



European Security Post-Libya and Post-Ukraine: In Search of Core Leadership

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1. Introduction

The EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), according to the conclusions of the special December 19-20, 2013 European Council devoted to defence, "contributes to peace and stability in our neighbourhood and in the broader world."¹ And yet, in the two most serious regional security crises in the EU's neighbourhood since the end of the Cold War – the Arab Spring in general and the Libyan crisis of 2011 in particular, and the crisis in Ukraine and Crimea in 2014, CSDP was not only completely absent from both theatres, but was barely invoked as a hypothetical or appropriate policy instrument. Moreover, there has been virtually no discernible effort to engineer coordination between CSDP and the

The paper analyses the future governance of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Unlike other policy areas, the main challenges for CSDP stem from the lack of a core leadership and common purpose rather than from institutional design faults. Alongside, the EU's dysfunctional relationship with NATO has reduced the CSDP to a largely civilian crisis management endeavour in the wider EU neighbourhood. Moving forward, the EU ought to capitalize on sub-regional integration efforts in this field, while maintaining the EU as a whole as the basic reference point and common framework for deeper integration between groups of member states.

ABSTRACT

¹ European Council, *Presidency Conclusions*, Brussels, 19-20 December 2013 (EUCO 217/13), para. 1, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/140245.pdf.

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IMAGINING EUROPE

EU's much-vaunted Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Indeed, its main constituent parts, the Union for the Mediterranean created in 2008 and the Eastern Partnership created in 2009, have both proven to be deeply flawed projects. US commentators on the Ukraine crisis were scathing in their denunciation of the EU's alleged ineptitude in handling its relations both with Kiev and with Moscow.² And a senior European analyst concluded, more diplomatically, that the entire ENP has been a failure and needs a drastic rethinking.³

These perspectives need to be borne in mind when reflecting on the security dimensions of a "more united and effective Europe." There is precious little unity, minimal effectiveness, and an extremely diffuse and unwieldy, though not dysfunctional, system of governance. Above all, there is no "obvious" CSDP leadership.⁴ Indeed, "leaderlessness" appears to be the name of the CSDP game. Anand Menon has insisted that this is "not necessarily as dysfunctional as most analyses are wont to claim." Arguing that the EU cannot and should not attempt to act in a "heroic" manner like militaristic nation states where leadership is crucial, he notes that, in the case of CSDP, "overlapping institutional competences are part of the very nature of what remains a unique and sophisticated international organization."⁵ Perhaps, but this does not help achieve either coordination or effectiveness.

Lacking any leadership, the EU's member states also remain *divided* over key issues such as the meaning of CSDP "autonomy" vis-à-vis NATO and the US; the desirable balance between military and civilian priorities in CSDP missions; the very range and ambition of those missions; financing, procurement, collective defence; and above all strategic vision. One 2013 study, essentially focused on the *military* dimension of CSDP, breaks EU member states down into those that actually *have* a strategy (France and the UK); those that have some sense of strategic purpose (Sweden, Finland and the Czech Republic); those with global horizons, although little in the way of operational plans (the Netherlands, Spain,

² Several dozen posts by prominent US academics and commentators on a private list-serve; "The European Union Reacts to the Crisis in Ukraine", in *Stratfor Global Intelligence*, 4 March 2014, <http://www.stratfor.com/node/205194>.

³ Stefan Lehne, "Time to Reset the European Neighborhood Policy," in *Carnegie Europe Papers*, February 2014, <http://ceip.org/1doS8LR>.

⁴ The NATO coalition against Libya was led by France and the UK; the EU "trio" which attempted to resolve the Ukrainian crisis in March 2014 involved foreign ministers from Poland, Germany and France.

⁵ Anand Menon, "Security Policy and the Logic of Leaderlessness", in Jack Hayward (ed.), *Leaderless Europe*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 131 and 145.

Germany, Hungary and Slovenia); “abstentionists,” who, according to the authors of this study, have no coherent plan and in some cases no defence ministry as such (Luxembourg, Austria, Ireland, Malta); “drifters,” whose national plans, for one reason or another, have not been updated since the turn of the century (Greece, Italy, Portugal and Belgium); and the rest, dubbed “localists,” whose main concern is their own territorial integrity.⁶ A 2009 study of the EU’s coherence in terms of *civilian crisis management*, broke the EU member states into four groups: professionals, strivers, agnostics, and indifferents. The professionals (Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK) were judged to be ahead of the game in recruiting and training civilian capacity for crisis management missions. The strivers (Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy and Romania) were deemed serious in their intentions but disorganised. The agnostics were “unconvinced about the value of civilian deployments,” while the indifferents simply failed “to take the task of developing civilian capacity seriously.”⁷ So much for unity...

In terms of *effectiveness*, this same study concluded that “ten years after the creation of [C]SDP, most EU missions remain small, lacking in ambition and strategically irrelevant.”⁸ The judgment sounds harsh, but the acid test of this policy area has to be its concrete achievements in the field of international crisis management. The EU regularly prides itself on being a “global actor.” The 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) stated, “Europe should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world.”⁹ It went on to boast that “European forces have been deployed abroad to places as distant as Afghanistan, East Timor and the DRC.” It did not add the key detail that only in the latter had those forces been deployed under the EU flag. The ESS notes that “we need both to think globally and act locally,” adding that “with the new threats the first line of defence will often be abroad.” The image purveyed by the ESS is misleading. Of the thirty-four missions recorded by ISIS-Europe as having been launched under CSDP,¹⁰ no fewer

⁶ Olivier de France and Nick Witney, “Europe’s Strategic Cacophony”, in *ECFR Publications*, No. 77 (April 2013), p. 4-8, http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/europes_strategic_cacophony205.

⁷ Daniel Korski and Richard Gowan, “Can the EU Rebuild Failing States? A Review of Europe’s Civilian Capacities”, in *ECFR Publications*, No. 14 (October 2009), p. 13-15, http://www.ecfr.eu/content/entry/civilian_capacities_report_page.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

⁹ European Council, *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, Brussels, 12 December 2003, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>.

¹⁰ ISIS Europe, “Mission Chart”, in *CSDP MAP*, <http://www.csdpmap.eu/mission-chart>.

than seven have been in the former Yugoslavia (i.e. inside the EU's own external borders), and eighteen in Africa. Of the remaining nine, four have been on the EU's Eastern border (three in Georgia and one in Ukraine and Moldova). Any objective or realistic geographical analysis of these missions would have to conclude that the overwhelming majority of them have been in the EU's immediate neighbourhood. To this extent, it is clear that the EU is a regional actor, but one which frames regional conflicts and destabilisation in a broader globalising context.

The EU has shown that it is taken seriously as an international partner by the United Nations and by the African Union, even if the US remains unconvinced about its seriousness of purpose as a security provider.¹¹ To date, the military side of CSDP has been very limited in scope and scale and extremely selective in its choice of missions. There have been dozens of academic and think-tank analyses of CSDP missions.¹² A clear majority of the analysts conclude that the effectiveness of the missions is limited at best, negligible at worst. The EU currently has eight missions running in Africa, only one of which (Atalanta) has any critical mass. Between them, the other seven involve fewer than 650 European officials, and cover challenges and distances of epic proportions. In the context of the general pattern of "Western" interventions in the internal affairs of sovereign states since the end of the Cold War (most of which have turned out badly),¹³ the EU needs to re-assess its entire approach to crisis management. Effectiveness, to date, has been sub-optimal.

Governability, on the other hand, has not been a major problem in CSDP. Although the EU has a bewilderingly complex multi-level and multi-agency institutional matrix for the delivery and management of CSDP crisis management missions, the key EU decision-making and decision-shaping bodies (Council Secretariat, Political and Security Committee, European Union Military Staff, European Union Military Committee, European Defence

¹¹ US Dept. of Defense, *The Security and Defense Agenda: the Future of NATO*, Speech by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Brussels, Brussels, 10 June 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1581>.

