



A EUROPEAN WAY OF WAR

Steven Everts, Lawrence Freedman,
Charles Grant, François Heisbourg,
Daniel Keohane and Michael O'Hanlon





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Contents

About the authors

Authors' acknowledgements

Foreword

1	Introduction	
	Steven Everts and Daniel Keohane	1
2	Can the EU develop an effective military doctrine?	
	Lawrence Freedman	13
3	The 'European Security Strategy' is not a security strategy	
	François Heisbourg	27
4	The American way of war: the lessons for Europe	
	Michael O'Hanlon	41
5	Conclusion: the significance of European defence	
	Charles Grant	55

Foreword



EDS has worked for many years in partnership with the ministries of defence and the armed forces on both sides of the Atlantic. We currently have colleagues stationed in the Middle East, in support of UK forces. We are, therefore, delighted to be supporting this new CER work, 'A European way of war'. In the best traditions of the CER, it has brought together key experts from both sides of the Atlantic to debate the future of European defence.

What is striking about the contributions is the high level of agreement on what Europe needs to do. They avoid the stereotyping of the US-Europe relationship as a division of labour in which – as François Heisbourg says – the US 'kicks in doors' and the EU 'cleans the house'. All agree that Europe must urgently improve its military capabilities if it is to translate the goal of "effective multilateralism" from rhetoric into reality. It must reduce the scale of its land armies and the number of duplicate equipment programmes. Europe must begin investing in technologies and equipment that complement rather than duplicate US investment. Equally, the authors highlight the lessons and experiences which Europe can offer to the US in the prosecution of unconventional warfare, for example in deterring insurgents and terrorists.

These essays provide a timely reminder of how the US and Europe are united by a common need to tackle global terrorism and proliferation, as well as their underlying causes. They all agree on the need for Europe to become a more effective military power and to take more responsibility for its own backyard. But they debunk some of the myths associated with the debate. All agree that Europe need not spend as much as the US or copy America's force structure and doctrine in every respect. As Steven Everts and Daniel Keohane stress, a European way of war does not mean either the creation of "an EU army under Brussels control, or the end of the NATO military alliance".

This work is a valuable contribution to the current debate on the future of European defence. Its prescriptions on how Europe can play an effective military role in world affairs deserve to be taken up by Europe's leaders.

Graham Lay

Managing Director
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1 Introduction

Steven Everts and Daniel Keohane

The idea of a ‘European way of war’ is controversial. Many defence commentators and officials assume that the phrase is a metaphor for two, equally undesirable, outcomes: an EU army under the control of Brussels and the end of NATO. The reality is that the EU will not have its own army for decades to come – if ever. Nor will NATO’s status as Europe’s pre-eminent defence organisation change any time soon. Most discussions on the future of European defence, when cast in such terms, generate more heat than light.

There is, however, a real need for Europeans to think more creatively about what kind of defence capability they want. What sorts of missions do they envisage? And how do they expect their forces to operate in the future? European governments need to make a tough assessment of the additional tasks they want their armies to perform, alongside traditional peacekeeping.

Clearly, Europe cannot hope to copy the American approach to warfare, with its heavy emphasis on technology and ‘full spectrum dominance’ – the ability to defeat any enemy in every conceivable category of weaponry. The budgetary constraints are simply too great. But equally, the Europeans should not try to emulate the Americans’ doctrine or force structure in their entirety – even if they had unlimited money – because Europe has very different strategic priorities. For a range of historical and political reasons, Europeans do not share all of America’s security policy goals. And yet American doctrine, tactics and capabilities remain the benchmark for nearly all European discussions on defence policy.

Such constant, and mostly unfavourable, comparisons with the US tend to create a harmful sense of impotence and resignation among European defence officials.

The European countries have very disparate military traditions, and they have great difficulties finding money for new defence equipment. Despite these problems, can European governments develop more innovative and ambitious defence policies? The answer is yes, but only if European defence ministries develop their own distinctive approach to warfare.

¹ *European Council, Brussels, 'A secure Europe in a better world – European Security Strategy', December 12th 2003.* The European security strategy, prepared by EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana, provides a good basis for thinking about a European approach to warfare.¹ But, as François Heisbourg points out in this pamphlet, that security strategy contains some glaring gaps. He argues that the EU should do three

things in particular: draw up a complementary strategy for the EU's internal security; audit the impact of European development programmes on security in recipient countries; and start working on an EU military doctrine.

In his essay, Lawrence Freedman questions the utility of an EU military doctrine, and concludes that it would be redundant. He thinks it unlikely that 25 European governments could ever agree on a meaningful doctrine. But Britain and France could take the lead, he argues, in defining a distinctly 'European' military contribution to dealing with global security problems. London and Paris are the only European capitals that have run their own military operations in recent years, sometimes in very demanding environments. And, unlike the other Europeans, the French and the British already have highly developed military doctrines of their own.

Freedman also argues that, even though the US is the world's predominant military power, European soldiers are often better than American ones at many of the missions that dominate contemporary

warfare: peacekeeping, nation-building and counter-insurgency. Thus the Pentagon could learn a lot from European experiences and ways of operating.

Our American contributor, Michael O'Hanlon, argues that the Pentagon is already learning fast from its post-conflict experience in Iraq. He stresses that stabilisation missions should not be seen as less important than those involving high-intensity warfare. And he argues that the greatest threat to the health of the US military in the coming years is insufficient numbers of troops to help with nation-building. He adds that the difficulties that US troops face when working with technologically backward European allies are a serious but secondary problem.

Freedman and O'Hanlon agree that both American and European armed forces need a better mixture of regular warfighting capabilities and peacekeeping skills. But politicians in Europe should take note – and take heart – that such improvements need not mean massive increases in defence budgets. The governments of the EU-25 collectively spend approximately €180 billion (\$220 billion) a year on defence, which is a significant amount of money.² For all its weaknesses, the EU remains the world's second highest spender after the US, which devotes some €330 billion (\$400 billion) to defence.

