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editorial

European strategy as a model

Nicole Gnesotto

Director

In these days of troubled transatlantic relations and a failed IGC, the adoption by European heads of state and government of a common security strategy deserves praise. Under the aegis of Javier Solana, the recent infighting among the twenty-five over America's strategy of pre-emptive action, the legality of the use of force and military intervention in Iraq has been transformed, in the space of a few months and a few pages of text, into a truly common European vision of the world and the Union's role in it. If one has to find something positive that has emerged from the Iraq crisis, it is that it at least permitted the Union to lay aside one of its old taboos and work out its own concept of international security in a collective, consensual and autonomous, in short European, way. Four conclusions can be drawn from this.

■ The idea of Europe as a purely civil power is behind us. The great debate of the 1980s over Europe as a civil power or a military power definitely seems to be a thing of the past: nobody any longer challenges the Union's need to be able to act externally in all fields as a global player that can call upon a complete range of resources, including military.

■ However, what the Union intends to become is a sui generis power. There is a clear European consensus that military power is to be seen as one means among others to be used on the international scene, neither the only one nor the first: 'none of the new threats is purely military; nor can [they] be tackled by purely military means'. That is why this European strategy cannot be seen as a doctrine of military intervention. The Union is neither a civil power nor a militaristic one, and it is somewhere between the extremes of Venus and Mars that it is developing its own strategy for dealing with international threats and crises.

■ Globalisation calls for a global approach to security. According to the European vision, the socio-economic root causes of threats are

inseparable from their direct violent or military manifestations, and what holds good for an analysis of the threat also does so for the necessary response: the political resolution of regional conflicts – in particular the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – development aid and support for democratic forces in all crises form part of the wide range of instruments available, along with means for applying coercion by force.

■ Preventive engagement and effective multilateralism are thus the two pillars on which the European security strategy rests. Acting before crises erupt, acknowledging the primary responsibility of the UN Security Council in the maintenance of peace and security, and defending and developing international law – principles that have from the outset underpinned the Union's external actions – now formally benefit from the greatest possible degree of consensus.

■ Does this mean that European and American strategies are poles apart? Things are not quite so simple: it is evident that the Europeans do not share America's ideology of 'rogue states' and the 'axis of evil', nor its obsession with military technology as a response to the new threats, nor, quite obviously, its mistrust of multilateral institutions, beginning with the UN. On the other hand, when it comes to identifying the strategic agenda for the coming decades the two have broadly similar priorities: international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are at the forefront of Europe's concerns. Similarly, the Europeans are aware that multilateral professions of faith are not sufficient when dealing with states that threaten world peace: to be effective, the multilateral system's means for applying sanctions and coercion need to be strengthened. European conservatism regarding principles – especially the principle that international security presupposes

The Institute and the Union

■ **EU security strategy.** Having been tasked by the High Representative to coordinate three workshops on the draft EU security strategy paper 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', on 6-7 October the Institute (Martin Ortega) held a second workshop, in Paris, entitled 'The EU's strategic objectives: effective multilateralism and extended security'. The seminar was attended by experts and officials from over thirty countries including the United States, as well as NATO representatives.

■ This followed a first seminar, on threats, held in Rome (Aspen Institute Italia) on 19 September. The third in the series, 'The EU Security Strategy: Coherence and Capabilities', was held in Stockholm at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on 20 October.

■ Reports of these three workshops have been widely distributed within EU member states. They can be accessed directly at the Institute's website.

■ The final version of Javier Solana's document was officially adopted by the 25 heads of state and government at the European Council of 12/13 December 2003 with the title 'A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy'. As one of the Institute's missions is to enrich the strategic debate and promote a common European security culture, we have decided to distribute copies of the document together with this issue of the *Newsletter*.

■ **Armaments.** Following its Communication on a European defence equipment policy (March 2003), the European Commission established a 'Group of Personalities' to develop a long-term vision for an EU security research programme. The Group consists of representatives from industry, the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council, intergovernmental bodies and research centres. Burkard Schmitt of the Institute is acting as rapporteur for the Group, whose findings will be published in spring 2004.