¹² I offer a comparative appraisal of all of these analyses in chapter five of my book, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, 2nd edition, Basingstoke and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

¹³ Jolyon Howorth, "Humanitarian Intervention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction in the Post-Cold War Era: A Provisional Balance Sheet", in *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2013), p. 288-309.

Agency) work relatively smoothly.¹⁴ This is more remarkable given the political constraints under which they operate – member state dominance of this entire policy area. A mass of academic literature argues that the socialisation mechanisms that kick in when these intergovernmental bodies go about their business are such that, although CSDP is virtually untouched by direct supra-national inputs, an aura of supra-nationalism nevertheless informs the way in which decisions are actually made¹⁵ – it being clearly understood that everything CSDP does enjoys the blessing of the member states. Anything to which any member state has a serious objection simply does not make it onto the CSDP agenda.

Some argue that, to improve unity and effectiveness (and possibly even governance), the EU needs to develop a core group of member states, a leadership group that will be committed to taking CSDP to a higher level.¹⁶ It is to this issue, which lies at the heart of the IAI project, that I now turn.

2. General Thoughts on the Framework Paper

The present paper starts from a position of basic agreement with the two initial observations presented in the IAI framework paper.¹⁷ The puzzle outlined in the framework paper accurately reflects the overall situation of the EU in 2014. A constructive

¹⁴ Mai'a K. Davis Cross, *Security Integration in Europe. How Knowledge-based Networks Are Transforming the European Union*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2011; Hylke Dijkstra, *Policy-Making in EU Security and Defense. An Institutional Perspective*, Basingstoke and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; Ana E. Juncos and Christopher Reynolds, "The Political and Security Committee: Governing in the Shadow", in *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (May 2007), p. 127-147. It should be noted that the European External Action Service is too young to assess and still has to prove its value.

¹⁵ Jolyon Howorth, "Decision-making in Security and Defense Policy: Towards Supranational Intergovernmentalism?", in *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (December 2012), p. 433-453.

¹⁶ Jo Coelmont and Maurice de Langlois, "Recalibrating CSDP-NATO Relations: The Real Pivot", in *Egmont Security Policy Briefs*, No. 47 (June 2013), <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/?p=2431>; French Senate Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Armed Forces, "Let's Get Rid of 'Europe of Defence'. Towards a European Defence", in *Rapport d'information*, No. 713, 3 July 2013, p. 48, <http://www.senat.fr/rap/r12-713/r12-713.html>.

¹⁷ Nathalie Tocci and Giovanni Faleg, "Towards a More United and Effective Europe: A Framework for Analysis", in *Imagining Europe*, No. 1 (October 2013), <http://www.iai.it/content.asp?langid=2&contentid=992>.

or positive outcome to the eurozone crisis will almost inevitably involve some top-down, centripetal, quasi-federal structure and associated policy-process. This risks exacerbating the opposite dynamic in today's EU, which is a bottom-up, centrifugal, eurosceptic tendency, the extreme expression of which (the UK) is bent on repatriating power from Brussels. However, this pattern does not readily apply in the field of CSDP. Institutional creativity in the form of some quasi-federal security and defence architecture, in addition to being hard to conceptualise, would not necessarily fix the problem, which derives essentially from the absence of strategic vision¹⁸ (itself a casualty of conflicting security cultures within the EU¹⁹) and the concomitant lack of political will. Moreover, the European public, in a very general sense, has no significant underlying problem with CSDP. Poll after poll suggests that citizens across the Union accept almost intuitively that it is logical for foreign and security policy to be conducted at the European level. With one or two minor exceptions,²⁰ negative reactions to the Lisbon Treaty were in no way spurred by this particular policy area. It is not European publics that are concerned about loss of sovereignty in CSDP, but EU governments. At the same time, all governments recognize the imperative need for CSDP, as has been stated repeatedly in every official document about this policy area. So there is a widespread trans-European desire for CSDP to be somehow made to work better.

The other major assertion of the framework paper that I endorse is the crucial need for a new European narrative. Here, the *problématique* of CSDP is entirely salient. The motivation and mobilisation of EU citizens no longer resonate around the message of internal European peace. One great challenge of the future has to do with the EU's interaction with the outside world – a point that has been poignantly driven home by the Libyan and Ukrainian crises.²¹ I believe that this challenge can infuse new dynamism into the EU story. But what precisely is the new mobilizing narrative to consist of? The IAI

¹⁸ Sven Biscop and Jo Coelmont, *Europe, Strategy and Armed Forces. The Making of a Distinctive Power*, London and New York, Routledge, 2012; Jolyon Howorth, "The EU as a Global Actor, Grand Strategy for a Global Grand Bargain", in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (March 2010), p. 455-474.

¹⁹ Heiko Biehl, Bastian Giegerich and Alexandra Jonas (eds.), *Strategic Cultures in Europe. Security and Defence Policies Across the Continent*, Wiesbaden, Springer VS, 2013.

²⁰ Irish and French misunderstandings about neutrality and NATO.

²¹ Anand Menon, *Divided We Fall? Europe in a Changing World*, JCMS Annual Lecture, New Delhi, 24 March 2014.

framework paper talks about the EU “punch[ing] its full weight as a 21st century global power,” and of projecting the EU’s “full economic, strategic and normative weight in its neighbourhood and beyond.”²² What exactly does that imply? Is a “21st century global power” different from global powers in the 19th or 20th centuries? On 1 March 2014, at the height of the crisis over Ukraine, John Kerry said, “You just don’t in the 21st century behave in 19th century fashion by invading another country on completely trumped up pretext.”²³ Really? Are we forgetting Grenada in 1983? Have we forgotten Iraq in 2003? And Barack Obama opined, “In 2014, we are well beyond the days when borders can be redrawn over the heads of democratic leaders.”²⁴ Yet Vladimir Putin, in his speech in the Kremlin on 18 March 2014, clearly relished reminding the US of its own 2009 written statement to the International Court of Justice over Kosovo: “Declarations of independence may, and often do, violate domestic legislation. However, this does not make them violations of international law.”²⁵ Since 1945, there is no question that the “international community” has made substantial progress in embedding state practices in international law, and in operationalising international institutions as the default framework for inter-state relations. But traditional power politics has not been transcended and great powers continue, when it suits them, to deploy that power in traditional ways.²⁶

The EU is not good at thinking about power. The word itself – significantly – is absent from the 2003 Security Strategy document. It was remarkable that the High Representative, in her report to the December 2013 European Council, made a real effort to face up to the world as it is rather than to one reflecting EU wishful thinking:

The world as a whole faces increased volatility, complexity and uncertainty. A multipolar and interconnected international system is changing the nature of power. The distinction between internal and external security is breaking down.

²² Nathalie Tocci and Giovanni Faleg, “Towards a More United and Effective Europe: A Framework for Analysis”, cit., p. 2.

²³ Rebecca Kaplan, “John Kerry warns of consequences for Russia after Ukraine invasion”, in *CBS News*, 2 March 2014, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/john-kerry-warns-of-consequences-for-russia-after-ukraine-invasion>.

²⁴ The White House, *Statement by the President on Ukraine*, 6 March 2014, <http://wh.gov/lykXU>.

²⁵ Russian Presidency, *Address by President of the Russian Federation*, Moscow, 18 March 2014, <http://eng.news.kremlin.ru/news/6889>.

²⁶ Robert D. Kaplan, “The Old Order Collapses, Finally”, in *Stratfor Global Intelligence*, 21 May 2014, <http://www.stratfor.com/sample/weekly/old-order-collapses-finally>.