² *Based on estimates in the SIPRI Yearbook 2003, 'Armaments, disarmaments and international security', Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003.*

O'Hanlon recommends that over the next decade EU governments should spend 10 per cent of their annual defence budgets on specific types of equipment. These include long-range transport planes and ships, unmanned aerial vehicles, and precision-guided missiles. To pay for this, he argues, defence ministries should cut their manpower by a quarter, and focus on developing highly trained combat troops. If defence ministries followed this plan, by 2015 Europe would have more than 200,000 high-quality, professional soldiers, able to operate at short notice anywhere around the globe. At the moment the US can send about 400,000 ground troops

around the world, out of a total of about 650,000. But presently the EU-25 can barely deploy 85,000, out of a total of 1.2 million ground soldiers.³ From both a defence planner's point of view, and that of the taxpayer, Europe's armies need urgent reform.

³ *These figures do not include air force or navy personnel. The total number of the US armed forces is approximately 1.4 million people. The 25 EU governments have almost 2 million people in their total armed forces. Figures based on estimates in the 'The Military Balance 2003-2004', International Institute for Strategic Studies, London 2004.*

Heisbourg, Freedman and O'Hanlon all agree that in principle a European approach to warfare is a good idea, provided three basic conditions are met:

- ★ Europe's two pre-eminent military powers, Britain and France, must take the lead in defining a European approach to war. Some EU governments may balk at having to follow an approach that would be defined to a large extent by British and French doctrine. However, Europe is better off with a sound military doctrine than a meaningless political compromise.
- ★ In their approach to warfare, Europeans should learn from the US approach, and from American experiences in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan. European armies should be able to work well with American soldiers. However, Europe's armies do not have to copy US forces in every respect. European defence ministries need to retain their traditional peacekeeping skills, while simultaneously building up their war-fighting prowess.
- ★ The EU needs to develop the internal aspects of its security and defence policy. In particular, European governments have to think about how to join up the various policy instruments which they need in the fight against global terrorism. EU governments need to ensure that their law enforcement, foreign and defence policies work together more effectively.

Recent developments in Brussels

The good news is that NATO and the EU are already taking steps that will help their members to develop a European approach to warfare. At NATO's 2002 Prague summit, President Bush called on the Europeans to increase their military might by creating a NATO Response Force (NRF). European governments followed his lead, approving a plan for a force of 21,000 elite troops, backed by supporting air and sea components, to be ready by 2006. This force will enable NATO to engage in a serious shooting war, in addition to its current peacekeeping work. By the end of 2003, NATO governments had already committed 9,000 troops to the response force, including 1,700 French soldiers. The NRF will be mainly European: the US accounts for only 300 (3 per cent) of the troops so far committed.⁴ Washington's message to its allies has been clear: Europe must increase its ability to undertake tough war-fighting tasks if NATO is to remain central to US defence policy. NATO's Response Force is goading the Europeans to prepare some of their troops for the most demanding types of military mission.

⁴ *Spain is the biggest contributor to the NRF, with 2,200 troops. Germany is contributing 1,100 soldiers. See Luke Hill, 'Alliance launches triservice rapid Response Force', Jane's Defence Weekly, October 22nd 2003.*

In February 2004, the British, French and German governments proposed that the EU should be able to deploy nine 'battle groups', each consisting of 1,500 troops, and deployable within two weeks. Each battle group would be able to draw on extensive air and naval assets, including transport and logistical support. The rationale for these EU combat units is to give the UN the rapid reaction capability that it currently lacks. The UN usually manages to find peacekeepers who can police a ceasefire or peace accord. But it often cannot find troops available to form an intervention force. It needs to be able to draw on a few battalions which are ready and able to fly into a conflict zone and impose peace. For example, the UN was unable to intervene quickly enough in East Timor in 1999.

The Bush administration is unlikely to provide the UN with US forces for this kind of task. Currently the United States has only two

soldiers involved in UN-run peacekeeping operations (out of a total of 42,000 soldiers, of which 3,650 are from the EU-25).⁵ If the US is unwilling to provide peacekeepers, it is even less likely to make elite forces available for UN interventions.

⁵ See <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/CountriesSummaryFeb2004.pdf>.

But the EU could be willing to help the UN: countries such as Britain and France have highly trained forces which can move into a war-zone at short notice. And European governments care much more than the US does about the UN's ability to act in geographical areas that may not be of fundamental strategic importance. This is why the EU sent a small UN-mandated intervention force to Bunia in Congo in June 2003. And in April 2004 the EU considered the possibility of sending a UN-backed intervention force to the Dafur region of Sudan, where more than 650,000 people had fled killings, rape and looting by Arab militias.

EU defence ministers agreed to the battle group initiative at their meeting in April 2004. They now have until 2007 to establish these forces – and may do so in three ways. First, a government could put together a national battle group. Only France and Britain could do this easily, although Germany, Spain and Italy should be able to develop their own combat units. Second, relatively large countries – such as Sweden and the Netherlands – could become lead or 'framework' nations for a battle group. Smaller countries would then supply some troops or equipment to plug gaps that the lead country could not fill. The third option would be for several countries to come together to form truly multinational units, similar to the Strasbourg-based Eurocorps, which unites soldiers from Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Spain. For a smaller country which does not want to 'plug into' a particular lead nation, a multinational unit might be politically more appealing.

For example, the Nordic and Baltic countries could decide to form a Baltic battle group. But multinational battle groups need not be

regional. The EU's non-aligned countries, for example, might want to form their own. Austria, Finland and Ireland are of similar military strength, and they could find that co-operating with fellow neutrals rather than NATO members would avoid embarrassing questions regarding their neutral status. In any case the creation of these battle groups – like the NATO Response Force – should help Europeans to think more alike on how they conduct warfare. Moreover, this effort should reinforce NATO's Response Force: the same troops would be available to the EU and NATO.

