CHAPTER SEVEN
Poland and the ESDP

Andrzej Karkoszka, Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces

The eastward enlargement of the European Union may have several repercussions for both old and new members, for the character and management of the Union's existing institutions and for countries still outside but in the vicinity of the Union. These consequences are predominantly political and economic, in the sense that they entail a major extension of liberal democratic systems of government on the continent and a substantial increase in the geographical size of the single, common market. In the strategic sense, the stable and military conflict-free zone in Europe will be extended to cover most of the continent, including some areas that historically have been notorious as hotbeds of both worldwide and regional conflagrations. Extending to the western rim of Russia and Ukraine, the Union may enable their engagement in the integration processes and thus have a beneficial influence on the course of developments in these pivotal countries from the point of pan-European security. On the other hand, their vicinity brings the EU closer than ever to the core of the post-Soviet conundrum, with a number of volatile spots with an uncertain future, like Transdniester, Nagorno Karabakh, Chechnya, Abkhazia and the countries of Central Asia. The EU is becoming a major factor in shaping the continent's security by assuming new responsibilities in this domain. The execution of this responsibility requires a unified assessment of the geo-strategic situation at the East and a common response to the challenges created by the new neighbourhood.

The EU's new members are required to accept fully the *acquis communautaire*, namely the whole body of legal, technical, social and economic laws, norms and principles. They are on the demanding side, willing to sacrifice their national habits and

norms and re-mould them according to the Union's standards. These new states are also, with one or two exceptions, much poorer and less politically influential than the states of the Union. The Union's bureaucracy and its older members often take it for granted that this docile attitude on the part of the ten newcomers will also apply to the sphere of foreign and security policy. Nothing could be more wrong, as the experience of the last year has shown. As the *common* EU foreign and security policy does not yet exist, and the new states have specific and well-grounded foreign-policy agendas, they want their views to be incorporated, not subsumed by the agenda of the larger nations. Moreover, as the security and defence posture of the Union is only now assuming some sort of coherent shape, the new members want to have an equal chance in taking part in its definition, since their security concerns are quite serious and justified, though they may differ somewhat from the concerns of the older members. The notion of solidarity, so often invoked in the economic domain of the Union, is of even greater importance in the domain of security.

POLAND AMONG THE TEN CANDIDATES

The forthcoming enlargement of the EU will substantially increase the number of members. Their sheer number will certainly complicate bureaucratic procedures and decision-making processes within the Union. However, it seems probable that the new members will rarely be able to act in a unified way as their economic and political interests vary considerably. The only common feature of this group of states is the small size of their economies and populations. Hence, in order to pursue their interests, they will most probably look to ally themselves with the larger of the existing member states, perhaps those with which they already have long-standing interactions or else with a group of smaller members, finding with them a more common base of resistance to the domination of the larger states. This observation may not apply so easily to Poland, whose economy and population are more commensurate with those of the medium or larger member states. In several other important indices, however, as Table 1 below shows, Poland is comparable to the sum of all the other nine candidate states.

Table 1: Poland and the New EU Members

	Area	Population	GDP 2002	Military Budget	Military Forces
	(1000 km²)	*(millions)*	*(US$ billions)*	*(US$ billions)*	*(1000 soldiers)*
Czech Republic	78.9	10.28	69	1.9	57
Cyprus	5.9	0.926	10.2	0.38	10
Estonia	45.2	1.383	6.3	0.158	5.5
Hungary	93	9.85	65	1.4	33.4
Latvia	64.6	2.36	8.4	0.198	4.88
Lithuania	65.3	3.69	13.9	0.359	12.7
Malta	0.316	0.405	4	0.031	2.14
Slovakia	49	5.4	22.7	0.624	22
Slovenia	20.3	1.99	22	0.387	6.55
Sum of 9	**422.516**	**36.284**	**221.5**	**5.437**	**154.17**
Poland	312.6	38.6	188	3.9	163
Poland as % of 10	**42.50%**	**51.50%**	**45.90%**	**41.80%**	**51.40%**

Source: Military Balance 2003-04

However, in spite of this dominant position, Poland neither aspires nor has a mandate to lead the group of the newcomers, all of whom are looking to the more affluent and influential older members of the Union for leadership. The efforts to

harmonize the interests of the group within the Visegrad framework were only partially successful.