Complex layers of governance and new patterns of interdependence empower new players and give rise to new challenges. As a result, state power is becoming more fragile. Among the drivers for this are: changing demographics and population growth, embedded inequalities, and new technologies.²⁷

Ashton, arguing that these developments “warrant a strategic debate among Heads of State and Government,” went on to argue that one of the EU’s top priorities through CSDP must be “to protect its interests and project its values by *contributing to international security, helping to prevent and resolve crises* and including *through projecting power* (emphasis in original).”²⁸

Unfortunately, but not entirely surprisingly, the Heads of State and Government, in their Council Conclusions, chose to avoid altogether any mention of strategy or power projection, instead focusing on the challenge of developing military and civilian capacity.²⁹

Ashton, however, was right. In order to generate a new grand narrative, Europeans need two things. First, they need to be absolutely clear – and in agreement – about the overall direction of systemic trends in international affairs. Is there a difference between the nature of and the deployment of power in the 19th century and in the 21st, and if so what is it? Second, they need to decide what outcome they might wish to favour from among the various options on offer and then to know how best to go about securing that outcome. Political scientists and international relations scholars have long theorized that major power transitions tend to be accompanied by military conflict.³⁰ As the stakes currently seem to be on the rise in Eurasia, the East China Sea, the Near East, and elsewhere, this issue acquires huge salience, especially in the context of the US “tilt” to Asia. Scholars such as John Ikenberry have argued that the liberal international order put in place after World War II is sufficiently strong and resilient to be able to co-opt the rising powers into its logic and institutions while making no significant concessions to those new emerging

²⁷ *Final Report by the High Representative/Head of the EDA on the Common Security and Defence Policy*, Brussels, 15 October 2013, http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131015_02_en.pdf.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ Sven Biscop and Jo Coelmont, “Defence: The European Council Matters”, in *Egmont Security Policy Briefs*, No. 51 (December 2013), <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/?p=8816>.

³⁰ A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2nd edition, New York, Knopf, 1968.

powers.³¹ Others have insisted that there is no way the rising powers will allow themselves to be co-opted, and have stressed the need for the West to strike a “global grand bargain” with the Rest in order to avoid military conflict.³² Giovanni Grevi has a slightly different European variant on this approach, which he calls “inter-polarity.”³³ Still others, such as Charles Kupchan, envisage a global order in which, for the first time in history, no one power will exercise hegemony or dominance and in which there will be multiple and quite different pathways to modernity and no single international system.³⁴ Robert Kagan and Robert Kaplan, for their part, continue to see a Hobbesian world reflecting naked power.³⁵ Any new EU narrative will need to engage with these perspectives in order to devise a strategy for the EU. The key pitfall to be avoided is that of inadvertently contributing to a new order that will be competitive, conflict-prone, and zero-sum. The Ukrainian crisis is a case in point. The new narrative informing the EU’s global action might therefore be: “to facilitate and help engineer a peaceful transition towards a new consensual global order.” That might be a narrative with which no EU member state could reasonably disagree, and therefore a good starting point for reconsidering the ways in which leadership of CSDP might be rethought. But first, what is the problem?

3. The Crisis of CSDP

What is the “crisis of CSDP”? It is rather different from the crises of the EU itself or of the eurozone, the key features of which are accurately and well defined in the framework paper. There is one key similarity between CSDP and the eurozone in that both policy areas were launched on a whisper and a prayer, with the elites present at the launch knowing

³¹ G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan. The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2011.

³² Robert Hutchings and Frederick Kempe, “The Global Grand Bargain”, in *Foreign Policy*, 5 November 2008, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2008/11/04/the_global_grand_bargain.

³³ Giovanni Grevi, “The Interpolar World: A New Scenario”, in *EU-ISS Occasional Papers*, No. 79 (June 2009), <http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/the-interpolar-world-a-new-scenario>.

³⁴ Charles A. Kupchan, *No One’s World. The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2012.

³⁵ Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*, New York, Knopf, 2008; Robert D. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, New York, Random House, 2012.

perfectly well that the political conditions for ultimate success (unity, effectiveness and governability) were simply not present at the outset.³⁶ These policy areas/projects were launched above all as a political signal to whoever was paying attention. The signal indicated that the EU was confident of the direction in which it was heading and also hopeful that if these policy areas at some stage ran into problems, these would be resolved by some great leap forward. That is the situation in which the EU found itself in 2011/2012 with regard to both of these key policy areas.

However, unlike in the case of the eurozone – where the problem was that a common currency simply *cannot work* in the long term without a strong measure of fiscal harmonisation, banking oversight, budgetary transparency and many other technopolitico-institutional mechanisms – the problem with CSDP was not technical design fault. Rather, it was that the policy area itself, by 2011/2012, seemed to have run out of steam. The available energy of EU officials was being taken up by the eurozone crisis and there wasn't any left for much else. The member states were in any case "missioned out," having been engaged in no fewer than 26 missions between 2003 and 2008, and many of them had also been or still were heavily involved in Iraq and Afghanistan. No new mission was launched between 2008 and 2012, with the (partial) exception of a small training mission for Somali troops (in Uganda). The High Representative, appointed in 2009 to head up the CSDP project, considered it a low priority, and was largely absorbed by the creation of the EEAS. It was no surprise, therefore, that when the Arab Spring erupted CSDP appeared to many to be irrelevant, rather like a cow grazing in a field, watching a passing train go by. Some analysts even pronounced it "dead."³⁷ With these challenges in mind – and they are considerable – let us proceed to an assessment of how (or whether) the creation of a "core CSDP leadership" might change the situation.

³⁶ Each of these policy areas goes to the very heart of sovereignty – as does that of borders and frontiers (Schengen), which is also currently undergoing turbulence.

³⁷ Anand Menon, "European Defence Policy from Lisbon to Libya", in *Survival*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (June-July 2011), p. 75-90; James Rogers and Luis Simón, "The New 'Long Telegram': Why We Must Re-found European Integration", in *Long Telegrams*, No. 1 (Summer 2011), <http://www.ies.be/files/Long%20Telegram%201.pdf>.

4. The Membership and Degree of Integration of the Core

The absence of any clear (or agreed-upon) view of policy objectives – the absence of *strategic vision* – has important consequences for the definition of the core. Since there is no clear agreement on what CSDP is attempting to *achieve* in the international arena (and how), then it is highly problematic to identify the core. To date, CSDP has largely *reacted* in ad hoc fashion to distress signals, mainly from the Balkans and Africa. If the problem is relatively minor and the member states can turn it into an opportunity (the DRC in 2003, Bosnia in 2004), then CSDP kicks in. If the problem is a major one and/or the stakes are considered high (Lebanon in 2006, Congo in 2008, Libya in 2011, Ukraine in 2014), then CSDP remains dormant.³⁸ This could be perceived as “strategy by default” in that CSDP missions become self-defining. But we should not delude ourselves that any of these missions were pro-actively or strategically selected.

The problem of identifying the core therefore boils down, at one level, to that of knowing *what the objective of CSDP is*. Let us start at the high end. If the objective, as articulated by the July 2013 French Senate report on the future of CSDP, is to create a core “Eurogroup” whose task is to generate an “genuine, integrated, collective European defence system capable of protecting its own territory and citizens independently,”³⁹ then clearly, as proposed in this report, the core would have to be France and the UK, acting according to a “breakaway strategy” (i.e. outside of the Treaties) and inviting into their orbit a number of associated member states. In the Senate’s view these would be first and foremost Germany (because of its size and because of the centrality of the Franco-German motor),⁴⁰ and, in

³⁸ Katarina Engberg, *The EU and Military Operations. A Comparative Analysis*, London and New York, Routledge, 2014; Annemarie Peen Rodt, *The European Union and Military Conflict Management. Defining, Evaluating and Achieving Success*, London and New York, Routledge, 2014; Benjamin Pohl, *EU Foreign Policy and Crisis Management Operations. Power, Purpose and Domestic Politics*, London and New York, Routledge, 2014.