During the summer of 2004, the EU will set up a new agency. The 'defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments agency' will try to do two things, both of which will help the Europeans to develop a common approach to defence. It will seek to improve European military capabilities and to enhance armaments co-operation among the member-states. Unlike a typical national armaments agency, this new body will not have a procurement budget. So a better short description would be to call it a 'capabilities agency', since it will bring together the separate worlds of research, development and procurement.

The agency's most important role will be political, in assessing member-states' progress towards meeting their capability commitments. Over the last few years, the Europeans' progress towards modernising and re-equipping their armies has been painfully slow. In 2002, EU governments agreed to a 'European capabilities action plan' (ECAP), which committed them to acquiring various sorts of equipment, such as transport planes and precision-guided missiles. The agency will evaluate and report annually on the member-states' progress towards meeting these commitments. At present, the agency looks set to keep these reports confidential. That would be a shame. If those reports were made public, the agency could 'name and shame' the member-states which renege on pledges, and thus put them under pressure to deliver.

Finally, European governments are due to reach agreement on an EU constitution in June 2004. This will probably include articles on 'structured co-operation', EU jargon for a process that allows a small group of member-states to move forward in the area of defence. Given that EU countries have, and will always have, very different military capabilities, closer co-operation amongst a smaller group makes sense. Quite apart from the much-documented transatlantic gap, there is also a large capabilities gulf between EU member-states – a gulf that will widen with the accession of ten new members in May 2004.

⁶ A revised version of the draft protocol listing the criteria for joining 'structured co-operation' can be found at <http://ue.eu.int/ligcpdf/en/03/cg00/cg00057-re01.en03.pdf>.

That said, the current wording of the draft constitution sets targets for participation in the *avant-garde* which are relatively easy to meet. For example, the draft says that one of the criteria for participation is to supply by 2007 all or part of a combat unit that can be

deployed in between five and thirty days.⁶ In fact, these combat units are the same types of force as those envisaged in the 'battle groups' plan that EU defence ministers approved in April 2004. However, some member-states will probably stay out of the structured co-operation, because they lack the assets or the ambition to take part. The defence inner circle will in some respects resemble the eurozone: some countries remain outside because they do not satisfy the criteria, and others because they choose to do so. Structured co-operation will help the emergence of a European approach to warfare: like the NRF and the battle groups, the concept encourages other countries to emulate what the British and French armed forces do.

The transatlantic case for a European way of war

Innovations such as the NATO Response Force and the EU battle groups should, together with some institutional innovations, enhance Europe's military clout. But probably the most important factor driving military reform in Europe will be the growing number

– and demanding nature – of future missions. The EU undertook its first military missions in Macedonia and Congo in 2003. These experiences have already helped defence ministries to understand which kinds of equipment they need most urgently, and what types of skills their troops should develop. Towards the end of 2004, the EU is due to take over the peacekeeping in Bosnia from NATO: this mission will be extremely difficult, including, for example, the hunt for the indicted Bosnian Serb general, Radovan Karadzic. Much more than the Congo or Macedonia operations, Bosnia will be a crucial test of the EU's military mettle.

The enlargement of the EU brings it closer to the arc of instability that runs around its eastern, south-eastern and southern flanks. Romania and Bulgaria are hoping to join the EU in 2007, while Turkey, Croatia and other countries of the Western Balkans are likely to enter at a later stage. The EU will therefore have many weak and malfunctioning states on its borders. It is bound to become more involved in countries such as Belarus, Moldova and Georgia. Across the Atlantic, US priorities will remain focused on countries such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea, and conflicts such as China-Taiwan and India-Pakistan. Washington will be reluctant to become too involved in conflicts around the EU's eastern and southern borders.

The EU will need to develop a more effective set of policies for stabilising North Africa, the Balkans and the countries that lie between the Union and Russia. Many of these policies will involve trade, aid and political dialogue. But EU strategy towards its near-abroad will also have to include a military component. Europeans should not expect the US to put out fires in their own backyard. After all, the principal rationale for the Anglo-French initiative at St Malo in 1998 – which begat the European Security and Defence Policy – was to improve the EU's poor performance in coping with the Balkan crises of the 1990s.

The EU's efforts to tackle conflicts in its near abroad may require more than 'mere' peacekeeping. For example, if the delicate

situation in Kosovo turned into a civil war, the EU should be ready to intervene with forces that could separate the warring factions. In such situations, British soldiers would be fighting alongside those from France, Germany, Italy and Spain, but not necessarily with American troops. If the Europeans were able to undertake that kind of robust military intervention autonomously, transatlantic relations would benefit. For the Pentagon would have one less region to worry about. Furthermore, the more effective the Europeans' military prowess, the more likely is the US to use NATO not only for peacekeeping but also for high-intensity interventions.

The future of EU defence policy

All the authors of this pamphlet are worried about the risk of a transatlantic division of labour – namely the idea that Europe should do the peacekeeping and America fight the wars. But they all reject that notion, both as a description of the present and as a prescription for the future. The experience of Iraq has already forced the US to rethink its approach to post-conflict operations. Having sometimes sneered at them, the Pentagon is now learning that peacekeeping, nation-building, and counter-insurgency should play a larger role in its military doctrine. Meanwhile, as the EU takes on more military missions, its defence ministries are themselves engaged in a learning process. They are starting to see that they will need more sophisticated equipment, and be prepared for serious combat missions. They know that they will not always be able to count on the US to do the war-fighting for them.

It is true that the US and Europe currently have very different doctrines and priorities. But experiences on the ground will probably encourage both sides to address their respective weaknesses: post-conflict stabilisation for the US and war-fighting for the Europeans. In the long run this may lead – to some extent – to doctrinal convergence.

European soldiers already conduct peacekeeping operations very differently from American troops. They expend less effort on force protection, they fraternise more with locals and they are more reluctant to unleash fire-power. Europeans will also, inevitably, fight their wars differently from the Americans. Given their budgetary constraints, European defence ministries have no choice but to focus less than the Pentagon does on sophisticated technology and airpower, and more on the role of ground forces. But these differences of emphasis should not prevent the Europeans from defeating most of their prospective enemies. When the EU mounts an autonomous combat operation, it is likely to be against a small or medium-sized power with weak air defences. The Europeans do not plan to fight any large and well-equipped adversaries on their own. In such cases, European soldiers would fight alongside American troops.

