

EWG 10 – “The EU as a Global Actor for Peace”

“CFSP’s Structural Options for the Twenty-First Century”

1. INTRODUCTION

Possessing a 25% share of the world GNP and 20% of international trade, the European Union (EU) cannot opt out of the international scene. Europe’s position on the world stage is indispensable as a safeguard for its values and in the defense of its interests. Nevertheless, the basis on which Europe’s security and economic development were built is rapidly changing. The new international environment of today demands new policies. We believe it is important therefore, to start a debate over what kind of global player, Europe as a political entity, wants to be.

The current debate within the different member-states is frequently polarized in their opinions. On the one hand, there are those who make the case for a strong, independent Europe contributing to a worldwide international multipolar system. On the other hand, there are those who stand for a European Union, sustaining only transatlantic, institutional dialogue and links.

Eurodefense believes that a more harmonized West provides Europe with better conditions to face the challenges of the twenty first century. We are convinced that the United States have had an important role in raising and developing Europe’s place in the world. We further believe that a mutually reinforced partnership, based on historical common values and interests is still indispensable for world peace and prosperity. However it is also necessary for us to determine more precisely what should be the European Union’s specific global role. The starting point must be that Europe defines its own interests and views, independent of any outside political pressure and international institution.

To state our position unequivocally, we shall concentrate on three main areas:

- 1) The International Framework;
- 2) The European Union in a World Context;
- 3) Constraints and Opportunities.

2. THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The five main threats identified in the European Security Strategy - ESS (December 2003) are:

Terrorism;

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD);

Regional conflicts;

State failure and organized crime.

These threats and other fundamental challenges like the destruction of our natural environment, the poverty and the spread of disease in the developing world or the nuclearisation (proliferation) issues demonstrate that Europe is part of a globalized world.

All of them have a transnational nature, namely the ideological struggle that feeds Islamic fundamentalism and its connections to organized crime and state sponsored terrorism. The proliferation of WMD is seen as the greatest threat to the security of the democratic world. Consequently, Europe can no longer behave and act as it did during the Cold War, when its security was based on territorial defense and when it was at the center of East-West confrontation. Be it economic, technological or cultural, borders are disappearing. Europe must therefore understand the nature of the threats we face and must take a lead to combat them.

Europe must achieve a position of sufficient strength and influence in the world in which we live today. It is necessary that Europe understands that it is losing its central position. The balance of global power is shifting in two directions, from the West to the East and from a Transatlantic Axis to a Transpacific one. The rise of new economic powers, such as China, India, Brazil and South Korea, suggests a more diverse and polarized world. Europe's position, the feeling, created by our history, of being 'at the center' is today out of date. The countries of the Pacific Rim are the new and rising hub of the world.

The United States, still remaining great power, has been one of the generators of this transformation. When it reaffirms old alliances, namely with Australia or Japan, on its way to become a "normal power", or signs treaties with more recent partners such as India and Brazil, based on an understanding of common interests and values, it is extending the reach of the new global order.

A "community of democracies", to which Europe belongs, but it is not the center, is rising and can lead to two major achievements: to help facing *global* threats and to

foster an international order capable of dealing with some powers were they seek to become rivals to the system. It seems that this is the framework where Europe needs to build its strategy.

3. THE EUROPEAN UNION IN A WORLD CONTEXT

Europe has an essential role in the creation of the 'community of democracies'; first because the countries of the EU were the founders of the system of political life we now enjoy, namely free, modern, liberal democratic principles; second because of its success in creating, peaceful integration from the time it started, Europe has become a role model for other regional organizations that have set out to achieve all that we now have and so solve their problems by peaceful means.

More important perhaps, the EU has, through the attractiveness of its institutions influenced several countries, on its periphery to make profound internal reforms towards democracy. The most evident example is the transformation operated in countries, that twenty years ago were part of the Warsaw Pact and are now member states of the EU and NATO. Europe's influence has a long reach. From the Balkans to Turkey, several states have made considerable democratic progress with their systems of government thus gaining the right to belong to the 'European club'. Moreover, other non-European countries have reformed with freer economies, enabling them to establish privileged economic and political relations with the EU.

The European Union is 'an island of peace', that can become a role model to the rest of the world. In other words, the 'Western Concept' is indispensable, still making sense today. There are also cases of other countries, forming the 'concert of democracies' that look to the EU as an example to be followed.

Europe in its new international context can, as the challenges of the 21st century demand, provide at both regional and global level a fundamental tool to strengthen the framework of the United Nations, also to stimulate and help the development of the 'community's way' both inside and outside the European Union, with other democracies that are our natural partners. Europe also has the opportunity and inspiration to be a role model for other regional integration processes that are trying to follow the European model.