³⁹ French Senate Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Armed Forces, “Let’s Get Rid of ‘Europe of Defence’. Towards a European Defence”, cit., p. 48. See also the similarly ambitious report by Philippe Esper et al., *Eurodéfense: pour une relance de l’Europe de la défense*, Paris, Editions Unicomm, 2009.

⁴⁰ The report recognizes that France may require “strategic patience” in order to bring Germany along... (p. 49).

a “second wave,” Italy, Poland and Spain. We thus wind up with the *Weimar Five*, plus the UK.⁴¹ This line-up is identical to that proposed by President Sarkozy in 2008, with the same six “big” European states.⁴² That proposal was, at the time, considered to be arrogantly dismissive of a number of somewhat less sizeable, but nevertheless equally “CSDP-active,” states such as Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and even Ireland. Even when we set a clearly articulated objective, therefore, there is little agreement on who exactly should be involved in leadership.

Nevertheless, within this “high end core,” there is a clear “inner core,” widely identified as consisting of France and the UK. The November 2010, Anglo-French “Lancaster House” Treaty on Defence and Security Cooperation underscored recognition in both London and Paris that these two would-be global players and permanent members of the UN Security Council could only continue to aspire to global player status if they combined their military efforts in a number of highly strategic sectors: aircraft carriers, transport aircraft, nuclear submarines, military satellite technology, drones, expeditionary forces, and eventually combat systems. The fundamental question sparked by this development among experts was: would this Franco-British cooperation act as a *complement* to CSDP or as an *alternative*?⁴³ Would those member states less keen to play a military role (either through CSDP or through NATO) see this as an incentive to continue to free-ride? France and the UK together account for around 45% of the collective EU defence spending of the 28 member states.

However, would this “high end core” leadership attract followers? Appropriation, by CSDP, of NATO’s historic core purpose of collective European defence may well be an objective nurtured in Paris.⁴⁴ It is emphatically not an agenda item in London, and would encounter

⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 48-49.

⁴² Nicolas Sarkozy, *Ensemble*, Paris, XO Editions, 2007.

⁴³ Ben Jones, “Franco-British military cooperation: a new engine for European defence?”, in *EU-ISS Occasional Papers*, No. 88 (February 2011), <http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/franco-british-military-cooperation-a-new-engine-for-european-defence>; Anand Menon, “Double Act: Anglo-French Defence Co-operation Pact”, in *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, February 2011, p. 24-27, <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/my-esrc/grants/RES-062-23-2717/outputs/Read/adcdc180-c893-4cc2-82ae-2f5c8ceb9146>.

⁴⁴ The “Europeanisation of NATO” was an intriguingly ill-defined objective of Hubert Védrine’s 2012 report on France’s reintegration of the military structures of the Alliance. See Hubert Védrine, *Report for the President of the French Republic on the Consequences of France’s Return to NATO’s Integrated Military*

serious resistance in many other EU capital cities. Franco-British partnership in security and defence – whatever its ultimate objective – is primarily a *bilateral* rather than a *community* project. And although there is a great deal of Franco-British cooperation taking place on the ground,⁴⁵ it is far from clear where it is going strategically or politically – or even in terms of procurement.⁴⁶ It cannot, under existing political and strategic circumstances in Europe, be substituted for a *common* EU security and defence policy.

If, on the other hand, setting the sights slightly lower, the objective of CSDP, as initially stated in the Saint-Malo Declaration of 1998, is to allow the EU to “play its full role on the international stage [with] the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so,”⁴⁷ then the core must include all those member states which can contribute seriously to that objective. To date, that has, in theory at least, embraced all member states except Denmark, which secured an opt-out from CSDP at the Maastricht Treaty, but which is currently reconsidering this option.⁴⁸ An examination of member state participation in CSDP operations over the first ten years confirms that by and large, and controlling for size, all EU member states, with very few exceptions, have contributed to both military and civilian operations.⁴⁹ Denmark,

Command, on the Future of Transatlantic Relations, and the Outlook for the Europe of Defence, 14 November 2012, <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/global-issues/defence-security/french-defence/international-organization-in/nato/france-and-nato/article/hubert-vedrine-report-submitted-to>.

⁴⁵ Alice Pannier, “Understanding the workings of interstate cooperation in defence: an exploration into Franco-British cooperation after the signing of the Lancaster House treaty”, in *European Security*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (2014), p. 540-558.

⁴⁶ Claire Chick, “Make-or-Break Year for a Partnership: 2014 may show if France, UK are serious”, in *Defence News*, 27 January 2014, p. 21, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20140127/DEFREG02/301270045>.

⁴⁷ Text available in Maartje Rutten (ed.), “From St-Malo to Nice. European defence: core documents”, in *Chaillot Papers*, No. 47 (May 2001), p. 8-9, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/from-st-malo-to-nice-european-defence-core-documents>. The ESS of 2003 implies similarly high ambitions, although it fails to deliver a succinct quotable statement of those ambitions.

⁴⁸ Lisbeth Kirk, “Danish Opposition Agrees to Quick EU Referendum”, in *EUobserver*, 12 August 2013, <http://euobserver.com/political/121082>. According to this article, 55% of Danes are in favour of scrapping the opt-out on CSDP.

⁴⁹ Giovanni Grevi, Damien Helly, Daniel Keohane (eds.), *European Security and Defence Policy. The First Ten Years (1999-2009)*, Paris, EU-ISS, 2009, p. 414-415, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/esdp-the-first-10-years-1999-2009>. The most significant exceptions have been Cyprus and Malta, whose contributions to both military and civilian missions has been close to zero, as well as the Baltic states and Luxembourg, whose contribution has been disproportionately small, even allowing for limited size and resources.

incidentally, has carried more than its fair share of the burden in civilian missions.

However, the fact that (practically) all member states contribute actively does not help to resolve the problem of core leadership. The “core” cannot be all member states. Here, there are two issues. In a series of interviews conducted in 2007 of all of the (then) twenty-seven ambassadors to the Political and Security Committee,⁵⁰ I was told repeatedly that, whenever there was any issue of significance on the agenda, the majority of the permanent representatives waited to hear what their UK, French and possibly German colleagues had to say. If the division within the leading member states was beyond salvation, then the matter ended there.⁵¹ If it was not, then the task of the other ambassadors was to facilitate agreement. The point here is simply that, if the “big three” are significantly divided on a political basis, then there is no measure of institutional tinkering that can fix that problem. If, however, they are agreed, the chances are that all member states will step in line.

The second issue has to do with the type of operations favoured by CSDP. In the early days after Saint-Malo, in part because that was a Franco-British initiative, the emphasis was on *military capability* and missions. Yet, within a couple of years, this emphasis had been relativized by the introduction of the concept of Civilian Crisis Management (CCM). The concept of CCM did not make its mark until the Helsinki European Council meeting in December 1999, when the term was first used in the Presidency Report. In particular, in the Annexes to that report, there were specific recommendations on what was referred to as the “non-military crisis-management” of the EU. This somewhat negative framing of the concept set the tone for discussions on civilian capabilities over the next two years. These were clearly seen as a *complement* to or as *subordinate* to the military capacities to which Helsinki gave its name. To this extent, the unintended consequences of the introduction of specific CCM policy instruments, under the impetus of the EU’s less militarily-inclined member states, have resulted in an overall mix of civilian and military aspects to CSDP which is undoubtedly very far removed from what Blair and Chirac had in mind at Saint-Malo.⁵² Three of the first five CSDP missions were indeed military missions.

⁵⁰ In fact, twenty-eight since the Commission representative was also interviewed.

⁵¹ It is relatively rare that such an impasse develops because such an issue would most likely not have been placed on the agenda in the first place. This is another institutional pitfall that argues against trying to get around the problem via institutional creativity.