Finally, the rapid evolution of EU internal security policy will affect defence policy. The March 2004 bombings in Madrid confirmed the ability of al-Qaeda-style terrorist groups to strike at Europe. In order to track these groups, EU governments will have to piece together information from a variety of sources. They have pledged to step up intelligence-sharing, and in March 2004 they appointed Gijs de Vries as the Union's first anti-terrorism 'tsar'. Since the terrorist threat comes from both within and outside the EU, the member-states can no longer afford to maintain the traditional distinction between external and internal security.⁷ In the most extreme cases, EU countries may wish to deploy force against a terrorist group that is based abroad, or against a state that harbours terrorists.

⁷ See Daniel Keohane and Adam Townsend, 'A joined-up EU security policy', *CER Bulletin*, December 2003 – January 2004.

European defence policy is developing fast – and a more distinctive European approach to warfare is bound to emerge in coming years. However, such an approach is – paradoxically – more likely to develop in NATO than in the EU itself. For most European defence ministries, NATO will continue to be the principal multinational

military organisation. That is not only because NATO is a military alliance – which the EU is not – but also because of NATO's large and experienced military headquarters. More than 2,000 people work at NATO's strategic headquarters (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe – known as SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium, while the EU military staff in Brussels has fewer than 200 people. Moreover, NATO has regional command headquarters in Naples (Italy) and Brunssum (the Netherlands), as well as a 'transformation' headquarters in Norfolk (US), which focuses specifically on reforming NATO's armies. Put simply, European armies are reforming principally because of their collaboration in NATO, rather than the EU.

The best example of this reform process is the NATO Response

⁸ See Kori Schake, 'Constructive duplication: reducing EU reliance on US military assets', CER, January 2002. She proposed that the Europeans develop a 'strike force', similar to the NATO Response Force that governments agreed to set up in November 2002.

Force. Britain, France, Spain and Germany are leading the European contribution to this force, while American participation is only symbolic. Thus NATO is playing its part in promoting a more ambitious but distinctly 'European way of war'. The irony is that the NATO Response Force was an American idea, which the Europeans have enthusiastically embraced.⁸

In the coming years, European governments should strengthen their military clout and conduct more ambitious autonomous military operations. But they should also improve the ability of their soldiers to work alongside Americans. As NATO evolves and reforms, the EU's security and defence policy will reap the benefits. Those who see the ESDP and NATO as competing and mutually exclusive concepts – and there are a few such people, in some parts of the Pentagon and the French foreign ministry – are living in the past. NATO and EU defence policy will sink or swim together, and on current trends they will swim.

2 Can the EU develop an effective military doctrine? *Lawrence Freedman*

Can the EU develop an effective military doctrine which would define the procedures to guide armed forces in future conflicts? EU governments have very different military strengths and diverse attitudes towards the use of military force. Those differences mean that the EU would produce a dysfunctional military doctrine, if it tried to create one. However, either acting together or separately, EU armies could make a distinctively 'European' contribution to contemporary military operations. Britain and France should take the lead in defining that contribution. Their armed forces are the most capable and experienced in Europe, and have therefore had the opportunity to develop military doctrines that have been tested in the most dangerous types of operation.

Any European military effort has to be compared with American military power. The US is in an unassailable position for winning conventional wars, as it did in Iraq in the spring of 2003. However, the problem of insurgents in Iraq has illustrated the extent to which the US has a dysfunctional military doctrine for unconventional warfare. Europeans should therefore not be obsessed with matching US military prowess. Europe's conventional capabilities should be sufficient to cope with most prospective conflicts, especially since the cases where they might fight wars without the Americans would be rare. Unconventional warfare has become the most significant and demanding form of military operation, and in this area the Americans have a lot to learn from the Europeans.

An EU military doctrine would be dysfunctional

Countries often develop reputations for conducting their military campaigns in accordance with their national character. On this basis, northern Europeans would be cool and calculating, and southern Europeans romantic and impetuous, while the British would be pragmatic and stubborn. In practice, however, geo-strategic considerations are the biggest influence on national military doctrines. A cursory glance at 20th century military campaigns backs up this point. In the 1960s, the Israelis knew they had to seize the initiative against Egypt, Jordan and Syria by striking first; if they had waited until they were attacked they would have been swamped. In the 1940s, the Russians could depend on territorial space and population mass to defend against the invading German army, while the Germans wanted to make the most of their qualitative advantages – such as their superior equipment – before the quantitative disadvantages began to tell. For maritime powers such as Britain and the US, the natural instinct has been to project sea and air power from a distance, and to rely on allies to carry out the bulk of land warfare.

To be relevant and effective, a military doctrine should draw on a view of the world and its problems; make assessments of available military capabilities (including those of allies and enemies); and add precise ideas about strategy and tactics for the armed forces to follow. Thus, a doctrine should provide a framework in which armed forces can train, plan, conduct exercises, and generally work together in a mutually reinforcing way. The best doctrines orientate armed forces for the future, so that soldiers recognise the situations in which they will find themselves and know how to act. A commander's orders should be clear and well understood by his or her soldiers. By the same token, bad doctrine will lead to surprises and disorientation. In the worst circumstances, major adaptations to the organisation of the armed forces and the conduct of military operations will be required, even in the midst of a war going badly.

A doctrine emanates from a political process, involving ministries, agencies, and armed services – so any doctrinal changes will require

negotiation between those disparate groups. Military doctrine, therefore, reflects the preferences of powerful voices within government and the armed forces, as well as the concerns of key allies. One consequence of a complex political process involving a range of competing interests may be a dysfunctional doctrine. The risk of dysfunction grows during a prolonged period of peace, which tends to spare doctrine from critical scrutiny. Only regular experience with combat and the ultimate empirical test of war provide defence ministries with constant reality checks.

