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The 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) was a political landmark and a remarkably prescient document. The current preparation of an EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS) led by HR/VP Federica Mogherini is an opportunity to rectify one glaring omission: the document altogether ignored the nexus between the liberal, open order it wished to promote on a global scale, and the state of governance *in Europe*.

Democracy taken for granted?

Indeed, the creators of the ESS blithely assumed that this question had been resolved once and for all. The text reads:

'The creation of the European Union…has transformed the relations between our states, and the lives of our citizens. European countries are committed to dealing peacefully with disputes and to co-operating through common institutions. Over this period, the progressive spread of the rule of law and democracy has seen authoritarian regimes change into secure, stable and dynamic democracies. Successive enlargements are making a reality of the vision of a united and peaceful continent […] the increasing convergence of European interests and the strengthening of mutual solidarity of the EU makes us a more credible actor.'

In other words, the ESS took for granted that the pluralistic, democratic, and rights-regarding governance it wished to see established worldwide – and which it rightly identified as a key precondition for Europe's external security – had been permanently hardwired into Europe's operating system, thanks in large measure to the European Union itself.

This was a colossal mistake, as recent events have proved. Vicious disagreements over the future of the eurozone, the conflict with Russia over Ukraine, and the refugee crisis have starkly exposed the divergence of interests, historical memory, and values within Europe. They have chipped away at solidarity and sidelined the EU as an actor in foreign and security policy. The ESS never did spell out the precise details of what a 'united and peaceful' Europe should look like. Still, this clearly is not it.

Our democracies do not appear so secure, stable, and dynamic anymore either. Across the continent, authoritarian or extremist movements and parties are playing on voters' fears, poisoning civic discourse, taking public spaces hostage, and putting governments on the defensive (except where the authoritarians are already in power). Nor is their purpose merely to shoulder in and secure a place at the trough of representative politics for themselves. The radicals do not object, per se, to parliamentary immunity or government handouts. But this is also about principles. Their ultimate goal is to kick the system over and smash it: to make way for illiberal rule.

'Without functioning social contracts and robust representative democracy, there can be no security in Europe – or coming from it.'

Menaces to the liberal order

These forces, while undoubtedly home-grown, do have their outside supporters. Not China, apparently: while it is quick to pit EU governments against each other when its interests require it, it doesn't seem to object to their liberal constitutions. But Islamic fundamentalists revile everything Europe stands for – secularism, pluralism, women's rights, gay marriage – and use terrorism to strike at its heart.

Russia's leaders, with good reasons of their own to fear fundamentalist Islam, nonetheless find themselves in full agreement as far as things to hate about Europe are concerned. The result: Russian troll onslaughts on European social media websites, Russian funding for right-wing parties, government-backed cybercrime, or manufactured outrage over allegations of crimes against Russian immigrants.

The ESS offers scant guidance on how to frame such menaces to liberal order in Europe. On the external front, it notes that 'large-scale aggression against any Member State is now improbable' (that remains unlikely, but it has returned rather prominently to NATO's calculations). Instead, it lists five 'threats': terrorism, WMD proliferation, regional conflicts, state failure, and organised crime. Only the first and the last are of direct concern for Europe's *domestic* security.

Oddly even for 2003, the strategy does not connect these concerns to states, preferring to pin-point non-state actors – apart from a stern warning to countries which have 'placed themselves outside the bounds of international society' and which, in case of recalcitrance, 'should understand that there is a price to be paid.' Presumably this was intended to cause consternation in Pyongyang or Tehran.

It's a safe bet that no one envisaged Russia annexing Crimea, fomenting war in eastern Ukraine, undermining governance in Kiev and the eastern European neighbourhood, and forcefully exploring the vulnerabilities of the European Union. It was even less reasonable to suppose that the former superpower's belligerence could be linked to a growing internal failure of governance – leading it to employ asymmetrical methods of aggression more commonly used by terrorists.

The new EUGS must recognise the nature and the urgency of these new threats to the European project. Even more crucially, it must comprehend that their external and internal variants share a key common element: the fear and anger of those who are left stranded in the wake of globalisation (or believe they might be). Without functioning social contracts and robust representative democracy, there can be no security in Europe – or coming from it.