⁵² Anand Menon and Ulrich Sedelmeier, “Instruments and Intentionality: Civilian Crisis Management and

Yet, that early statistic gave a very misleading impression of the real footprint of CSDP. Only three further military missions were mounted between 2004 and 2014, compared with a total of twenty-eight missions which, while not being 100 percent “civilian,” were all basically “non-military.” CSDP’s tortuous relationship with NATO, which has involved endless and inconclusive arguments about a hypothetical “division of labour” (the Alliance doing heavy military lifting and the EU concentrating on small-scale civ-mil operations), and the ongoing debate over how the EU might enter into new forms of cooperation with the Alliance will be discussed below. But the fact that CSDP has *de facto* evolved into a practice massively dominated by overseas missions in which high-intensity military capacity is rarely required suggests that the Saint-Malo ambitions for CSDP, as defined above, are no longer seen as the core function of this policy area.

If that is the case, and if the purpose of CSDP is to act as a small-scale European crisis management mechanism conducting mainly civilian missions as a complement to NATO, then the core might be very different. Countries such as Germany, Finland, Romania and Sweden have contributed disproportionately to civilian missions to date. Could they conceivably replace France and the UK as the dominant force in such a core?

One other candidate for a leadership role that is occasionally raised is the traditional driver of European integration: the Franco-German couple, which has always driven the most important policy areas of the European Union. However, in the area of defence, this has not been the case. Too many major areas of divisiveness prevent convergence: history, nuclear weapons, overseas expeditionary warfare, approach to civilian-military synergies, strategic culture in general. The experience of the Franco-German Defence Commission and the Franco-German Defence Committee in the 1980s and early 1990s was extremely disappointing to both sides. The much-trumpeted Eurocorps has remained a dormant shell. Throughout the 1990s, France moved ever closer to the UK and ever more distant from Germany. During the 2000s, France nevertheless tried hard to involve Germany more actively in CSDP expeditionary missions, such as the 2008 EUFOR Chad mission, the leadership of which Paris more or less forced onto a reluctant Berlin. By the end of that

Enlargement Conditionality in EU Security Policy”, in *West European Politics*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (January 2010), p. 75-92; Peter Viggo Jakobsen, “Small States, Big Influence: The Overlooked Nordic Influence on the Civilian ESDP”, in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (January 2009), p. 81-102, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2008.01833.x>.

decade, France had begun to despair of Germany ever closing the gap between her own hesitancy and France's exuberance. Paris prioritised London as the key partner. However, since 2012, the picture has changed again. Britain has reneged on one key aspect of the Lancaster House Treaty (aircraft carriers), made increasingly anti-European noises (referendum), had second thoughts about intervention in Syria, and generally gone into limbo. Germany, on the other hand, has been active with France and the broader Weimar group in pressing for a EU OHQ and, more generally, in continuing to promote CSDP. At the Munich Security Conference in February 2014, several German speakers flew the kite of more pro-active German leadership in foreign and security matters. Yet although one hears more and more senior French officials saying quietly that France has to prioritise the German defence partnership over the British,⁵³ it is not at all clear whether there is much substantial mileage in this.

The "wild card" in many of these scenarios is the position of the United Kingdom. The decision taken by Prime Minister David Cameron to attempt to renegotiate Britain's role in the EU cannot but have potentially serious implications for the UK's future role in CSDP. Whether or not the UK, by accident or design, finds itself leaving the formal structures of the EU, the defence and security conundrum facing the Union will remain exactly the same. Experts are often asked: could the EU develop a robust security and defence capacity without the UK? The answer comes in two parts. The first is that CSDP without the UK would inevitably be a much lesser reality than it would be if the UK were fully involved. The second is that, because the European defence and security project arises out of the movement of history's tectonic plates, CSDP would have no alternative but to continue to develop, even without the UK. Indeed, it might even develop more rapidly because the "British brakes" would be removed. By the same token, the UK, because it is a significant defence player geographically situated in Europe, would have no alternative but to continue to have some sort of relationship with CSDP. This might involve the negotiation of a special status for the UK (similar to that of Turkey?) within the European security project. But whatever the precise nature of such an arrangement, the UK would clearly henceforth wield significantly less clout in CSDP than it has to date. There would be a serious cost to pay in terms of the UK's influence over this crucial policy area.⁵⁴

⁵³ The speech by General Gilles Rouby to the Parliamentary conference on CSDP in July 2013 explicitly called for a Franco-German leadership in CSDP.

⁵⁴ Julian Lindley-French, *Little Britain? Twenty-First Century Strategy for a Middling European Power*, Mel-

Therefore, the answer to the first question posed by the IAI's framework paper is that it remains extremely difficult to determine the membership of the core, whichever scenario one assumes. Furthermore, the degree of integration of this elusive core is itself a victim of the political and strategic conundrum of identifying CSDP's ultimate objective and purpose. With that difficulty in mind, we move to the second question about the relationship between the core and the non-core.

5. The Relationship Between the Core and the Non-Core?

Assuming CSDP stays in business, it is hard to imagine a "non-core" which stands idly on the margins or elects to write cheques rather than to deploy forces. A "security community" is indivisible, especially when the smaller, weaker member states are also the most vulnerable (for example the collective policing of Baltic air space). In the mid-2000s, after the debates in the Constitutional Convention that generated the concept of "permanent structured cooperation" (PESCO), there was much discussion of the creation of a "vanguard" group of countries that would be committed to taking CSDP to a "higher level." Initially driven by France, this concept was explicitly intended to opt for quality rather than quantity and to divide the EU member states, for CSDP purposes, into more active and more passive members, on the assumption that, in time, all would eventually "catch up." The UK was opposed to such an approach, having only agreed to the launch of CSDP on the understanding that it would aim to generate the maximum possible military capacity – and that meant squeezing every last drop out of every member state. Article 42(6) of the Lisbon Treaty nevertheless states that

Those Member States whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments to one another in this area with a view to the most demanding missions shall establish permanent structured cooperation within the Union framework.

bourne, Wilkinson Publishing, 2014; Jolyon Howorth, "The UK & Europe: In or Out of Security and Defence Policy?", in John Drew and Martyn Bond (eds.), *The UK and Europe: Costs, Benefits, Options. The Regent's Report 2013*, London, Regent's University, 2013, p. 189-197, <http://www.regents.ac.uk/europereport>.

The procedures whereby member states may enter into permanent structured cooperation are laid out in detail both in the main body of the Treaty and in a Protocol. Although the procedure has never been formally activated, the debate around its intentions led to widespread acceptance that it must be as *inclusive* as possible.⁵⁵ The procedure itself remains in limbo.

One way in which, despite their differences in terms of size, strategic culture and resources, the member states are beginning to cooperate to drive forward the acquisition of civil and military capacity is through the so-called “clusters” approach. This is a quite different phenomenon from PESCO, but it is one in which the member states are self-consciously organising themselves into a small number of relatively like-minded groups for purposes of cooperation. Tomas Valasek has theorised a number of “bottom line requirements” for cross-border defence cooperation to thrive. The first is a measure of commonality in strategic culture. The second is an important degree of trust. Every participant to a cooperative venture fears either entrapment (being sucked into a conflict it would not have chosen) or abandonment (being jilted at a critical moment). This has been the reality in NATO since 1949. Trust can only be built with time and experience. The third factor is that the cooperating nations should be of roughly the same size and quality. Fourth, there needs to be a level playing-field for defence industries, since cooperation will suffer if one partner is perceived to be protecting its national champions at the expense of the other(s). Seriousness of intent is a fifth requirement, and the absence of corruption in the procurement process is a sixth.⁵⁶ These elements have tended to come into play in the growing number of cooperative clusters that have appeared in recent years.

The Franco-British couple is the most obvious example, and we have already assessed its internal tensions. Recently, there has also been intensive cooperation between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, five countries with very different relations to NATO and to the EU. Norway and Iceland are members of NATO but not of the EU; Sweden and Finland are members of the EU, but not of NATO; Denmark is a member of both

⁵⁵ Sven Biscop, “Permanent Structured Cooperation and the Future of the ESDP: Transformation and Integration”, in *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (November 2008), p. 431-448.