The Polish armed forces are the largest among the candidate states, and the recent decision of the Polish government to earmark a sizeable unit to the EU Rapid Response Force makes her participation considerable in comparison to any of the other new members and most of the old ones. Taking into account half a century of a high level of participation in UN peace-keeping operations and Poland's active role in all NATO and a number of EU military and police operations, Polish readiness to take part in the EU's security and defence cooperation and policy is far from trivial. But it is not the only or the most important reason why Poland's inclusion is significant for the future political arithmetic of the Union's internal and external policy. Poland's geo-strategic location, with borders to Russia/Kaliningrad, Belarus and Ukraine, adds a new dimension to the eastward policy of the Union. Another factor making Poland's entry to the EU significant is her excellent relations with both the United States and all the major member states of the Union. Poland's support for, and substantial participation in, the US war against the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq admittedly caused temporary irritation in a number of West European capitals, but, in view of her equally strong desire to integrate fully with the Union, this may in time be of an asset to both transatlantic and European relations.

POLAND'S VIEW OF ESDP AND THE EU'S SECURITY STRATEGY

The most authoritative recent exposition of Polish security and defense policy in general and its attitude towards the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in particular is to be found in 'The Strategy of National Security of the Polish Republic', a document signed by the president of Poland on 8 September 2003. According to this document,

Poland as a member of the Union will actively participate in the mechanism of CFSP. […] We shall actively participate in the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) as an indispensable addition to the CFSP and as a mechanism, which creates a favorable framework for the improvement of operational capabilities of the member states. Poland as a member of NATO and EU shall support the building up of the military and civilian capabilities within the Union, which will be simultaneously a European pillar of NATO and which will utilize the Alliance's assets. On her side Poland will undertake efforts to bring an appropriate input both military and civilian into the Union's capabilities. In this context it will be of importance to gradually harmonize procurement and the European arms market so that it will assure utilization of specific competences and experiences of all members of the EU. The efforts of the EU in the operational capabilities and the Prague commitments on NATO defense should be mutually supportive and complementary. The peacekeeping operations organized by the EU will be, among other activities, a natural consequence of such relationships. It is desirable for Poland, as a member of both organizations, that stable and institutionalized cooperation between these two organizations exists, so that full complementarity is assured between the activities of NATO and EU. Thus we shall embark on and will support initiatives directed at structural reinforcement, cooperation and working relationship of both organizations, guaranteeing maximal effectiveness in the utilization of assets available to both of them. The European identity in sphere of security and defence is to assure the EU the status of an increasingly more important partner of the USA. At the same time the American presence in Europe, including the military one, is to continue in strengthening the perception of security in the transatlantic and European dimensions. […] The Polish armed forces are involved in the shaping up of security in the direct neighbourhood of Poland and on the entire European territory through the development of military cooperation with other states. They

> participate in strengthening of the international order by being included in the operations carried out by the UN, OSCE, NATO, EU, and also by *ad hoc* coalitions. […] The armed forces are obligated to prepare and maintain a potential of expeditionary forces, enabling them to participate in operations of crisis response and peacekeeping operations taking place on and beyond the territory of Poland in the frame of NATO, EU and the UN.

The general principles of Polish policy regarding participation in the EU's security and defence policy, the ESDP, and the relationship between the EU and NATO are laid out clearly and firmly here. There is no doubt that these principles set out several obligations which are taken very seriously, as they are strongly supported by the majority of the population and most of the political parties represented in parliament, as well as others active outside parliament. This attitude on the part of Polish society was expressed in both public polls on Poland joining NATO and a referendum on Polish entry into the European Union. The sound and unequivocal support of Poland for a strong European security and defence policy, facilitating the far-reaching integration of the European nations, was confirmed as recently as 15th January 2004 by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz. Speaking about the possibility of the creation of a 'hard core' within the Union of states that are willing to undertake enhanced cooperation, he expressed Poland's readiness to join such a core, as long as such a step facilitates the process of integration and is open to any state wishing to join. Cooperation in stemming illegal immigration, drug-trafficking and, in particular, military cooperation were indicated as possible areas of such enhanced cooperation.