We must emphasize another important component of the argument. For a long time, Europe has enjoyed an internal security framework provided by United States' military power. However, the future poses serious restrictions to the maintenance of the European position.

This highlights the need for a continuing transatlantic partnership but containing a more meaningful European input. Both in the context of the EU-US strategic partnership and as an independent actor, the states that compose the EU must acquire military and non-military capabilities, such that we are taken seriously by all other countries. The EU has to be prepared to develop its own defense and security, in order more fully to participate in the broader military context and to contribute to the maintenance of world peace and stability.

Furthermore the EU possesses a diverse and wider spectrum of instruments for crisis management than any other regional organization. Added to this we believe that in those nations where others might have a less favorable image, Europe's input can be seen as a welcome alternative.

4. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Considering again the two primary roles of Europe already mentioned, namely its place in the community of democracies and the powerful influence it is able to exert, we believe it is not only possible but also necessary that the EU takes appropriate measures to achieve its global role. By understanding its place in the framework of the community of democracies, Europe could and should drive the pace of positive change of international institutions. It will, we believe, be demanded of Europe to play a greater role in international and global matters than heretofore. This has already happened, via NATO, with the recent military engagements in Afghanistan, via the framework of the EU, in the Democratic Republic of Congo and via a UN mandate in south Lebanon. This then is the environment in which the EU can and must take a lead and must build a new common foreign and security policy.

As will be expected, the greatest constrain to a new and workable ESDP is internal divergence that can occur between member states. A meaningful European policy depends on capabilities and will. It is necessary therefore to create a common foreign agenda, capable of reconciling internal European positions. To achieve this, the best course of action is we believe, to address a small number of issues where a congruence of interest can be found, or as the European Commission recommends, "a clear focus on a limited number of strategic priorities, where Europe can make a difference, rather than dispersing efforts across the board" (COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION to the European Council of June 2006, *Europe in the World – Some Practical Proposals for Greater Coherence, Effectiveness and Visibility*).

We now give the main points, at the institutional level, that we believe Europe should focus on, in order to develop its foreign policy agenda: -

Deepening Trans-Atlantic Relations

The deepening of Trans-Atlantic relations, recently shaken by the invasion of Iraq, is we believe indispensable in its wider context to the European agenda

The consultation process, based on a clear cut definition of European common interests, on the one hand and on willingness for a multilateral approach and compromise on the other, must be restored and developed.

The bilateral institutional framework of partnership on both sides of the Atlantic, especially outside the NATO security partnership, is too narrow. In order to maintain a long-term vision and commitment that goes further than the present concept of annual meetings, it is necessary to understand and deepen the different areas of cooperation

In order to cover the multitude of major threats to our global security, convergence could be promoted within NATO, after European member's concertation, by an intense dialogue in a high level group (USA-EU), on a number of major threats to our global security.

Security and Defence

The closer deeper partnership envisaged above has to address the relationship between NATO and the ESDP. To be a global actor, Europe must organize and develop its military capability in harmony with the North Atlantic Alliance. NATO is progressively becoming a security organization, not exclusively a defense organization, as was the case during the Cold War. Although not in formal relationships, NATO from time to time includes for certain operations, nations outside of Europe. A debate has revolved around the inclusion, among others, of new global partners such as Australia and Japan. Today, NATO tends to reflect an alliance of democracies, rather than geographic alliances.

The EU should ask itself the question, what role will it play in the future? The answer must include better coordination with NATO, with new ESDP instruments, such as the European Defense Agency, by an adequate capability to conduct Petersberg operations, where Europe's know-how can reinforce its value and by the priority of EU deployments close to home.

Militarily, this indicates a high level of interoperability between the European and American armed forces. During the last five decades, Europe's security and the

European process have been assured by the NATO's umbrella. If the EU intends to be a global actor for peace, it must take an active part of in the decision process. It is time to give a more effective contribution to the collective effort. An increase of European capabilities and a willingness to share burdens is imperative, enabling the EU to have a greater say in the decision making process and more strongly to influence the North Atlantic Alliance.

Simultaneously, to play its full role on the international stage, to defend its values, to protect its interests and to respond to international crises particularly when the USA and some other partners are not involved, Europe should continue to develop its capacity for autonomous assessment, decision making and action, as stated by the European Council of Helsinki and Cologne in 1990. Action must be backed by a credible military capability and means to decide how to use them in the best way.