⁵⁶ Tomáš Valášek, “Surviving Austerity: The Case for a New Approach to EU Military Collaboration”, in *CER Reports*, April 2011, <http://www.cer.org.uk/node/75>.

organisations, but has an opt-out from CSDP.⁵⁷ And yet they actively seek cooperation. A third example is offered by the Benelux countries, which have a long tradition of cross-border cooperation. The Belgian and Dutch navies share an integrated command and feature common training and maintenance operations. This model is perceived by partners as offering scope for similar endeavours such as governance, education, training, control of the Benelux airspace and other matters, where cooperation has been successful. This particular cluster of countries is also deeply interested in extending cooperation to both France and Germany.⁵⁸

A fourth example of a cooperative cluster is that of the Visegrad countries (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic). While the driver of this experiment is probably as much NATO as it is the EU (countries that wish to demonstrate their loyalty as US allies), the range and variety of cooperation projects is encouraging, and the potential for pooling and sharing is felt to be considerable.⁵⁹ In June 2012, a broader grouping of Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia formed the Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC) initiative.⁶⁰ It is unclear how coherent this grouping might prove to be given the rather different agendas of the Czech Republic, which focuses massively on NATO, and Austria, which clings to its neutrality. Finally, there is much ongoing cooperation between France, Germany and Poland in the context of the “Weimar Triangle”⁶¹ and also,

⁵⁷ Alyson J. K. Bailes, Gunilla Herolf and Bengt Sundelius (eds.), *The Nordic Countries and the European Security and Defence Policy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, http://books.sipri.org/product_info?c_product_id=239. See also the official website of Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO): <http://www.nordefco.org>.

⁵⁸ Sven Biscop et al., “The Future of the Benelux Defence Cooperation”, in *Clingendael/Egmont Reports*, April 2013, <http://www.clingendael.nl/node/4307>.

⁵⁹ Tomáš Valášek and Milan Šuplata (eds.), “Towards a Deeper Visegrad Defence Partnership. DAV4 Full Report”, in *CEPI Policy Briefs*, 15 November 2012, <http://www.cepolicy.org/node/169>.

⁶⁰ Xymena Kurowska and Bence Németh, “The Central European Playground: Who Plays What?”, in *Long Posts*, No. 6, 22 May 2013, <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2013/05/playground-central-europe>; Michal Onderco, “Misreading the European Playground”, in *European Geostrategy*, 5 June 2013, <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2013/06/misreading-european-playground>. See also Kurowska and Németh’s response to Onderco: “The Central European Playground: A Rebuttal”, in *European Geostrategy*, 5 July 2013, <http://www.europeangeostrategy.org/2013/07/central-european-playground-rebuttal>.

⁶¹ Cornelius Adebahr, “The Comprehensive Approach to Crisis management in a Concerted Weimar Effort”, in *Genshagener Papiere*, No. 6 (March 2011), http://www.stiftung-genshagen.de/fileadmin/Dateien/Publikationen/Genshagener_Papiere/Genshagener_Papiere_2011_06.pdf.

increasingly, between Portugal and Spain.⁶² The point about all of these examples is that, in most cases, the countries involved are all trying, in different ways, to ensure that *they will not be consigned or relegated to the “non-core,”* while recognising that the precise definition of “the core” remains a work in progress. One concern with the clusters approach (precisely because it lacks an overall strategic framework) is that it will eventually deliver capacities that might prove sub-optimally useful in terms of their collective coherence and contribution to the overall CSDP endeavour. This simply reminds us of the importance of overall leadership. This model does bear some resemblance to the “patchwork core Europe,” except that the different patches are far from similar either in size or in the quality of their respective capacity offerings. Moreover, in theory at least, they are temporary, expedient arrangements designed in the near future to come back together in a more coherent whole.

If we accept that, within the 28 member states of the EU, there is really no way either of designating a clear CSDP “core” or, *ipso facto*, of defining a clear “non-core,” we are left with the recognition that the relationship between the different players, either as individual nation states, as proximate “dyads” or “triads,” or as clusters, remains relatively indecipherable. All are members of CSDP *because* they are members of the EU – and because the EU has designated CSDP as a priority policy area from which (with the partial⁶³ and perhaps temporary exception of Denmark) none wish to be excluded. The problem for CSDP, as I have indicated, is not so much one of institutional recalibration as of lack of clarity about the *core purpose*. This poses, very directly, the question of the relationship between CSDP and NATO. It is in part because of the *coexistence* of CSDP and NATO that the core purpose of the former remains elusive – thus making it difficult to grapple with the question of leadership.

From the very outset, CSDP was predicated on *autonomy* – from NATO (and, therefore indirectly, from the United States).⁶⁴ As the Cold War wound down after the traumas of the INF crisis and as the hot war in Yugoslavia raged out of control, the desire among

⁶² *Joint Statement: 26th Spain-Portugal Summit*, Madrid, 13 May 2013, http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/IDIO-MAS/9/Presidente/News/2013/20130513_SPAin_Portugal.htm.

⁶³ Note that Denmark is fully represented by its ambassador on the Political and Security Committee.

⁶⁴ Jolyon Howorth and John T.S. Keeler (eds.), *Defending Europe: The EU, NATO and the Quest for European Autonomy*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

many Europeans for *security autonomy* became overwhelming. US unilateralism had profoundly rocked European elites in the mid-1980s. NATO's very existence was a daily reminder of the second-class status suffered by Europeans in this policy area. Kosovo merely intensified that sentiment. US injunctions about burden-sharing cut no ice with allies whose free-riding tendencies had become part of their DNA. The forlorn attempt to discover some mechanism *from within* NATO that would allow the EU to borrow US assets for missions Washington did not wish to be associated with (the European Security and Defence Identity – ESDI) reinforced the growing sense that NATO was part of the problem rather than part of the solution. The only way Europeans were ever going to step up and take some measure of control over the security and stability of their neighbourhood was through an autonomous initiative. This was the thinking that animated both Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac at Saint-Malo (albeit driven by different logics). It was overwhelmingly predicated on the perceived need *to empower* the EU.

The quest for autonomy in the 21st century was driven by two main considerations. The first was that the EU should be free to decide on its strategic objectives according to policies set in Europe rather than in Washington. There was a widespread expectation (indeed, it was widely asserted – especially by Tony Blair) that these objectives would be entirely compatible with NATO. But the *political principle* of strategic autonomy was fundamental. The second driver was the belief that, as long as European military capacity was generated within and through NATO, most Europeans would simply free-ride on the US. Only through a EU agency and project, it was argued, would Europeans be prepared to stump up for the military capacity they so sorely lacked. At one level, this was primarily a question of *leadership*. As long as the US agreed to lead, the Europeans were happy to follow – at minimal cost to themselves. In NATO, there was always an undisputed leader. Beyond that leader, the “core group” (informally referred to as the “quad” – the US, the UK, France and Germany) was clearly identified and accepted by the other member states. One problem with CSDP, as we have seen, is that there has never been any real agreement on leadership. Through NATO, Europeans lost the habit of leadership – and therefore of thinking strategically.

Equally significantly, the promise of autonomy has remained unfulfilled. There has been no meaningful crafting of a European strategic doctrine or grand strategy. And there has been very limited development of new, usable, European military – and even civilian

– capacity. As we saw with Libya in 2011 and with Ukraine in 2014, CSDP was simply nowhere to be seen. The Libyan operation was formally “badged” by NATO – albeit with the US fictitiously “leading from behind” and half the member states opposed to the mission. With respect to the West’s response to Russian moves in Ukraine, on March 26, 2014 President Obama explicitly reasserted NATO’s primacy. It is not clear at the time of writing (late May 2014) what possible purpose (other than symbolic) NATO might serve in Eastern Europe, but that is another question.