The risk of a dysfunctional EU doctrine is high, mainly because it would require 25 governments and their respective defence establishments to compromise. If EU governments did agree on a common military doctrine, it would stem from a determination to demonstrate political unity – and not from the need for a doctrine that would provide effective guidance in an actual conflict. Furthermore, European governments have not yet developed a very successful EU foreign policy. And such a foreign policy is a precondition for EU success in the military sphere. No European soldiers will be deployed on EU military missions if the Union's governments cannot agree on their political objectives.

The impact of having several governments negotiate strategy documents, whether in the EU or NATO, is to render those documents more bland and vague. The European Security Strategy, which EU leaders approved in December 2003, illustrates that point (see François Heisbourg's chapter). Furthermore, these political processes have become even more complicated with the arrival of ten new EU members in May 2004. Both the EU and NATO are becoming increasingly unwieldy and less able to act swiftly and resolutely in a crisis. But NATO has more chance of acting decisively, because of US leadership and the absence of the more pacifist EU neutrals (Austria, Finland, Ireland and, to a lesser extent, Sweden).

In addition, most EU member-states have only limited experience of war-fighting. With the exception of France, the enthusiasm in some

capitals for the 'Europeanisation' of national armed forces too often appears to be directly related to a deep reluctance to use military force. Belgium is the most conspicuous example of this tendency. Only Britain and France have recently had substantial military experience. Only London and Paris have had to think about the demands of high-octane missions. For example, aside from contributing to various military coalitions, Britain sent troops to Sierra Leone in 2000, while France deployed soldiers on its own to the Ivory Coast in 2002.

Other EU member-states have participated in coalition wars or in peacekeeping operations – which have sometimes been quite bruising experiences. And many EU governments are making substantial contributions to operations in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq. But a serious military doctrine should not only reflect combat experience but also command experience. Countries like Germany and Spain are going through a useful military reform process, but their national doctrines remain limited compared to those of Britain and France, because they have less experience of commanding larger units of troops.

Much contemporary warfare is against opponents which do not represent a direct existential threat, as did the Soviet Union, but rather cause chaos in the more fragile parts of the world. There may be a variety of reasons why one EU government might feel obliged to get involved in a conflict (such as lingering post-colonial ties), but equally many reasons why others might not. At present, there is no consensus in Europe on the purpose or the circumstances in which it is appropriate to use military force. There is, therefore, a risk that even if the EU had a military doctrine, reflecting the partial views and meagre capabilities of most of its member-states, the governments would not agree on whether to participate in, or on how to conduct future EU operations. For some countries, like France and Austria, an EU brand might legitimise a military doctrine and future operations; but for others, such as Denmark and some of the new EU members, it could have the opposite effect.

For all these reasons, any attempt to turn the EU into a proper military organisation with a shared doctrine is bound to end in failure. However, a European approach to warfare does not have to be an EU approach. Instead, Europe could develop a 'way of war' that builds on the experience of the major European military powers, namely Britain and France. There is something distinctive about the demanding nature of their past experiences and present contributions which could be a model for the rest of Europe. Furthermore, those European countries that have actively participated in recent operations, such as Spain, Italy, Poland and the Netherlands, also share this distinctive approach, at least to some degree.

Most wars are now fought by 'coalitions of the willing'. International institutions – the United Nations, NATO or the EU – endow a degree of legitimacy on such coalitions, but do not run major wars themselves. The NATO management of the 1999 Kosovo war may be the exception that proves the rule. The real question is which governments are ready to join a coalition to address a particular emergency. A key aspect of the answer to that question is the likely role that the US would play in leading such coalitions.

American military doctrine is dysfunctional

US military doctrine has become increasingly dysfunctional. The principal reason is the changed nature of modern warfare, rather than the convoluted political process in Washington. European commentators often make the mistake of comparing deficiencies in their own decision-making procedures to the complex and often acrimonious inter-agency process in Washington. The delays and confusion that the Washington process can cause are often serious. But there is an important difference with Europe: in the US there is a single decision-maker – the president – who serves as the final arbiter.

All US armed services – Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines – have developed their own doctrines, often with scant regard for each

other. Nevertheless, ever since the US withdrawal from Vietnam in 1975, an underlying assumption has given coherence and continuity to American military thinking. The fundamental assumption guiding the Pentagon is that US armed forces should prepare for wars against other major powers. All other types of operation are secondary ones which America should, if at all possible, avoid. From this assumption flows the reason that American doctrine has become dysfunctional: straightforward conventional wars against major powers are becoming a rarity, while complicated small wars are becoming more common.

There are two specific reasons behind the failure of existing American doctrine. First, the energy and resources which the Pentagon devotes to conventional forces have reached a point of diminishing marginal returns. Second, the Pentagon has spent too little effort on training soldiers for those unconventional operations that it dismissed as non-core business, but which are increasingly dominating America's military efforts.

The recent US-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrated that:

- ★ conventional victories are relatively easy to accomplish;
- ★ the West can easily achieve air dominance; and
- ★ the key military tests are increasingly found on the ground.

In terms of conventional warfare, the US is now in a class of its own. This is hardly surprising since the US defence budget is equivalent to what the rest of the world spends collectively on defence. America also spends its defence money far more efficiently than European governments do. Even so, to occupy a country the size of Iraq with effectively only three combat divisions (each with between 10,000 and 18,000 soldiers), as the US did in April 2003, is remarkable. Furthermore, recent advances in defence technology have allowed American commanders to project lethal power over great distances

with increasing accuracy. This means that the network of overseas bases which the US established in Europe during the Cold War is becoming redundant. As a consequence, allies are often considered to be something of a nuisance, demanding major political inputs in return for minor military outputs. Donald Rumsfeld, the US Secretary of Defense, has observed that in the current era the mission should determine the coalition, rather than the other way around.⁹

⁹ *US Department of Defense News Briefing in Warsaw with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, September 25th 2002.*

NATO's Kosovo war did much to shape America's attitudes towards its allies. NATO tried to achieve its objectives through an air campaign, which led to an exaggerated perception of the disparity between American and European military capabilities. Europeans could barely muster 15 per cent of the total air sorties. But to the intense irritation of the Americans, this gap did not stop the Europeans from demanding a big say over the selection of targets and the overall course of the war. The largest transatlantic row occurred when the British government pushed for a commitment to use ground troops if the air campaign continued to fail to produce results. The Clinton administration was deeply reluctant to pay a domestic political price for such a land campaign. It feared that US public opinion would be unwilling to tolerate even modest casualties for what would be seen as marginal foreign policy objectives. Only Britain's promise to commit up to 50,000 troops to an eventual land operation began to ease US objections.

