raised a new geostrategic dimension in conflicts: conflicts over resources have increased; tendencies to achieve economic pre-eminence have been sharpened (see new types of trade agreements); regional inequalities have been multiplied with devastating effects in terms of population displacement; ecological problems are already responsible for a new type of cross-border migration: the environmental displaced. Hence, the EU would greatly help itself, increase its resilience and significantly improve its security by choosing to transform the global economic and political model.

30 Jolyon Howorth, *EU Global Strategy in a changing world: Brussels' approach to the emerging powers*, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13523260.2016.1238728>

31 Sven Biscop, *Geopolitics with European Characteristics*, [http://www.egmontinstitute.be/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/egmont.papers.82\\_online-versie.pdf](http://www.egmontinstitute.be/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/egmont.papers.82_online-versie.pdf)

32 See note 8.

## 7. OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES IN THE DEBATE ON EUROPEAN SECURITY: BREXIT, TRUMP, AND RUSSIA

The departure of Britain from the EU has of course had an impact on security and defence. With no doubt the greater impact refers to economic and political issues, but to the extent that all these aspects appear interrelated, Brexit's victory raises a clear problem of credibility, capacity and leadership in the security and defence of the EU. Not for nothing The United Kingdom was not a simple member of the EU, but one of the two major global powers, along with France, with a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, the fifth global economy, the sixth defence industry in the world. Of course, it is well-known that the UK was not looking at the EU as a strategic actor since a long time: as an eloquent evidence of this fact, it is sufficient to notice that in its 2015 Strategic Review, British government did not even mention common European security and defence policies. The special relationship of the United Kingdom and the United States also affects European defence, and even more after the recent developments following Donald Trump's election at the Presidency of the US.

As far as Trump's election is concerned, it seems quite fair to address this issue by reporting the following paradoxical extract from an article appeared on Bloomberg's website on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016: "Asked if Trump reassured him over NATO commitments during their phone call on Wednesday, Duda said they didn't talk about details. Trump 'told me not to worry or have concerns, that many things are discussed by the media but I can be reassured that Polish-American relations will be upheld', Duda said. 'All the agreements are all still in play, still valid. That is how I understand the situation'"<sup>33</sup>. Polish President words, divided between the "great joy" with which he has welcome the EU-NATO new plans about the deployment of Atlantic troops on its territory and the fear of the consequences for the Alliance after the US elections can, without any doubt, be regarded to as emblematic of an historical situation that is, at least, paradoxical. There are, of course, many ways in which the Trump administration in the United States might spoil the current quite positive mood in EU-US cooperation, in particular (but not only) with regard to EU-NATO cooperation. For instances, reduced contributions to the Atlantic Treaty could lead to pressures for increased defence budgets in

many already over-indebted EU member states. Moreover, the EU will suffer (and is already suffering) from a political perspective, as Trump's victory could provide further impetus to the emerging populist and nationalist movements all around Europe, but especially in those European countries in which there will be elections in the current year (in the immediate aftermath of the elections, several populist and far-right leaders have greeted Trump's victory as a desirable, refreshing result). In the meantime, many European leaders publicly state that this result represents a clear and effective risk of upsetting international relations as we know them. Strengthen the EU project, or face its swift decline. Many agree on the fact that the worst effects are more likely to occur in the fields of global governance and security, and namely with regard to the stability of specific areas, like Europe and the Middle East regions. An alleged "reconciliation" between the US and Russia seems to be one of the most feared amongst "Trump's promises": that, amidst the conflict in Ukraine and in the light of Russia's military involvement in Syria – would (and, apparently is already starting to) substantially challenge the EU's position and unity towards Russia. Nevertheless, the wisest (even if not immune to a certain degree of uncertainty) prediction that can be made for the moment is, maybe, that a more predictable picture will become clearer during the current of these first months of Trump Presidency.

33 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-11-18/trump-call-has-polish-leader-reassured-over-european-security>

## CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL REMARKS

If we could attempt to summarise the multiplicity of “Europeanist visions” in one very simple paragraph, we could say: the CFSP/CSDP was first established by the customs and monetary unifications, which progressively led to the integration of all the other main policy areas, and to the consequent convergence of political interests and international identity of the Member States around common liberal values. Not everyone agrees with this view. Also among Europeanist commentators, some argue that the slow and complex journey towards the goal of providing the Union with a foreign policy and the enormous contradictions of the path taken so far bring into question the ability of the CFSP to come out in the short to medium term from the current contradictions. Many challenges have been overcome, but, they argue, we cannot yet say that the EU is close to having completed the training course of its foreign policy.

The data set indicates that security and defence issues have returned once again on the European political agenda through a revitalised “geo-strategy”. The so-called “Russian threat” and the destabilised Middle East serve to European countries and the NATO as an alibi to extend the possible geographical area for the Atlantic Alliance’s military options. A variety of conflicting visions at national, European, as well as political family levels animate the debate in this field.

On the other hand, the social conflicts produced by poverty, inequality, climate change and their consequences, including the dramatic increase in the number of climate and/or economic refugees, are interpreted and addressed as security issues, the key problem being presented as “the latent threat” that they represent to European societies, rather than the political and economic reasons which are at the origins of such “crisis”.

It seems that the American perspective is going to lead to a new period of strategic redefinition in which the United States are inclined to simultaneously maintain an important military deterrent and actively participate in new forms of military confrontation: asymmetric, informal, flexible, hybrid. Trump’s election in November 2016 and his declarations about NATO have made this perspective even more uncertain and unstable. In this scenario, national, economic and political interests are plunged in a more and more chaotic environment, where traditional concepts and ideological alliances seem to be weakened, new con-

flikt-lines appear, and new structural reflections and strategic definitions are the more and more required.

In this context, the processes which lead to the formulation of individual preferences about security and defence are even more complex and difficult to observe and understand. Hence, in the short and medium-term period an in-depth analysis of the decision-making process in the security and defence fields has become necessary and requires a comprehensive understanding of the functioning of both institutional and non-institutional actors and their role in influencing the policy preferences of the decision-makers, at both the national and, mainly, the European level. As a preliminary analysis demonstrates, both relativism and liberal institutionalism fail in explaining in an exhaustive and coherent manner how such preferences are made.

Considering a more long-term perspective, it could be interesting to use a Neo-Marxist approach in order to analyse and explain how the recent events and shifts in the international dynamics seem orientated to move again, at least to a certain extent, the focus of the conflict in Europe on the East/West axis rather than the North/South one. Using this approach with regard to the current changes in the international system, and taking into account the above mentioned considerations, we should be able to develop new arguments capable to explain how these events are due to the unequal distribution of wealth through globalisation and global markets within and between different regions and states, and how this remains a flaw within the global system and a major source of conflict in the hands of Western liberal market democracies.