Despite its assertion of autonomy, CSDP has welcomed and embraced inputs from the non-EU member states of NATO (US, Canada, Turkey and Norway), all of which have participated in one or several CSDP missions. In one sense, these countries might be thought to constitute the “non-core.” But that perspective merely opens up a legal and operational Pandora’s box, which is highly prejudicial to overall security arrangements in Europe. It is a truism that the “Berlin Plus” arrangements have proven to be at best dysfunctional, at worst a farce. Institutionally, there is a fundamental legal obstacle to harmonious relations between CSDP’s EU member states and the non-EU members of NATO. This arose at the very outset of the CSDP story when Norway and Turkey, strongly supported by the US, pushed very hard for the continuation of the previous arrangements within the WEU that gave Ankara and Oslo a serious part in decision-making via that body.⁶⁵ It was probably a strategic mistake on the EU’s part not to have made some early juridical/institutional concession to Turkey and Norway whereby they could assume some meaningful status within the institutions of CSDP. But this did not happen, and relations have been seriously soured by fifteen years of standoff. Norway has successfully negotiated an “opt-in” to the activities of the EDA, but any such role for Turkey is blocked by Greece and Cyprus. It is not beyond the bounds of the imagination to revisit the 1999 decision to enshrine what Madeleine Albright called “discrimination” against Turkey and Norway, but it would be awkward and messy and is probably unnecessary.

A better approach would be to completely rethink the much broader framework of institutional arrangements between the EU/CSDP and NATO. It is becoming widely acknowledged that, post-Libya (and all the more so in light of events in Ukraine), CSDP

⁶⁵ Willem van Eekelen, *Debating European Security, 1948-1998*, The Hague, Sdu Publishers; Brussels, CEPS, 1998.

and NATO need to cooperate with one another intensively.⁶⁶ This approach must be understood in the broader context of the US “pivot to Asia,” the Obama doctrine of the US encouraging other regional actors to take greater responsibility for their neighbourhood,⁶⁷ the US financial crisis and swingeing defence budget cuts, and a constant barrage of signals from Washington DC that the EU must transform itself into a consequential security actor. Both NATO and CSDP are currently in a state of existential self-interrogation. What does it mean under those circumstances to insist that CSDP should remain autonomous? As one who initially argued strongly in favour of autonomy, in order for CSDP to breathe life into itself, I now believe the EU should cooperate intensively with NATO in order to turn their joint efforts into an effective and appropriate *single regional capacity* for the stabilisation of what I call the “greater European area.”⁶⁸

There are three distinct options for the recalibration of the CSDP-NATO relationship. The first is for CSDP simply to cease to exist, to admit failure, to abandon its fifteen-year project, and for the appropriate EU member states to free-ride, for their security and even their existence, on the United States, via NATO. This is an unseemly prospect for a Union that constantly repeats its intention to be a subject rather than an object of history. Nor would it be an option that would be welcomed by the US given the pressure on the EU to assume its strategic responsibilities. The second option for CSDP is to continue to attempt to carve out a workable relationship with NATO *as a separate and autonomous entity*. That option presents many challenges. Why would another twenty years produce markedly better results for CSDP than the last twenty? As long as the two organisations remain, or are kept, rigorously distinct, the confusion over “core purpose” and therefore over “core” and “non-core” membership will persist. There will be a strong tendency to adopt an

⁶⁶ Maya Kandel and Jean-Paul Perruche, “Now or Never: The Way to a Credible European Defense”, in *Paris Papers*, No. 2 (2011), <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/content/download/153083/1551257/file/Paris%20Papers2.pdf>; Jo Coelmont and Maurice de Langlois, “Recalibrating CSDP-NATO Relations: The Real Pivot”, cit.; Sven Biscop, “The Summit of Our Ambition: European Defence Between Brussels and Wales”, in *Egmont Security Policy Briefs*, No. 55 (March 2014), <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/?p=12911>.

⁶⁷ David Rohde, “The Obama Doctrine”, in *Foreign Policy*, 27 February 2012, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/27/the_obama_doctrine.

⁶⁸ I would define the “greater European area” as covering, in addition to the EU itself, the immediate EU borderland, plus the hinterland to that borderland. In other words, the entire territories between the EU and Russia, which takes us from the Arctic to the Black Sea and to the Caspian basin, from the Red Sea to the Straits of Gibraltar and down to the vast expanses of the Sahel.

uneven and inequitable division of labour – with NATO doing the heavy military lifting and CSDP serving as a mere back-up organisation for minor civilian and civ-mil missions. That again will prove unsatisfactory both to the US and to the EU and will not resolve the issue of the “core” and the “non-core,” and still less the issue of leadership inside CSDP.

A third CSDP-NATO option is for CSDP progressively to merge with NATO and to take over primary responsibility for key NATO functions. This also presents a number of major challenges and is predicated on two crucial assumptions. The first is that the United States is serious about encouraging the Europeans progressively to become consequential players, essentially responsible for taking on the leadership of stability and security in the greater European area. There are reasons to believe that this is not wildly unrealistic. Why would Americans continue to assume the burden and expense of carrying the security of the Europeans (who are more numerous and wealthier than they) in an era of austerity and retrenchment and when the world of 1947-49 has moved on several times? The US “decline” has been seriously exaggerated, but even Washington now has to make real choices and to focus its attention on strategic priorities.⁶⁹ In spring 2014, twice as many Americans (61%) believed the US should not get involved in resolving the Ukraine crisis as believed it should (32%).⁷⁰ In the short and medium terms, it is reasonable to expect that the United States will be prepared to continue to underpin NATO for a transitional period. But there are two caveats. First, it will do so increasingly reluctantly, especially if the Europeans persist in shirking their historical and strategic responsibilities. Second, the US will not do so indefinitely. However, if the Europeans are seen to be taking control of their own destiny and neighbourhood, then there are reasons to believe that the US will be willing to share and eventually even to transfer responsibilities to the Europeans, who will progressively become the major stakeholder(s) in the “Alliance.” This is a major assumption that can be neither proved nor disproved other than by testing it. That would be a gamble. The second assumption is perhaps even more difficult to make. It is that the EU member states (collectively) *would agree* progressively to shoulder the responsibilities of regional security and stabilisation, provide the resources that shift would require and take over from the US the burdens of leadership. If the EU intends to become a

⁶⁹ Michael Mandelbaum, *The Frugal Superpower. America's Global Leadership in a Cash-Strapped Era*, New York, PublicAffairs, 2010.

⁷⁰ Sarah Dutton et al., “Poll: Most say U.S. doesn’t have a responsibility in Ukraine”, in *CBS News*, 25 March 2014, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/poll-most-say-us-doesnt-have-a-responsibility-in-ukraine>.

consequential regional security player, it has no alternative than to become a military (and civilian-military) power. That can only happen if the political, operational and institutional confusion between NATO and CSDP is resolved. Policy proposals along these lines will be offered in the final section of this paper.

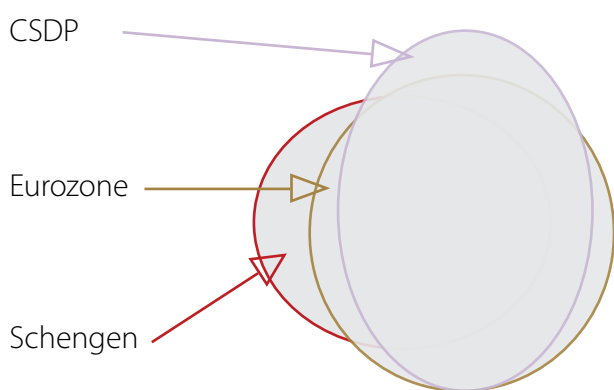
6. Which Model of Governance Best Applies in the Case of CSDP?