The European Neighbourhood

Europe has to develop a more effective 'neighbourhood agenda'. As already mentioned, the example of the EU has been a powerful driver for domestic reform in a number of neighbouring countries, that around twenty years ago were communist dictatorships. As the European Union has decided, in the future, to enlarge, it is important to maintain a policy of firm support for candidate and 'pre-candidate' states. The EU must set up a constructive and peaceful partnership with Russia, based on a commitment of respect for human rights, peaceful relations with neighborhood countries in Europe and Central Asia and on a clear strategy of mutual interest for energy supply. Other countries in Eastern and South Eastern Europe, in the Caucasus and in Central Asia must also be involved in this process. It is however countries to the south where lies the major challenge.

The European Union and the Muslim World

The EU needs a specific agenda to deal with Muslim Countries, especially the sensitive and complex area stretching from Morocco to Pakistan. Western foreign policy in the Middle East has been driven, most of the time, by US initiatives. The conflicts and instability that have characterized this region have, however, a deep impact on Europe where millions of Muslims live and work.

The Middle East has a number of unsolved problems, i.e. the enduring conflict between Israel and Palestine, now among Palestinians themselves and more recently, the Afghan, Iraq and Lebanon conflicts fostering Islamic fundamentalism and violent Jihadism. Radical Islamic terrorism is operating today on a global scale influencing radical movements, in Europe.

Another issue of growing concern in the Middle East is the volatile increase in ethnic and religious divisions, leading to greater tension between the Sunnis and Shi'as. The radicalization of their positions is of growing concern to the more stable countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

The Middle East has become a maelstrom, with a vortex that is easily transformed by simple external stimuli. It is a many faceted mirror that reflects and influences developments in the Muslim world, with a pernicious external impact.

In consequence, we believe that Europe needs a wider and more comprehensive vision and approach to the problems, which transcend the 'neighborhood policy'.

Africa and the Mediterranean Area

To keep and deepen the Mediterranean and African dialogue must also be a European priority. Africa provides both opportunity and challenge. On the one hand, Africa has a variety of resources that offer opportunity; on the other hand, it is a fertile soil for the sort of state failure that gives rise to the development of terrorism and organized crime. As well, Africa is the origin and real conduit for immigrants looking to Europe for a better life. In an important step to create dialogue mechanisms between the two continents, Europe has developed an important initiative to build a specific market area that will come into effect in 2010. This will be significant in strengthening the dialogue that already exists between the two continents. Economic and cultural development, good governance and connection to the global economy are some of the building blocks, which will develop stable and peaceful societies.

Europe and the emerging powers

Currently, new world powers, such as India and China, are emerging on the international scene. Today is the first time that countries own the three essential economic development factors simultaneously, i.e. cheap labor; technological know-how and the will for power.

Other countries such as Brazil are becoming more affirmative, and will probably exert a greater influence in the future.

Maintaining its high standard of the values of democracy, plus its respect for human rights, shared with some of the BRIC countries, the EU should continue to make every effort to build and sustain peaceful relations with each of them.

5. FINAL NOTES

In sum, we have shown the particular elements, that in the context of the 21st century have we consider, relevance, for the EU as global actor for peace. These are:-

- **A concrete common foreign, security and defense policy in the European Union**

The European Union has to act as a unified entity in foreign affairs issues. The EU states have to acquire military and non-military capabilities, which will be taken seriously by other nations and it should continue to develop its capabilities for autonomous action backed by a credible military capability.

- **A strategic partnership with the United States of America**

To promote interests and share efforts, within an institutional framework that provides a deeper relationship between the two sides of the Atlantic, Europe needs a partnership that allows for more consistent vision in the longer term.

- **Cooperation with NATO**

On the way to be a global actor EU should develop and organise its military capacity. The EU and NATO should develop a meaningful strategic partnership and organize mutual military capabilities with coherence and cooperation.

- **European Neighbourhood**

Europe must develop a more effective neighbourhood agenda including a constructive and peaceful partnership with Russia, based on a commitment of respect for human rights, peaceful relations with neighbourhood countries in Europe and Central Asia plus a clear strategy of mutual interest on energy security of supply.

- **The Stabilization of the Muslim World, Especially the Wider Middle East**

In a framework of cooperation with Europe, a clash of civilizations with Islam must be avoided.

- **The Share of Responsibilities in an International Order of Democracies**

With the main goal being to obtain a more stable international, affinity, regional transparency and cooperation must always be to the fore.

- **The development of cooperative relations with the emerging Powers**

The world is watching the raise of potential new powers. China and Russia are examples but they are in the future, far from being unique. Others such as India, Indonesia and Brazil will tend to become more affirmative. Europe's good relations and strategy of cooperation with these countries, building bridges between them, is certainly a way to contribute to a future of peace.

In our opinion, these are the fundamental goals for a successful European common foreign policy, thus guaranteeing the UE a role, as an effective international actor for peace, in the twenty first century.

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