CHAPTER 10
Towards a common European Security and Defence Policy?

Lisbet Zilmer-Johns and Jess Pilegaard,
Danish Institute for International Studies

The aim of the present volume has been to provide an overview of the central challenges facing the European Union in terms of developing a common security and defence policy. In so doing, the contributors have, perhaps unsurprisingly, raised more questions than they have answered. This reflects the open-ended nature of the political processes that are currently taking place in Europe: The future of the ESDP cannot be determined by mechanically analyzing a fixed set of clearly identifiable variables. A host of known and unknown factors are currently impinging on the development of the ESDP, and an even larger number of unknown future developments will influence the further course of events. Prediction and scenario-building is a thankless task these days, and while it seems reasonable to assume that significant changes are under way, it is much more difficult to make out the different possible trajectories of change.

The second chapter of the present volume claimed that retaining the status quo was not a viable option. The existing modalities of European security and defence policy are simply not sustainable because they fall short of satisfying either national or multilateral requirements of effective military force projection. Current budgetary allocations are not necessarily insufficient, but they are spread too thinly across a multitude of different security and defence frameworks. Since the end of the Cold War, most European states have slashed defence expenditure without initiating fundamental reforms of their armed forces. Most states consequently entertain

what are in effect miniaturized versions of the mass armies they developed during the Cold War. These force structures are not adapted or equipped to handle the new security threats.

If Europeans – individually and collectively – want to be a credible actor in international security, they will have to reassess their current security and defence policies, and especially their spending patterns. Europe has the economic muscle and political clout to be an active force in international security, and the individual members of the Union arguably have the potential building blocks that could make the EU a credible military force as well. For this to happen, however, things will have to change. Western Europe prospered under the benign security regime of the United States, which fostered a liberal security community underpinned by common values and ideals. The basic building blocks of the system are currently changing, however, and Europe will have to adapt in order to safeguard this security community. 'If we want things to stay as they are, they will have to change', professes the young Tancredi to his uncle, the Prince of Salina, in Lampedussa's *The Leopard*. Much the same could be said of European security at the beginning of the 21st Century: If Europe wants to remain at the centre of the international security debate, it must strengthen its capacity to project military force.

The preceding chapters have offered an overview of the central challenges facing the Union in the further development of the ESDP. Instead of trying to summarise the vast material presented by the contributors, this final chapter will take a few steps back and attempt to make sense of developments from a theoretical perspective.

At the beginning of the volume, a cursory discussion of different theoretical approaches to the study of European integration was presented. It was argued that the interests and policies of the member states were of paramount importance in understanding the ESDP. Few would question the relevance of the state-centric perspective in making sense of European security and defence policies, but, as the preceding chapters have shown, there are also dynamics that cannot be reduced to the simple categories of theoretical intergovernmentalism. This chapter will conse-

quently revisit the theoretical agenda, suggesting other ways of analyzing the political developments that are currently taking place in relation to the ESDP.

REVISITING THE CONCEPT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

One of the leading figures in early integration studies, Ernst Haas, defined integration as 'the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new and larger centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states'.[1] The early integration theories were quite optimistic in assuming that the process of integration would be linear and self-reinforcing, thanks, *inter alia*, to the process of spill-over. The latter concept was defined by Charles Lindberg as 'a situation in which a given action, related to a specific goal, creates a situation in which the original goal can be assured only by taking further actions, which in turn create a further condition and a need for more action, and so forth.'[2] Integration in one field naturally leads to integration in others, and as the capacity and authority of the new centre grows, still more citizens will shift their 'loyalties, expectations, and political activities' towards the new centre. The creation of a customs union between the members of the European Community thus necessitated the development of a common commercial policy. Likewise, the creation of an internal market necessitated the development of a common agricultural policy to replace the divergent and discriminatory national policies.

1. Ernst Haas (1958), *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces 1950-1957*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
2. Leon N. Lindberg (1963), *The Political Dynamics of European Economic Integration*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 10.