Concentric circles: This model does not quite fit as far as CSDP is concerned. It is based on the notion of a *permanent separation* between the core (whose members are clearly defined) and a non-core (among whose members, presumably, there is close convergence if not an identity of views on their relationship to the core and on their desire to remain outside it). It is this latter notion that is especially problematic. There is, in my view, no way that a sizeable majority (or even a sizeable minority) of EU member states would wish to remain permanently outside the core of CSDP – or even that the core would wish (or allow) them to remain outside. On the contrary, the reality seems to be that all EU member states hanker to be part of the core, even though their inputs and commitment vary considerably. The variability in geographic space does not affect the desire to be part of the core. What it does affect is the core purpose of the policy area (what the framework paper calls “matter”). The centripetal/centrifugal dimension does not really apply. No member state is trying to break away (with the possible exception of the UK), but then neither is there a discernible dynamic to transfer political decision-making authority from the member states to Brussels. The process of “Brussels-isation” in foreign and security policy (Council Secretariat, High Representative, Political and Security Committee, EUMS, EUMC, EDA) has remained resolutely inter-governmental and the member states, to date, have firmly resisted transferring any *serious* power to the EU.

However, the move towards greater “federal” decision-making procedures and structures in the eurozone core would almost certainly have a knock-on effect in the area of security and defence, if only because it would relativize the value of “sovereignty,” tie the external policies of the core member states in competition, trade, economics and banking more closely together, and progressively redefine the stakes in foreign and security policy. The

extent to which this would persuade member states to move robustly in the direction of pooling, sharing, rationalising and eventually integrating their security and defence capacity would almost certainly depend to a large extent on other external “events” (Ukraine/Crimea serve as a useful reminder of the inescapability of external shocks).

Multiple clusters: This seems to be an appropriate model when applied to the entire range of major policy areas covered by this project. If CSDP were to be considered as one of the overlapping circles, the innermost core corresponding to the members of the eurozone, then the second zone would cover a further ten countries, and the area left entirely outside would contain Denmark. The area covered by the core therefore needs to be much larger and the outer sections much smaller, as in the chart below.



This would make the overall issue of governability for the EU less fraught than is implied in the framework paper. Moreover, the potential spill-over into defence from an intensified, quasi-federal impetus in economics and finance would be likely to work in similar ways to that posited in the concentric circle model. In many ways, this seems a relatively accurate rendering of the reality of overlapping policy communities

that already exists across the EU, and which has been theorised by Vivien Schmidt as the EU becoming a *region state* in which there are certain state-like features and powers but also many policy areas continuing to depend to a large extent on intergovernmental agreements between nation states.⁷¹ But the issue of *CSDP governability* would not really be affected by the reinforcement of this model. As was made clear above, that issue depends overwhelmingly on the resolution of two problems: the definition of a strategic core purpose for CSDP, and its relations with NATO.

⁷¹ Vivien A. Schmidt, *Democracy in Europe. The EU and National Politics*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2006.

Hub and Spokes: This model does not really apply to CSDP, for two reasons. First, it is predicated far too heavily on the “UK heresy” becoming more widespread. There are no signs that this will happen. Denmark (which some might think would be a candidate for *suivism*) has already explicitly ruled this out. The UK is unique, for reasons of history, geography, culture, politics and identity. No other country is likely to follow this approach. Turkey might wind up finding itself in a comparable situation to that of the UK (for different reasons) but that would still only give two spokes. The second reason is that the spokes would be relatively insignificant in relation to the hub, whereas in a bicycle wheel (the presumed analogy) they are actually vital. It is inconceivable that the UK would agree to be “a spoke” in a CSDP wheel. It will either be central or not at all. There are, therefore, no discernible centrifugal forces at play in the CSDP policy area.

The patchwork core: This model cannot be applied to security and defence. The example given of energy policy may have some salience. But the defence example of “functional clusters uniting over specific questions related to strategy, operations, capabilities or industry”⁷² breaks CSDP down into too many sub-divisions to make sense. It is true that the geographical clusters referred to above look on the surface as though they fit the model. But as noted above, these clusters are temporary and expedient and designed to promote greater overall coherence. The model looks and sounds inherently centripetal rather than centrifugal.

7. Policy and Institutional Innovations

The key problems for CSDP remain its mythical “autonomy” from NATO, its sub-optimal relationship with non-EU NATO member states (especially Turkey), its inability to generate a clear strategic vision or doctrine, its inadequate generation of usable capacity and its ad hoc, reactive approach to overseas missions. All these problems could be solved by a move towards intensive cooperation and an eventual merger with a transformed NATO (probably with a new name) in which Europeans would progressively assume greater and greater responsibilities and leadership. This recast alliance would be focused almost

⁷² Nathalie Tocci and Giovanni Faleg, “Towards a More United and Effective Europe: A Framework for Analysis”, cit., p. 19.

exclusively on the “greater European area,” and the US, during a medium-term transitional period only, would play an important enabling role. Gradual institutional innovations might include the following:

- The North Atlantic Council should be re-designated as the supreme political forum for overall strategic dialogue between the main geographical areas of the Alliance and comprise one member each from the US, the EU, Canada, Turkey and Norway.
- The Political and Security Committee would assume responsibility for the political control of greater European area operations.
- A “policy framework” would be elaborated jointly via CSDP and the NATO Defence Policy Planning Process.⁷³
- The post of SACEUR would be assigned to a different handpicked officer with each separate mission that is undertaken. Sometimes it would be an American flag officer but most often – and increasingly – it would be a European.
- Allied Command Transformation would be merged with the European Defence Agency, the merged entity being based in Brussels, and with a significant US liaison mission. This would effectively merge the two initiatives of “pooling and sharing” and “smart defence.”
- A European Security Council would be established to draft a quadrennial *European Security Strategy* focusing on strategic foresight, conflict prevention and crisis management procedures, including the elaboration of a “comprehensive framework” doctrine.
- At the highest level, a direct EU-US Partnership Council, made up of former heads of government or heads of state and key ministers would discuss the entire range of EU-US cooperation on all policy issues (trade, economics, culture, agriculture, intellectual property, environment, transport, etc.) and also those which are currently – and inappropriately – taking up time in NATO (climate, energy security, cyber etc.).

⁷³ Thanks to Sven Biscop for elaborating this idea in “The Summit of our Ambition...”, cit.

8. Conclusion

The challenges facing CSDP stem largely from the ill-defined core purpose of this policy area and from the increasingly illogical and unworkable structural/political relationship that has developed between CSDP and NATO. The institutional questions and prescriptions formulated in the IAI framework paper offer interesting insights into the specificity of CSDP as opposed to the other policy areas being assessed by this project. But it is not through a process of new institutional architecture that CSDP's current weaknesses can be fixed. The problem remains fundamentally *political*. It is also strategic in the sense that the world around the EU is changing rapidly – and not for the better. Unless and until the EU's member states acquire a firm grasp of the processes of power transition that are taking place not only in their immediate neighbourhood but around the globe, and unless they make a resolute collective decision to become actors in those processes rather than bystanders or spectators, CSDP will continue to remain a work in progress which still has a very long way to go.

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Imagining Europe

As the unprecedented financial crisis and ensuing economic recession push Europe to the brink, a critical question arises as to what the foreseeable trajectories for EU governance are in the decades ahead. The crisis has already accelerated EU policy and institutional evolution in key policy areas, but the integration project remains torn apart by centrifugal political and economic forces. The “Imagining Europe” series aims at delineating what kind of governance models the EU could head towards, and which of these models is best suited for the purpose of a more united, effective and legitimate EU. In particular, the research sheds light on the degree and nature of integration at the “core” of Europe and the relationship of that core with those member states (current and future) which opt to remain outside it. It does so by exploring five policy areas: fiscal and monetary policy, infrastructure and communications, security and defence, migration and citizenship, and energy and environment.