The enlargement of the Union by ten new members will add a new strategic dimension to EU security policy. Several of these states have long borders and strong political and economic links with the post-Soviet region, in particular with Russia and Ukraine. Poland intends to enrich this direction of the EU policy, mindful of the potentially beneficial impact of good economic and political relations on her security. Poland does not conceal its desire to be the proponent of a strong engagement by the EU with its eastern neighbours and has been trying on

its own to develop positive relationships with them. Particularly evident here is her strong support for Ukraine's pro-Europe aspirations, based on the assumption that developments in this large and populous state are the key to the future stability of the entire region. Ukraine's pivotal geo-strategic position is often overlooked by the West European states. And, with regard to Russia, the Union's strategy is more a compilation of individual members' relations rather than a cohesive policy. Since, according to both official and public opinion in Poland, Europe as a political, economic and cultural entity does not end at the River Bug, the European process of integration must eventually encompass Russia, Ukraine and Belarus too, as far as their respective internal developments and attitudes will permit. This eastward engagement of the Union will become particularly relevant after the forthcoming entry of Romania and Bulgaria, which will give the Union direct involvement in the Black Sea region. What was once a matter of the 'global' policy of the Union, like developments in Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Crimea, the Middle East and even central Asia, will become a matter of direct relevance to its security. In particular, relations with Turkey will increase in strategic importance, as they will then be shaped by much wider and more complex security concerns than the current issue of the fate of Cyprus.

Until now, the ESDP and the Union's security strategy have not been developed in any meaningful way with the participation of the new members. This may change once they assume formal membership. However, the inclusion of this large number of new states in the Union may also mean the continuation of their inactivity in matters of common security strategy, given that their experience of being involved in shaping this strategy has not, so far, proved very encouraging. Hopefully, the larger states of the Union will learn how to accommodate their methods of leadership so that the interests of the newcomers are not ignored.

THE POLISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE HEADLINE GOAL

Following the EU Helsinki summit and the subsequent conference on military contributions to the headline goal, Poland defined its contribution already in 2001:

from its land forces, some 1500 soldiers in two battalions (one paratrooper battalion from the 6th airborne brigade for the EU Rapid Reaction Force and one battalion of the air cavalry from the 25th Air Cavalry Brigade); from its air force, one SAR air group and one transport aircraft (An-28); from its navy, two 'Krogulec'-type mine-sweepers and one support and rescue ship. Additionally, one small unit of the military police is being trained for EU tasks (in addition to a nearly 100-person civil-police unit, which is already operating in Kosovo).

Bearing in mind the EU's plans for the further development of available forces by 2010 and Poland's forthcoming membership of the EU in 2004, Poland intends to review its contribution. Although the forces earmarked for EU operations are less than those planned for NATO's Rapid Reaction Force and other allied forces, they will come from the same pool, thus assuring a high level of interoperability and readiness. Their dual-hatted allocation conforms to the concept of the harmonious development of military capabilities of both organizations. There are a number of specialized units, like the anti-terrorist and special forces units and chemical defence units, as well as other assets (a tactical movement coordination center, for example), which could be prepared for joint operations. Moreover, Poland is ready to cooperate in the areas of cartography and satellite photography. One particular aspect of the Polish contribution is its existing involvement in multinational military cooperation: the Polish-Lithuanian and Polish-Ukrainian battalions are already fully operational, and have already been taking part in the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo operations respectively.

Poland views the EU Capability Action Plan (ECAP) as being complementary to the NATO Defence Capabilities Initiative approved in Prague. If it is used efficiently and purposefully, which so far has not entirely been the case, the ECAP may prove a very useful way of improving the coordination of European efforts to create joint military capabilities. Poland expressed satisfaction at being admitted to this endeavour, despite the fact that it was not yet an EU member, and it is taking an active part in the EU working groups by developing a number of projects. Out of several such groups, Poland expressed an interest in working on an operational headquarters, air-to-air refuelling, combat search and rescue, strategic airlift and,

possibly, in NBC protection group. It is no coincidence that these areas are exactly those in which Poland participates within NATO or has accepted a national specialization within the alliance.