The optimism of the early integration theories made them an easy target for criticism (and caricature) when the integration process ground to a halt because of political differences between the member states. Integration theory fell in disrepute, and more traditional, state-centric intergovernmentalism invaded the field of study. One of the early traditionalist critics, Stanley Hoffmann, suggested that a division of labour might be called for, leaving supranationalists to toy around with the *low politics* of economic integration, while the field of *high politics* would remain the exclusive domain of intergovernmentalists.[3] National governments might be enticed to pool their sovereignty in policy fields that do not threaten the very core of their national authority, but they would certainly reject the idea of granting other states a say in questions of their own 'national security'. In matters of life and death, risk-averse governments prefer to keep a tight rein.[4]

The ESDP is thus the last place one would imagine supranational theories having any explanatory relevance, this being the archetypical example of so-called *high politics*. It is nevertheless worth considering the relevance of the integration theories in making sense of current political developments in Europe.

From the preceding chapters, it is possible to suggest a number of factors that are enabling closer collaboration in the fields of security and defence policy. The *integration pull* is provided by the converging interests of EU members. This factor basically amounts to the traditional intergovernmentalist position: integration is proceeding because the governments of the EU member states support the process. Following the Saint-Malo Summit of 1998, the majority of the member states espoused the ambition of creating an effective ESDP with a distinct European capacity for international force projection, including a rapid reaction force of 60,000 men. The interests and motives of the member states are varied, but there would seem to be an increasingly common recognition that a certain capacity for

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3. Stanley Hoffmann (1965), 'The European Process at Atlantic Cross Purposes', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 85-101.
4. See also Hans Mouritzen (1998), *Theory and Reality of International Politics*, Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 113 ff.

military action is an essential element in the efforts to make the Union a credible, international actor.

The adoption of a security strategy in December 2003 is another example of policy convergence in Europe. Member states have previously been reluctant to broach the issue, lest the efforts to develop a common security strategy revealed fundamental and unbridgeable differences. However, the debacle over Iraq made it clear that the EU had to take a clear stand on the new security threats. Without a common policy line, the EU could only react to American initiatives in the struggle against terrorist networks and WMD-proliferating states. The adoption of the security strategy is likely to intensify cooperation in the area of security and defence. The ability to agree on the definition of key threats to European security reflects the emergence of an increasingly common threat perception, which is obviously an important precondition for moving from a purely reactive to a pro-active security policy. Negotiating a common position remains an intensely political affair, where other strategic interests come into play. Member states will have different (domestic) priorities and different views on the transatlantic relationship or on bilateral relations with relevant third parties. But having defined the salient threats in a common strategy beforehand, the Union does not have to start the formulation of a common position with a debate on *whether* terrorism, weapons of mass destruction or failing states are relevant threats to the security of the EU.

Being a negotiated document, the security strategy obviously contains language that is open to interpretation. Disagreements over the exact meaning of the wording are therefore likely to emerge at the level of implementation. Also, a common security strategy does not necessarily lead to a common strategic concept concerning the use of military force. As emphasised in Chapter two above, the member states are a very diverse group when it comes to strategic culture. Some have long-standing traditions of military activism, of promoting values abroad using both civilian and military means, while other member states have a predominantly pacific culture. As argued in Chapter 4 on the debate on ESDP in the Convention and the IGC, the introduction of flexibility, with structured cooperation alongside a mutual defence clause that does not include all EU members, is effectively an

acknowledgement of the diversity in strategic outlook within the Union. However, past differences are not necessarily a reliable guide to future behaviour: recent events would seem to suggest that the EU could indeed be developing a common strategic culture. While Operation Artemis in Bunia, Congo, was heavily dependent on French contingents, it included combat troops from the United Kingdom and Sweden (traditionally non-aligned) and non-combat troops from Germany and Belgium.[5] Operation Artemis suggests that the EU is indeed capable of developing a 'strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and when necessary, robust intervention'.[6]

On a more general level, the very development of the ESDP, and the close intellectual and practical link between military and civilian resources in crisis management, suggests agreement on a common approach, where the use of military force is seen as only one of a number of instruments in the EU's so-called 'toolbox'.