EU defence: too much process, not enough output

Transatlantic arguments over the Kosovo campaign had a major impact on European attitudes towards a common defence policy. By the end of the 1992-95 Bosnian war, European leaders were concerned about the United States' limited commitment to resolving European conflicts. On the eve of the Kosovo war, in December 1998, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and French President Jacques Chirac held a summit at St Malo. They identified a way

forward for European defence and the Kosovo war initially accelerated that process.¹⁰ However, Franco-British momentum was soon lost, and subsequent events – in particular the quarrels over Iraq – have highlighted once again the differences of view between Paris and London.

¹⁰ See Gilles Andréani, Christoph Bertram and Charles Grant, 'Europe's military revolution', CER, 2001.

The core issue in Europe's defence debates is what relationship Europe should have with the US. To simplify somewhat – but not excessively – the French believe Europe must raise its military game to provide a counterweight to the US. The main objective for the British is to be taken seriously in Washington and get a hearing for European views. In their respective approaches, the British have been more consistent. If there has been a British approach to warfare for the past 60 years, it has been to gear military capabilities to the level that is necessary to gain an *entrée* into Washington's decision-making processes. France, however, has fluctuated between its readiness to embrace an alliance with the US and its desire to develop alternatives. The problem for the French is that they cannot balance American power on their own, so they need to propose a mission for Europe as a whole. The French have often tried to get other European countries to sign up to this kind of project. But the countries that are inclined to support France do not possess substantial military assets and experience. This strategy looks forlorn unless Britain, Europe's only other serious military power, collaborates with France.

For both the French and the British, the improvement of European military capabilities is a necessary condition for further progress – either to convince the Americans that their European allies can bring some hardware to the decision-making table, or else to set the foundations for an alternative to NATO. The St Malo compromise also shows the limits of both the British and French positions. Blair agreed that the Europeans should be able to act without the Americans in contingencies involving neighbourhood crises – although he assumed that the US would agree that the EU could use

NATO assets. In return, Chirac accepted that the EU could not credibly expect to duplicate NATO's planning and command capabilities.

The Iraq row has not been fatal to the European defence initiative. A more serious problem for the EU is that its defence policy will lack substance without extra military capabilities – and these have yet to materialise. European countries cannot move substantial forces with speed to anywhere outside Europe. Only Britain has any serious, if modest, transport capability – while Germany had to use Ukrainian aircraft to carry its troops to Afghanistan. Some improvements are in train, albeit painfully slowly. For example, the first of the A400M transport planes should be delivered in 2009.¹¹

¹¹ Seven European governments are buying 180 A-400M transport planes but these are short range rather than long range. Only the UK has long range transport planes that can carry the heaviest loads.

These limitations do not make Europe-only operations impossible. But EU missions are either going to be small, and in effect British-led and/or French-led, or the Europeans will have to rely upon American support, as they do in the Balkans. At the moment, EU defence policy gives the impression of being yet another European initiative bogged down in endless and largely pointless wrangles about process. To sceptics, the defence debates in Brussels have little to do with preparing for warfare, and more to do with reviving a flagging European political project. This explains why the key innovations in EU defence policy tend to be about setting up new institutions in Brussels, rather than defence ministries buying new equipment.

This general preoccupation in European capitals with form rather than content was evident in the debate over planning cells in 2003. In April of that year, France and Germany (together with Belgium and Luxembourg) proposed a European planning cell that would operate separately from NATO's command structures – to the intense annoyance of Europe's Atlanticist countries such as Britain.

In December 2003, EU governments agreed that the EU would deploy a small group of operational planners to SHAPE, NATO's planning headquarters near Mons. This group will work on ensuring a smooth relationship between the EU and NATO on 'Berlin-plus' missions, when the EU borrows NATO assets. There will also be a new unit of about 30 operational planners for the EU's military staff, which currently consists mainly of 'strategic planners' (their job is to advise EU foreign ministers on the operational plans that may come out of SHAPE or a national military headquarters). The new unit will help with the planning of EU military and civilian missions which involve policemen. Given that there are very few places where Europeans could even think of acting militarily without a benign US attitude, and probably American logistical and intelligence support, the point of the Franco-German proposal was unclear. The fact that such proposals irritate Washington may be a bonus for some in Paris and Berlin, but it also strengthens the perception that the purpose of European defence policy has little to do with how armed forces might actually be used.

The way forward for European defence

Any attempt by governments to draw up an EU military doctrine would be fraught and probably futile. Instead, Britain and France should lead Europe in developing a European approach to warfare that is based on their recent campaigns. Other European states would have to be involved in that process, and be prepared to contribute. In many respects, British and French doctrine is already quite mature and well geared for contemporary international conditions, especially when the task involves irregular war in weak or failing states. The British operation in Sierra Leone in 2000 and the French mission to the Ivory Coast in 2002 are examples of the types of operation which the EU can expect to undertake in the near future.

Furthermore, British and French doctrine has already had a significant influence on those other EU countries that have

participated in operations abroad. Germany is an interesting example of this reform process. At the end of 2003 the German government decided to shift the focus of its defence planning from territorial defence towards acting overseas. By 2010 Germany will have a 35,000-strong 'intervention' force for combat operations and a 70,000-strong 'stabilisation' force for peacekeeping. To pay for this, the Germans are – sensibly – getting rid of large stocks of weapons designed for conflicts that are now unlikely to materialise. There is little point in any European country maintaining large numbers of aircraft that can deliver only 'dumb' bombs.