In sum, Poland's planned contribution to EU military operations is not very large, but it is quite reliable and fully commensurate with its present military, financial and technical capabilities. According to the commentaries coming from Warsaw, this contribution will be reviewed and modified once Poland acquires full membership in the EU, depending on requirements and actual capabilities.

DEFENCE REFORM ON THE WAY TO NATO AND THE EU

The military contribution of Poland, and even more so of the other new member states, to NATO and the EU will inevitably be limited. Two factors contribute to such predicament: first, the poor state of their economies, and secondly, the state of their armed forces. While the first factor will take a long time to be overcome, the second depends on the success of the on-going and in some cases well-advanced transformation of military structures, which in its turn depends on political will and on the resources that are devoted to this task. Polish defence expenditure over the last decade has been quite constant, hovering at the level of 2% of GDP, which indicates a serious effort, but in terms of actual financial resources this translates into some 3.6 billion euros, less than half of what is generated by Spain and less than half the Netherlands' defence budget. The structure of Poland's defence budget is still shaped predominantly by personnel costs, with only a small portion, some ten percent on average, being spent on modernization and procurement. As a result of these budgetary deficits and the requirements of NATO membership, the armed forces are developing in an imbalanced way, those prioritized for NATO contingencies being better equipped and trained than the rest of the forces. As a result, overall spending on maintenance, investments and training is inadequate. A 'two-tier' force is emerging, a small force that is fully capable of operating

with NATO forces, and the remainder, the bulk of the armed forces, with low readiness and degraded military capabilities.

The transformation of the Polish armed forces is an on-going process, having proceeded gradually over the last fifteen years. The army was reduced from 460,000 to its current strength of 160,000, re-deployed through the abandonment of several hundred garrisons, and restructured in terms of command system and the composition of units. Democratic oversight of the armed forces and the defence policy of the state was firmly established, the general staff being incorporated fully into the civilian Ministry of Defence. Staff operations are now less a matter of the command function, which has been delegated to the commands of the respective categories of forces, and more directed towards taking the leading role in force and operational planning, as well as assuring the 'jointness' of the armed forces.

Several long-term plans aimed at modernizing and restructuring the armed forces have been developed over the past decade. Most of them have struggled to balance the needs of the military with the actual financial abilities of the state. Though each stage in the process has brought some positive results, none of the plans has been fully successful. The latest of these programmes is a six-year development programme prepared by the government in 2001 and adopted by parliament. The act was passed by an overwhelming majority, reflecting a national consensus on the defence needs. The new left-wing coalition government now in power has taken up this programme, marking a departure from previous practice of every new government coming up with its own solution to defence problems. This continuity in national defence efforts and the adoption of a longer-term perspective regarding the development of the armed forces are seen as a blessing, as the officer corps and society at large was already showing 'reform fatigue' caused by the constant revisions and debates over the issue.

The new programme envisages armed forces of 150,000 soldiers, of which 55% are to be career servicemen. Two-thirds of the officer corps is to consist of non-commissioned officers, a very ambitious proposition in the Polish conditions. A large number of senior officers will have to be released from the army, which will be

very expensive and require a special programme of professional retraining. There are no plans to create an all-volunteer force. A switch to a career army would take some ten years and cause a significant, possibly unbearable increase in defence expenditure. Moreover, some believe that Poland, being located on the periphery of the NATO area, still needs ample reserves to beef up its regular forces in the event of a mobilization. Some forty percent of military infrastructure is to be transferred to the civil economy through privatization, thus creating additional proceeds for the military budget. Procurement plans envisage the purchase of several new weapons system, such as multi-role aircraft, armoured personnel carriers, anti-tank missiles, several types of warship, radiolocation networks, and electronic warfare and communication systems on the tactical and operational levels.