A convergence of national interests is obviously a necessary condition for the ESDP to develop, but it is hardly a sufficient explanation, in that it does not shed any light on *why* interests are converging. Member states obviously find it advantageous to cooperate in this field, but in order to understand why, we may have to move beyond the limits of traditional intergovernmentalist theory.

The concept of 'spill-over' is probably too controversial to be useful in the present context, but the basic idea remains persuasive: the common external policies of the Union, especially the Common Foreign and Security Policy, must be backed by a certain capacity for action if they are to be credible.[7] Issuing a common *demarche* to warring parties is one thing – getting them to listen is quite another, and the latter is more often than not a function of the capacity for resolute action to back up the demarche. The European Union may possess a strong capacity for peacekeeping, reconstruction and development, but the application of these foreign policy

5. The operation also enjoyed support from South African, Brazilian, and Canadian troops.
6. *European Security Strategy* (2003), Brussels.
7. See e.g. Charles Grant (2003) 'Resolving the Rows over ESDP', *Opinion*, London: Centre for European Reform.

instruments presupposes a certain capacity for international force projection. The EU cannot deploy humanitarian aid, police forces or election observers without a minimum capacity for military force projection. Sometimes, you may need the stick to offer the carrot, and if the European Union wants an international role, it must include some military instruments in its toolbox.

Other factors are simultaneously pushing in the direction of increased cooperation. The *integration push* includes the structural constraints stemming from the rising costs of military technologies and the increasing expectations of third parties. In terms of structural constraints, EU member states are finding it increasingly difficult to keep abreast of military-technological developments. As the hi-tech component of modern military equipment is increasing, the cost structures are gradually becoming prohibitively expensive. Similarly, large-scale acquisition programmes and investments in research and development are increasingly going beyond the scope of national European economies. These changes were clearly spelled out in Chapter 6, on defence reform. The smaller member states and the most recent newcomers from Central and Eastern Europe are already feeling the pinch, and some member states have already been forced to shelve projected acquisitions and modernization programmes. In light of the immense costs of maintaining a modern fleet of fighter planes, a number of Central and Eastern European countries are thus considering different long-term leasing options being offered by Western aircraft industries. In this sense, the (European) nation state may no longer be the appropriate or optimal framework for organizing military defence. [8] When forced to choose between obsolete weapon systems or common weapon systems, the chances are that most member states will opt for the latter (or, as is perhaps more likely, a mixture of both).

While the citizens of Europe may have been reluctant in 'shifting their loyalties' to the new centre, their expectations and political activities are increasingly focused on Brussels. For all the methodological limits to opinion polls, it is striking to note the

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8. Cf. Alan Milward (1999), *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, New York: Routledge.

growing popular support for a European defence.[9] Even more important, perhaps, are the external expectations of third parties *towards* Europe.[10] This may seem somewhat dated in light of the political debacles of 2003, which saw both Washington and Moscow in hectic *bilateral* consultations with the capitals of Europe (rather than Brussels), but the argument still stands. The analysis of the European security strategy presented in Chapter 3 of the present volume suggests that it should be seen as part of a transatlantic dialogue; the Europeans reassuring the United States that they share the same security concerns. The US administration may prefer bilateral contacts over a multilateral dialogue, but it nonetheless expects the European Union to have a policy on international security matters. The expectations of other (and smaller) third parties are even more pronounced and decidedly focused on the common institutions of the Union. The countries located on the periphery of the Union are obviously a case in point. Demands and expectations are placed upon the Union, and by reacting to them the Union is reinforcing its international presence, thus feeding what could become a process of positive reinforcement.

We are witnessing a process of European integration in a policy field that has traditionally been perceived as the exclusive domain of sovereign nation states. The latter obviously retain the upper hand in this process, but a traditional intergovernmental perspective is hardly adequate in explaining the processes that are currently taking place.

THE EUROPEANIZATION
OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY?