The question of how European armies should work with American forces is crucial for the development of a European approach to warfare. But the terms of the Europeans' defence debate need to change. In particular they need to get away from taking American military prowess as the standard by which all others are judged. There are three reasons for this.

First, there are very few contingencies in which the Europeans could contemplate fighting a major war without the US. The most serious military scenarios would be in Asia – such as a future conflict involving China. In these circumstances, it is inconceivable that European governments would act independently of the US. Moreover, when the Europeans did work with the Americans in a conventional war, the added value would be largely political rather than military.

Second, comparing European military power with the US is both misleading and irrelevant. The massive American defence effort sets an impossible standard for Europeans to meet. European governments should not try to match the extravagant US force structure. Nevertheless, Europeans do need to fulfil their past promises to improve military capabilities, so that they are not caught short in some future emergency. Crucially, this does not require a large additional financial commitment from European governments.

Furthermore, there is not going to be a transatlantic war, and the Europeans and Americans need to be able to work together. The surge in American military technology does create new problems for Europeans trying to work alongside American soldiers on the ground. However, European governments should aim to develop armies that complement the US armed forces rather than copy them.

Europeans will only act alone in those contingencies where the Americans do not see much of a role for themselves. Europeans cannot work directly against the Americans, or even take action in the face of deep American objections – though the Americans can act against European objections. Unless a well-armed rogue state emerges near Europe, such as a nuclear-armed Iran, the most likely opponents of the EU will be in Africa or the Middle East and will have weak air defences. Such opponents would not be a serious match for European forces, especially if the Americans were assisting with logistics and intelligence.

It is true that the Europeans could not have fought the Kosovo war without the US, at least not in the way the Americans fought it. But European governments could have fought that war differently, with a greater stress from the start on preparations for a land war. A modest number of high quality aircraft, especially in combination with well-trained professional forces, can be extremely effective. For example, during the 1980s the Iranians spent six years outside Basra, unable to make headway against the Iraqi defences. In 2003, the British spent about eight days in that position. The conclusion is clear: Europeans do not have to fight as Americans. Even if they wanted to, it would be totally beyond their capabilities. But more importantly, in many contemporary conflicts they are better off fighting the European way.

The third reason for not trying to copy the US is the dysfunctional nature of American military doctrine. Contemporary American doctrine focuses on 'big threats' and prepares US armed forces for capital-intensive rather than labour-intensive wars. But the conventional war stage of a conflict is shrinking, while the

unconventional war stage which follows is expanding. Examples of this phenomenon are high-intensity policing in the Balkans, peacekeeping in Afghanistan, and the counter-insurgency operations in Iraq.

Impressive US strides in conventional warfare are due to American cultural impatience; a political preference for quick results and technology-based solutions; and the Pentagon's desire to use maximum resources to keep casualties to a minimum. Irregular warfare requires more patience and puts greater pressures on front-line troops and junior officers. Soldiers also have to co-ordinate their efforts with aid workers and diplomats, as well as quell social unrest. In these cases, the enemy understands that it will be overwhelmed in regular war. But, with a determination fired by nationalism, ethnic vulnerability or ideology, the enemy can embarrass the Americans by adopting traditional insurgent tactics. Iraq is a particularly challenging example, for very specific historical reasons. The Iraq experience is posing the biggest test to American military prowess since Vietnam – although it is not of the same proportions. The Americans have suffered heavily from a fixation with force protection, which often leads to over-reaction by soldiers that pushes insurgents and locals together.

A comparison between the American counter-insurgency operation in Baghdad and the British one in Basra in 2003-04 flatters the British, because of the much more favourable political climate in southern Iraq. Nonetheless, it reinforces the view that the British have a better approach to this sort of campaign, in particular by understanding the importance of separating the insurgents and the local population. It is fair to say that Europeans are more skilled at this sort of campaign, in part because of the tradition of imperial policing, but also because of their more recent and extensive experience of peacekeeping.

Because today's opponents are more likely to specialise in guerrilla warfare than tanks and aircraft, there is now a paradoxical situation.

The United States' reluctance to engage in unconventional wars has constrained its surplus of power. Both the Clinton and, initially, the Bush administrations sought to dampen expectations that the US would be willing and able to sort out every local conflict. They were especially fearful of being drawn into a series of inconclusive and domestically unpopular foreign entanglements. But the events of September 11th 2001 created new imperatives for American activism. Washington now has major commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq, and is finding it harder to limit those commitments.

The days when the Pentagon could insist that it would not enter a conflict without a clear exit strategy, and then pass on the thankless and demanding task of nation-building to others, have passed. This is already starting to have important consequences for doctrine development in the US. The Iraq experience shows that a new conflict sequence is developing in which the length of the actual war is contracting, because there are few likely enemies able to withstand intense and precise firepower. But the post-war activity, which can be both tough and deadly, may stretch out almost indefinitely. The key question is not whether the Europeans can adapt to American doctrine, but whether the Americans can adapt to the European way of war.

3 The 'European Security Strategy' is not a security strategy *François Heisbourg*

At the Brussels summit in December 2003, European Union governments adopted a document entitled "A secure Europe in a better world" and subtitled "European Security Strategy" (hereafter referred to as the ESS).¹² In the spring of 2003, the governments had given the EU's High Representative for foreign policy, Javier Solana, a mandate to draw up this document. Solana presented the first draft of the ESS to government leaders at the European Council in Thessaloniki in June 2003. At that summit and afterwards, the paper received a lot of praise for its ground-breaking proposals and clearly worded text. This warm welcome was deserved, for the EU had never previously engaged in a threat-driven analysis of global security. Solana's first draft highlighted the need to tackle threats such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and to prevent the emergence of 'failed states'. The June draft was all the more remarkable since the EU was – and to a large extent still is – deeply divided over the United States' venture in Iraq.