The Institute and the Union

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■ **The Balkans.** On 19 October Lord Ashdown, the EU's Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, briefed a small group of selected specialists on current developments in and prospects for Bosnia-Herzegovina, at the Institute.

Seminars

■ **Transatlantic.** On 17 November a transatlantic conference 'Transatlantic security cooperation: facing the new challenges' organised by the Istituto Affari Internazionali and the EUISS (Gustav Lindstrom), was held in Rome. Attended by some sixty diplomats, researchers, academics and officials, it focused on EU and US strategic concepts, EU-NATO cooperation, armaments cooperation and future trends in the transatlantic link.

■ **Proliferation.** The Institute (Dov Lynch) participated in the organisation of a major inter-parliamentary conference, led and financed by the European Commission and held at the European Parliament, Strasbourg, on 20 and 21 November. The conference was organised in the spirit of the G-8's Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, and under its French presidency.

Institute publications

Transatlantic Book 2003

■ As part of its work on transatlantic relations, the Institute published, in English only, *Shift or Rift: Assessing US-EU relations after Iraq*, by Nicole Gnesotto, Stanley Hoffmann, Antonio Missiroli, David Gompert, Jean-Yves Haine, Ivo Daalder, James Lindsay, Martin Ortega, Patrick Clawson, Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, Daniel Serwer, Gustav Lindstrom and Brian Jenkins; edited by Gustav Lindstrom (November).

Chaillot Papers

■ **No.65: *The South Caucasus: a challenge for the EU***, by Pavel Baev, Bruno Coppeters, Svante E. Cornell, David Darchiashvili, Arman Grigorian, Dov Lynch, John Roberts, Domitilla Sagramoso, Brenda Shaffer and Arif Yunusov; edited by Dov Lynch (December).

Institute publications

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Occasional Papers

- **No. 49: *EU cohesion in the UN General Assembly***, by Paul Luif (December).
- **No. 48: *Space and security policy in Europe: Executive summary***, by Stefano Silvestri, Rapporteur (December), a study funded by the European Space Agency.
- **No. 47: *EU and Ukraine: a turning point in 2004?***, by Taras Kuzio (November).

Forthcoming

- ***Chaillot Paper: Fighting proliferation - European perspectives***, edited by Gustav Lindstrom and Burkard Schmitt.
- ***Chaillot Paper: From Copenhagen to Brussels. European defence: core documents, Vol. IV***, compiled by Antonio Missiroli.
- ***Occasional Paper: Shaping an intelligence community within the EU***, by Björn Müller-Wille.
- ***Occasional Paper: Initiatives for crisis management in sub-Saharan Africa***, by Fernanda Faria.

External publications

Judy Batt

– 'The EU's new borderlands', *CER Working Paper*, October 2003.

Nicole Gnesotto

– 'Différences de perception de la dangerosité du monde', in Arthur Paecht (ed.), *Enjeux stratégiques, Les relations transatlantiques - de la tourmente à l'apaisement?* (Paris: IRIS, PUF, 2003).

– 'L'Europe et les Etats-Unis : raisons et leçons d'une crise', in Michel Dumoulin & Geneviève Duchenne (eds.), *The European Union and the United States*, Proceedings of the 8th Glaverbel Chair in European Studies 2002-2003 (Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2003).

Jean-Yves Haine

– 'The EU's Soft Power. Not Hard Enough?', *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, Winter/Spring 2004, pp. 1-9.

Antonio Missiroli

– 'The EU - just a regional peace-keeper?', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, no. 4, 2003.

– 'The EU and its Changing Neighbourhood: Stabilisation, Integration and Partnership', in Roland Dannreuther (ed.), *European Union Foreign and Security Policy: Towards a Neighbourhood Strategy* (London: Routledge, 2003).

Martin Ortega

– 'Some comments on the EU's Mediterranean policy', *Perceptions*, June 2003.