The concept of 'Europeanization' has gained increasing prominence in recent years, spurring a lively theoretical debate about the two-way influence between the member states and the common policies and institutions of the EU. The concept

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9. *Eurobarometer 60*, autumn 2003.
10. See C.J. Hill (1993), 'The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 305-28.

has been used in a number of different contexts and remains somewhat ambiguous from an analytical perspective.[11] It nonetheless captures an idea that is crucial in the present framework, namely the notion that the fundamental preferences (i.e. interests and visions) of the member states are affected by the integration process. Being a member of the European Union changes the way a given state thinks, talks and negotiates. Being a member of a club involves some element of socialization and adaptation. The institutional context matters.

Johan P. Olsen suggests a number of different approaches to the concept of Europeanization, two of which will be highlighted in the following.[12] First, the concept can be used to analyze the development of institutions at the European level, that is, the development of some central capacity for action, coordination and coherence. Secondly, the notion of Europeanization may shed light on the central penetration of national systems of governance, that is, the adaptation of national systems of governance to a European centre and European norms. This second conceptualization opens the door to an analysis of the different patterns of influence between member states and between the different levels of authority in the European Union. Seen through this lens, Europeanization is not just standardization from Brussels, but the diffusion and consolidation of ideas and practices in the European governance network.

The first type of Europeanization, i.e. the development of new institutions at the European level, is exemplified by the emerging EU policy on homeland security and the solidarity clause. When faced with transnational security threats such as terrorism, a Union without internal borders is almost forced to intensify internal cooperation. There is a strong argument for close coordination between sectors, instruments and policy communities. As argued in Chapter 4, the Convention's proposal for a solidarity clause received broad support, with national policy-makers reacting on the basis of increasing interdependence rather than national positions.

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11. '[A] fashionable but contested concept', according to Johan P. Olsen (2002), 'The Many Faces of Europeanisation', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 40, no. 5, pp. 921-52.
12. See Olsen, op cit., pp. 923-4.

The call in Chapter 9 for an EU directorate-general for homeland protection would represent a step towards the Europeanization of homeland security. The tragic events in Madrid on 11th March 2004 are likely to speed up the process of Europeanizing homeland security, as evidenced by the decision made at the Summit in Brussels on March 25th 2004, to implement the solidarity clause and the appoint a security coordinator.[13]

The development of the security strategy is another example of Europeanization at work. Central EU actors were instrumental in coordinating inputs and elaborating the strategy. As discussed in Chapter 3, the drafting of the strategy was mainly driven by the High Representative, Javier Solana, and his top aides. They were in close contact with the national actors, but the momentum was distinctly European.

The two approaches to Europeanization mentioned above were clearly relevant in the development of the EU's intelligence cooperation, as described in Chapter 5. Intelligence cooperation is an example of the 'integration logic', whereby the development of the EU's crisis management capacity requires the Union to take further action by developing a common intelligence capacity (i.e. the development of EU-level institutions as described in the first approach). At the same time, the very process of establishing common intelligence structures underlines the close interplay between the national and the European levels (cf. the second approach to Europeanization). In the words of Major-General Messervy-Whiting, the people involved in establishing intelligence cooperation had 'the luxury of a virtually 'clean sheet' and thereby the opportunity to design the best possible achievable intelligence system by benchmarking against the best existing systems in States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, taking the best elements from each and leaving the least best behind.' Hence, the European level was penetrated by national 'best-practices', which over time are likely to penetrate back into national systems, as they adapt to the circumstance of having to deliver input to the EU level while simultaneously receiving its output.

13. European Council: 'Declaration on Combating Terrorism', Brussels, March 25th 2004.

Following this line of reasoning, the member states are part of a unique political union, which influences the way in which they react to external events.[14] As shown by several empirical studies, the gut reaction in many European capitals is not, 'How should we react in order to best protect our national interests?', but rather, 'How will our partners in the Union react to this development, and what are the chances of achieving a common position?'[15] Thinking at the level of the national capitals has changed during the past forty years of European integration. As ever, the 'logic of integration' coexists with the 'logic of diversity',[16] and the smaller member states, who most obviously lack the capacity to fend for themselves, are more amenable to this process of socialization. However, even the larger member states are evidently influenced by the routinization of intense consultation and collaboration, suggesting that there is indeed more to the process of European integration than the collusion of rational utility-maximizers.