The main concept behind the new plan to transform the Polish armed forces is to convert them from heavy, mechanized and armoured forces, focused on defence of the national territory, into light, mobile forces capable of operating abroad. The organizational aspect of this process was the creation of two mechanized corps commands in May 2001. The corps is in command of a major share of the Polish operational land forces, comprising immediate reaction, rapid reaction, and core forces. Four divisions (three mechanized and one armoured cavalry) and six brigades (two mechanized, one armoured, one coastal defence, one air-mobile and one airborne assault) form these forces. One division is assigned to the Multinational North-East Corps, and one armoured cavalry brigade is committed to the NATO reaction force, coming under the German armoured division structure. Each Polish mechanized corps has one artillery brigade, one engineering brigade and several other specialized units. The two existing military district commands perform the role of territorial commands and are responsible for logistics, host national support, administration and territorial defence. To carry out this last task, they include seven territorial defence brigades designed to operate in the fixed areas. The present eighteen military brigades are becoming much lighter and more mobile, including the ability to be transported by air. The restructuring aims at making battalion-strong units operationally self-sufficient and capable of independent action. With a similar concept guiding the restructuring of the navy and the air force, the Polish army will be converted into a much more manoeuvrable force

able to perform various duties in crisis-reaction mode, according to the requirements of NATO and, possibly, the EU.

It seems that the process of transforming Poland's military structures, as well as those of the other East European states, and of making their management compatible with Western democratic standards, has reached a level comparable to those existing in NATO and existing EU member states. All the appropriate institutions and modalities for the operation of these forces within a democratic system of government are in place. What still remains to be achieved in these states, most of whom aspire to membership in both organizations, is technical modernization facilitating their cooperation with the most advanced armies. This process of technical modernization cannot, however, be based entirely on purely Western technology. The East European states do not have the financial resources to buy only Western technology, nor do they want to resign completely from using their own arms industry as a source of weapons systems. The incorporation of this military-industrial potential into transnational Western arms companies would constitute the best possible form of assistance for purposes of modernization. However, this would require a much more magnanimous approach by the more advanced states to the problems of Europe-wide military production.

POLAND'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL MILITARY OPERATIONS

It may safely be stated that Poland's involvement in international peacekeeping and peace-making operations comes from a long tradition, based on a specific Polish history, in which a concern for the freedom and independence of other nations was seen as part and parcel of the country's own two centuries of national struggle for reunification, independence and defence of the national territory. The sense of the indivisibility of peace and security in the European context is strong at the grassroots level. There is also a long history of Polish participation in international peace operations, stemming from somewhat different political considerations, which made Poland the only state within the Warsaw Pact that was 'permit-

ted' to send forces abroad. Poland's commitment here dates back to 1953 (the Korean armistice) and now counts more than 25 different UN peacekeeping operations involving more than 47,000 soldiers. More recently, Poland has taken part in various 'coalitions of the willing', sending units to places like Haiti, Iraq (the first and second Gulf Wars), Afghanistan and the Balkans, where Polish soldiers formed part of all the consecutive operations of the UN and the allies. At present there are some 2,000 Polish troops with the UN forces on the Golan Heights and in Lebanon and, last but not least, Poland is responsible for the South-Central divisional zone in Iraq, manning its headquarters and deploying some 2,500 soldiers in the zone. The Polish armed forces are part of the UN SHIRBRIG arrangement, developed at the initiative of Denmark. In developing its peacekeeping capabilities, Poland established a specialized centre to train soldiers for this task in various geographical and social environments and educate them for the unique nature of peacekeeping roles. The centre is often used by foreign armed forces who are planning to deploy their units in peacekeeping roles.

The readiness of Polish society and the political establishment to become involved in activities undertaken by the international community, and in particular by its current allies, is seen as proof of a deep commitment to the common cause and to values, like those of the EU, and in particular to the mutual security guarantees like those provided by NATO. The strength of these mutual commitments is not a theoretical issue in Poland, where the consequences of its West European allies' guarantees in 1939 – verbal but not immediately material – are still remembered. This is why Polish public opinion was shaken by the prolonged delay in NATO's reaction to the Turkish invocation, for the first time in the alliance's history, of Art. IV of the Washington Treaty.

A willingness to share the political, material and human burdens linked to any military operation aimed at the preservation of stability, conflict resolution or peacekeeping does not mean taking an easy approach to the matter. The moderate resources of the Polish state do not permit substantial involvement in international military operations. However, on many occasions Polish politicians have reiterated their view of the fundamental importance of international law, the inviolability of

every state's sovereignty and the primary responsibility of the United Nation's Security Council in preserving the world's peace and stability. There is also a growing acceptance in Poland of the overriding pre-eminence of human rights and the necessity of preserving human life in considering the advisability of military action. The ultimate humanitarian reasons for any joint international military action should not be forgotten in the political squabbling between the five permanent members of the Security Council, who should be able to resolve their difference promptly in order to establish a consensus. Thus, the actions of NATO in the former Yugoslavia over Kosovo and of the US-led coalition in Iraq received relatively wide support in Poland because of their assumed legitimacy, even though they were not entirely sound on legal grounds.