Burkard Schmitt

– 'Towards a European Defence Equipment Market?', in *The European Files*, no. 3.

New formulas for the Middle East

It is very difficult to tell a friend that he or she is wrong. And yet, pointing out our friends' mistakes is the best way to help them – even though this sincerity may not always be well received. In the Middle East, we the Europeans should tell our transatlantic friends that American policies are not working satisfactorily. The capture of Saddam Hussein or other positive developments on the ground will not offset the overall unstable situation in Iraq. Transition to democracy and independence are stuck in cumbersome negotiations between the Iraqi communities, and nobody can anticipate whether those negotiations will guarantee both the end of terrorism and territorial integrity. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, American mediation since the Aqaba summit last June has not led to practical measures for the application of the Quartet's 'road map'. Private initiatives, such as the unofficial Geneva peace accord, have been more instrumental in exposing the Israeli and Palestinian governments' short-sightedness than external pressure on the parties. Finally, President George W. Bush's policy of confrontation vis-à-vis Iran was not the best way of engaging Iran in the peaceful track. The trilateral British-French-German initiative of October 2003 has eased tensions and allowed for serious international action to curb possible Iranian nuclear proliferation ambitions.

Faced with American Middle East policies that are not attaining the desired results, the Europeans are too shy. True,

some of them are more vocal than others when they publicly criticise US policies. The trouble is that all of them are too timid when it comes to putting forward alternative policies. The Europeans should develop new proposals for the Middle East, elaborating on common grounds that already exist between them. They should ask themselves: what Middle East region do we want to have in 10-20 years' time?

The most difficult issue, of course, is Iraq, on which Europeans are divided. However, there is potential consensus on the crucial role that the United Nations must play in the transition towards democracy and independence. If transition is to be supervised in a neutral fashion, an increased UN role seems indispensable. Also, taking into account past colonial experience, the Europeans know very well that foreign military control of natural resources cannot be sustained forever. On the other hand, serious degradation of the security situation in Iraq would run counter to European interests. Therefore, it seems paramount to develop a new, more ambitious transition plan, whereby the international community would be directly involved in the political and economic reconstruction of Iraq and the Europeans should promote such a plan.

The Europeans basically agree on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and on how to deal with Iran. There is no credible alternative to a negotiated two-state solution to the former, along the lines of the Clinton parameters and Taba

negotiations. While the current Israeli and Palestinian governments do not seem ready to follow that path, the external actors, notably the United States and the EU, should insist on a peaceful resolution of the conflict that allows the two peoples to live side by side in peace. On Iran, the Europeans share the view that nuclear proliferation is unacceptable. However, constructive relations are possible if Iran respects human rights and international law.

In sum, the EU and its member states should define new formulas to stabilise the Middle East once and for all. The objective would be to offer peoples of the region the opportunity to organise their lives in peace both internally and internationally. To do that, the fatal circle of periodic outbursts of violence in the region must be broken.

An alternative European long-term project for the region would ultimately also benefit the United States. Indeed, both American and European interests in the Middle East would be best served if the region were stable and at peace. Hence the utility of the European input. In the Middle East, the Americans need the Europeans because the latter have innovative ideas (which the Americans do not acknowledge willingly). Reciprocally, the Europeans need the Americans because their ideas cannot be put to work without American muscle. Any convincing global political formula for the Middle East requires the appropriate combination of European expertise and American energy. ■

Martin Ortega

On-line/http

ESDP webpage: the Institute has added a special webpage on European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) to its website. It gives a detailed overview of ESDP and its ramifications, including the main elements of the policy, and provides definitions, facts and figures, some tentative assessments and references to official documents. All of the Institute's publications and reports on seminars can be accessed on the Institute's website: <http://www.iss-eu.org>.

Institute staff

Giuseppe Vitiello, Head of Documentation, resigned from the Institute at the end of December to take up an appointment in Rome as director of publishing at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità.

Briefings

On 22 October research fellows briefed a group of officials from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Institute.