Defined in this manner, the Europeanization approach suggests that the factors that are *pulling* and *pushing* for greater integration in the fields of security and defence policy are being channelled through national decision-making systems that are increasingly Europeanized. The structural conditions that are making it increasingly difficult for smaller states to maintain a modern capacity for effective force projection are common to all states in the international system. The rising costs of state-of-the-art military equipment is not a solely European phenomenon. However, the Western European reaction to this structural constraint is arguably distinctly European. There is a tradition of seeking common solutions to common problems, which seems to outweigh the logic of diversity that is typically associated

14. The concept of Europeanization denotes a process that is not specifically tied to the European Union (Olsen, 2002: 922). The same process could in principle be relevant in other systems of governance. However, the process has arguably been most developed within the European system of governance.
15. Ben Tonra (2001), *The Europeanisation of National Foreign Policy: Dutch, Danish and Irish Foreign Policy in the European Union*, Aldershot: Ashgate.
16. Hoffmann (1965), op cit.

with so-called 'high politics'. In some ways, it seems easier for Europeans to agree on matters of common security and defence policy than on fishing quotas.

EUROPEANIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The above discussion might be faulted for focusing too much on the *internal* aspects of Europeanization: the broader framework of international political relations must obviously also be taken into account. The process of Europeanization is not a purely endogenous phenomenon. The transatlantic wrangles of 2003 divided the members of the European Union, but the depth and importance of these lines of conflict should not be exaggerated. Any open political conflict among EU members stands out precisely because it deviates from the consensual mode of policy-making that has become a hallmark of the Union. Even at the height of the Iraq conflict, the political distance between London and Paris was arguably less than the distance separating London and Washington. The debacle did not stop the European integration process or impede work in the Convention. For all the differences that have been provoked and accentuated by the Iraq crisis, the longer-term effect of the US-led campaign may actually be to reinforce the commonality of purpose inside the Union. When faced with fundamental crises, Europeans have until now relied on the same solution, namely more integration. External events have shaken the integration project, but in hindsight, the major crises of European cooperation have all led to renewed and intensified efforts at integration.

Whatever the political differences separating Europeans from one another, the EU does emerge as a relatively coherent political community that is clearly distinct from both the United States and the regions neighbouring the Union to its east and south. This is not to belittle the strong political and cultural ties between the different regions, especially the broader Western security community (i.e. NATO), but merely to suggest that the Union is emerging as a distinct voice in international relations, an advocate of a distinctively European approach to international politics and international security. This process is obviously all the more pronounced given the present tensions arising from the fight against terrorism, but it is in some ways re-

miniscent of the role that was thrust upon Europe in the days of the Cold War. Then as now, West Europeans sought to position themselves as interlocutors and bridge-builders. Witness the following excerpt from the declaration of the European Commission on the occasion of the achievement of the customs union on 1st July 1968:

> [A]t a time when the organization of the world on the scale of old sovereign nations is yielding place to organization at the level of continents, it is important that the errors of the past should not be repeated at this higher level, that the clash of nations should not give way to the clash of entire continents. Consequently, it is Europe's duty to organize cooperation and association with the other main groups in the world.

Some 35 years have elapsed since then, but these words are as relevant as ever, and the diplomatic approach they represent has further evolved.

The import of these observations is that the European Union is developing a distinct approach to international security and defence policy not in isolation, but in reaction to wider political developments. The EU is formed not only according to the logic of its own internal development, but also in reaction to global lines of political conflict. This process is neither linear nor smooth, but it has the potential to gradually reinforce itself. Whether by design or as the result of wider political developments, the EU is developing a stronger presence and identity in international relations.