As far as the present and future operations of the EU are concerned, Poland views them as proof of the increased responsibility of the Union for the region's security and stability. The Polish contribution to Operation Concordia in Macedonia has been tangible in terms of military patrols and the Polish presence in the headquarters at Skopje.

ESDP AND NATO: MUTUALLY REINFORCING OR COMPETING?

The gradually increasing European-based security and military cohesion seems to be a logical build-up of the general process of the European integration. According to Polish thinking on the matter, the Union should be able to react to any crisis influencing security in Europe and should also be a leading factor in global security. The Union has a unique range of instruments – unmatched by those of any other organization or state – that it can operate in pursuing crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction. The development of a specifically military capability will complete this inventory by adding a factor of dissuasion, deterrence and, if the need arises, hard military force. However, the level of maturity of this budding military capability is still not very advanced and it cannot as yet be treated as any form of security alternative to the existing NATO provision.

The tendency towards making the ESDP more robust is laudable, but it should not be aimed at fully emancipating Europe from its existing ties with the US. Such an objective would be contrary to the vital interests of several states in Europe, including Poland, and could only lead to the break up of NATO. For this reason, any proposal to create a formal obligation of common defence among the EU member states would mean directly supplanting the similar commitment that exists in NATO and covers the great majority of EU member states. This view is not at odds with Poland's positive attitude regarding the principle of 'solidarity', which can be invoked in the case of a terrorist attack and should lead to a mutual assistance and cooperation. However, this principle could not apply to areas outside Europe or to pre-emptive operations involving the use of military force.

A rational measure of duplication of structures and activities between the EU's ESDP and NATO is perhaps unavoidable. The EU authorities must set up a well-developed staff to execute the host of preparatory measures required to bring the headline goal to fruition, as well as to plan for future contingencies with regard to the expanded scope of the Petersberg missions. However, a recently discussed proposal to establish a complete EU headquarters and commands for its future forces, able to carry out a full spectrum of operational planning as part of 'enhanced military cooperation', seems too much like an intentional duplication of the existing NATO military command structure. There may be more sense to the suggestion of having the EU planning and commanding staff open to the presence of the respective representatives from NATO planning and command structures.

At present and well into the future, NATO's strategic and operational capabilities, which are based predominantly on US assets, will represent an indispensable back-up for any type of EU military operation. They also ensure the necessary 'escalation dominance' in case of any difficulties that such an operation may encounter. By ensuring the availability of NATO assets, the 'Berlin-plus' agreement is a good basis for a strategic partnership between the two organizations.

THE AMERICAN 'CONNECTION'

For Poland and a number of other states, the prospect of 'rivalry' between the two organizations, NATO and the EU, is unacceptable. The two organizations are regarded as complementary circles of political, economic and military interaction between friendly and politically homogeneous states engaged in various complex processes and pursuing different, even at times contradictory, but not antagonistic, national interests. Some refer to the two circles as a 'civilizational alliance'. The recent rift within this alliance of democratic states should teach us four lessons. First, interactions between the states that belong to these two circles cannot be based on the hegemonic position and unilateral policy of even the strongest state, like the USA. Secondly, multilateralism is not a necessity for the weaker states, but it is the best way for any state to participate in the modern world of today. Thirdly, military solutions to most contemporary international challenges is only one of many possible methods to be tried, and only after all the other ways have been fully explored. Of course, this does not mean that military forces should be discarded *a priori* or not accepted as one of a range of legitimate and effective methods of action. Finally, relationships between the allied states cannot be pursued in open opposition or hostility to the principal partner. The worst outcome of a fundamental breakdown, however remote and improbable it may seem, in the existing framework of Transatlantic cooperation, would be the re-nationalization of security policies in Europe. This would be disastrous for all states, particularly those of Central Europe, located between Germany and Russia and potentially always exposed to pressure from either side.