Half empty

A few months and a couple of *Newsletters* ago, we described the outcome of the European Convention as 'half full'. After the failure of the Intergovernmental Conference to finalise a constitutional treaty for the EU, the contrary seems almost inevitable: never before, in fact, has an IGC ended in failure. What is more, the political and personal relations between the heads of state and government of the 25 look seriously damaged - which does not bode well for the coming months. Still, the future may turn out to be not so bleak, the glass not so empty.

■ Firstly, with the obvious exception of the modalities and scope for qualified majority voting, the IGC reached a tentative consensus on most of the 80-odd controversial points earmarked at the outset. Admittedly, they were (and still are) part of a package deal that was not finalised, so they cannot be considered an *acquis* of the IGC, a point from which to start again once the dust has settled. Yet the forthcoming Irish and Dutch presidencies would not have to start from scratch if and when they resume talks or negotiations on a constitutional treaty. If the prospect of a new Treaty of Rome has waned, why not dream of a new Treaty of . . . Utrecht, maybe?

■ Secondly, the IGC glass was almost full notably in the domain of security and defence. After a difficult start -

when the reverberations of European divisions over Iraq still influenced the attitude of most negotiating partners - sensible solutions were put on the table and basically accepted. This applies both to the mutual assistance clause (Art. III-214), whose latest wording seemed to meet all demands, and especially to the article on 'structured cooperation' on defence (Art. III-213). The ultimately converging formulations proposed by the Italian presidency and, jointly, by France, Germany and the United Kingdom, helped to clarify all the fuzzy elements in the original draft article released by the Convention (including the 'admission criteria' to be included in the relevant protocol) and dispel the fears expressed by some present and future EU members. In other words, the functional requisites and procedures for a better performing ESDP were essentially laid down, if not formally agreed.

■ Thirdly, ESDP has further proved to be fertile ground for viable and effective compromises, in that crucial deals have been struck in those policy areas that did not necessarily fall within the IGC domain. This applies to the 'permanent financial mechanism' for funding common military operations to be finalised by next March; to the Agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments, to be set up during 2004; and also to the military

planning headquarters for EU missions - an extremely sensitive issue on which (unlike the majority voting system) a willingness to find a balanced, workable and universally accepted solution eventually prevailed.

■ Finally, the glass is not entirely empty also because - as the case of the Agency shows - some, or perhaps many, of the new provisions regarding ESDP (and possibly CFSP) almost agreed upon by the IGC could well be put in place before, and arguably without, a brand new constitutional treaty. In fact, the enlarged Union may decide to implement whatever the Nice Treaty does not explicitly forbid - and arguably even more, especially if operational realities and imperatives call for quick and effective action.

This could apply even to 'structured cooperation', although Nice formally rules out enhanced cooperation on defence and military matters. In fact, if everybody was ready to subscribe to the revised Article III-213 (and attached protocol), why not include the key elements of that in the new headline goal for 2010 and make them a common policy target for *all* EU members? By doing so, the Union could also overcome the risks of preventive exclusion and discrimination that made it so difficult to achieve consensus in the IGC. ■

Antonio Missiroli

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an order based on rules drawn up by all and for all - therefore does not rule out pragmatism on the need for international law to evolve to meet the new threats. However, the Europeans never overstep the red line beyond which observance of the rule might become exceptional and exceptions the foundation of international practice.

■ *Allied but different is therefore how the Europeans see themselves, and that is how they behave: in the Iranian crisis, starting from a common aim of preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear state, Europe's approach, which has so far been quite successful, has been*

radically different from America's. Will the United States take umbrage or will it draw the relevant lessons? At a time when US strategy is coming up against the tragic reality of the complex situation in Iraq, will Americans be sensitive to the normative value of the approach taken by the Europeans? The answer will depend less on the Americans' capacity for introspection and self-criticism than on the Europeans' collective determination to defend, and prove in practice, the relevance and effectiveness of their own concept of international security. ■