The American military presence in Europe is no longer needed because of a Cold-War-type threat from an adjacent area. Russia is slowly democratizing and modernizing its political system, and although it has not yet passed the point of no return on its road towards becoming a liberal, affluent and non-imperialist democracy, it is unlikely to pose a military threat in the years to come. It is now the USA which needs Europe as a staging area for its worldwide military operations. Given that this is the case, the actual deployment of US forces in Europe can be shaped, in terms of both their best location and their numbers, by taking more into

account purely American interests. For Europe itself, the US presence is increasingly symbolic. What really counts now is the robustness of America's political, economic and military engagement in the world's events and in issues in which European security interests are at stake. This can best be obtained through NATO and through cooperation between NATO and the EU.

Bearing in mind their national history, it is not surprising that Poles are distrustful of state-sanctioned pacifism in a world full of dictators and armed conflicts. On numerous occasions, Western states have showed clearly dubious or double moral standards in their dealings with authentic social movements struggling for independence and with dictatorial or oppressive regimes. This is why most East European societies have strong misgivings about the opposition of some political circles to the Iraq operation of 2003. They see this opposition as anti-Americanism rather than a superior moral stance, the anti-American crusade of some countries smacking of a desire for political compensation for their own loss of global influences or, in other cases, being simply a means of strengthening their own positions. Notwithstanding misgivings about the crudeness of its methods and the overbearing unilateralism on part of the present US leadership in relation to its allies, it cannot be denied that it is only the US today which has both real power and the political willingness to use it in defence of common US and European values and interests.

MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION

Proposals to develop a common European military industry as part of the common security and defence policy need no more arguing. The ESDP creates a new and badly needed impetus to such efforts. If successful, the new initiative concerning the establishment of a new institution to organize such efforts may help to bring European military potential more in line with the new security agenda of the Union. Moreover, a harmonization of military production, based in part on joint procurement planning and common R & D efforts, would appear to be the best possible remedy for falling European defence budgets and the steadily diminishing

internal weapons market in Europe. These new initiatives, which are aimed at incorporating the experience of already existing mechanisms like OCCAR or the Letter of Intent Framework Agreement, seem to be gaining wide acceptance, though the actual shape of such an institution is not yet clear. For example, the unequal rights of states in the OCCAR's procedures should not be perpetuated in the new institution, which should be open to all states that are willing to join.

The proposed armaments agency is raising great hopes, particularly in the less technologically advanced and financially weaker states of the Union, as well as in all the prospective new members, like Poland, which has observer status in the Informal Advisory Group. All of these states, some already participating in the Western European Armament Group, are pursuing ambitious programmes of restructuring and modernization, partly with a view to transforming their armed forces into EU (and NATO) inter-operable units. However, if past experiences are anything to go by, the weaker partners, with their uncertain qualitative input and few resources, are not easy to incorporate into cooperative agreements. There is a natural tendency for 'cooperation of the strong' to develop, based on competence rather than a willingness to participate. If only the market forces are to operate in this regard, this will certainly lead to a ruthless elimination of the weaker partners. In effect, these less advanced states would then be relegated to a position as permanent buyers of advanced weapon systems produced in other states. And the fact is that the weaker arms industries of the prospective new members often represent a large share of the national economy and the labour market. Their elimination, rational though it may seem in some West European capitals, is therefore not acceptable locally. These industries should be treated at least as supplementary to the mainstream or final assembly lines, which might require a measure of capital investment and goodwill. The desire to create a common defence-goods market may lead to a gradual dilution of Article 296 of the Union's Treaty, which allows domestic military markets to be protected on grounds of national security and other vital interests. While this tendency to abandon protective norms is desirable in theory, it may be difficult for some states to accept without special measures moderating its negative impact on their own military industries.

A truly European military industrial market may not be created if only the supply side is organized on an increasingly common basis, with the demand side, that is, the 'customers' of military production, remaining organized entirely on a national basis. Thus, it seems that the future EU agency should also address the potential for common weapons procurement, regulations concerning the export of military and dual-purpose products, the standardization of military production, and other areas influencing the creation of a future EU-wide military capability. The military headline goal should also become a political guideline in terms of achieving far-reaching coherence in the national defence policies of EU members.