¹² *European Council, Brussels, 'A secure Europe in a better world – European Security Strategy', December 12th 2003.*

The final version published in December, however, did not arouse the same excitement across Europe. The final ESS is somewhat less incisive than the first draft. For example, the hierarchy of threats is not as stark as before. In the final document, terrorism and proliferation are less obviously singled out than in the initial draft. Moreover, the novelty of the exercise had begun to wear off in both Brussels and national capitals. The apparently less threatening term 'preventive engagement' had replaced the phrase 'pre-emptive

engagement'. When asked to explain the change, EU officials refer to a linguistic problem: many European languages lack a direct translation of pre-emption. But the political connotations of the term, and its prominent place in US thinking, must have been a greater problem. Germany in particular had stressed the need to soften the language of the earlier draft.

This shift from excitement in June to coolness in December underlines a deeper truth: the EU cannot have a proper security strategy as long as decisions on the use of force rest in the hands of its member governments. The ESS can capture at any given moment what appears to unite the EU-25 in analytical and policy terms. But the security strategy does not emanate from a fully

¹³ Johnson is cited in James Boswell, *Life of Samuel Johnson*, first published in 1791. fledged strategic actor that can wield force on its own account. When it comes to strategic concepts, the EU resembles Samuel Johnson's description of a dog walking on its hind legs: "It is not done well; but you are surprised it is done at all."¹³

Any national government finds it difficult to formulate a meaningful strategic concept, for it has to balance endogenous factors (political and economic interests, ambitions and values) and exogenous realities (threats, risks and partnerships). Furthermore, differences of opinion between agencies, ministries, and even armed services, may compound the difficulties of drawing up a national strategic concept. However, such difficulties at the national level pale in comparison with the challenge of drawing up a document at the EU level, which 25 governments – each with particular interests and traditions – have to agree upon.

Therefore, the ESS is a sort of halfway house, indicative of the hybrid quality of the EU itself: not a federal state (like Brazil, India or the US), but much more than a typical international organisation (like NATO, the World Trade Organisation or the United Nations). It is worth highlighting some of the positive and negative features of the existing ESS.

The European security strategy: strengths and weaknesses

The positive aspects of the ESS include the following:

- ★ A global approach to Europe's security interests and threats. There is no parochial myopia in the document, and the ESS states that what happens in North Korea or South Asia is of direct relevance to the EU.
- ★ A concise list of the primary threats to European security: terrorism, WMD proliferation, regional conflicts, state failure, and organised crime. This choice of threats is appropriate, notwithstanding the difference in emphasis between the initial draft and the final document.
- ★ An explicit link between EU security and the economic development of poorer countries.
- ★ A triple emphasis on the need to improve European military capabilities; to ensure co-ordination of the instruments of the EU's hard (military) and soft (economic and diplomatic) power; and to expand co-operation with non-EU partners.
- ★ A clear recognition that the EU needs to do more than use the economic and diplomatic resources of its 'soft power' to sort out security crises in places such as the Balkans. At least implicitly, the document recognises that the EU may have to use hard power to put an end to a civil war or prevent threats such as terrorism. Thus it says that the EU should develop a "strategic culture which favours early, rapid and, where necessary, robust intervention".

In addition, the policy aims of the ESS are generally compatible with American interests and policies, which gives it the virtue of appearing to buttress transatlantic relations. Of course, some views in the ESS differ markedly from US rhetoric, notably on multilateralism and pre-emptive military action. But these

divergences are not directed against the US per se, and do not seem, at first glance, to harm American interests. However, the compatibility of the ESS's policy aims with American ambitions may be more apparent than real, as is explained below.

The not-so-good news is that there are significant gaps and shortcomings in the ESS. Some of these flaws stem from the different positions of the various member-states. Others flow from the fact that EU foreign policy officials were responsible for the document. As a result, internal issues that also affect European security are neglected. The following shortcomings stand out:

★ **Alliance politics:** Perceptions of history inevitably shape perceptions of both the present and the future. With respect to history the ESS is flawed from the opening paragraph. The second sentence reads: "The violence of the first half of the 20th century has given way to a period of peace and stability unprecedented in European history". In other words, the Cold War never happened. Furthermore, this major historical oversight eliminates the contentious issue of alliance politics from the ESS. Every European government which has produced a strategic concept has also offered a clear view of the assumptions it makes about the transatlantic partnership. The US National Security Strategy does the same. The ESS, however, ducks the issue. The unfortunate consequence is that there is nothing in the ESS on the politically contentious – but strategically vital – question of the division of military roles between the US and the EU. More broadly, and perhaps more ominously, this failure to take a view on how the Atlantic alliance should evolve comes at a time when there are real prospects of substantial transatlantic divergences on key issues. For example, disputes could arise on policy towards the wider Middle East region or China. The EU has mainly economic and political links with China, whereas the US is a strategic and military actor in East Asia – witness the 100,000 American soldiers stationed there. And if EU governments were to

authorise the sale of military equipment to China, as the French government proposed in February 2004, the US could view such a move as damaging to its vital interests. The ESS does not reflect on the possibility of such divergences, and therefore does not make proposals on how to handle them.

★ **Internal security:** Aside from a single, unrevealing paragraph, the issue of EU internal security does not form a major part of the recommendations in the ESS. The document does contain strong language about the threats of terrorism and proliferation, including a pointed reference to the possibility of terrorists using WMD. However, precisely because there is such a strong emphasis on these 'new' threats, Solana's officials should have made recommendations regarding EU policy on internal security. Since the Madrid bombings in March 2004, terrorism and internal security have become the EU's top political priority. Yet EU governments had already agreed on strong language about the domestic implications of terrorism at successive European Council meetings, most notably at Laeken in 2001 and Seville in 2002. Politically, therefore, it should have been possible for Solana to introduce a stronger internal security dimension into the recommendations section of the ESS. Technically, internal security is not part of Javier Solana's policy remit. But surely bureaucratic turf-wars should not have determined the scope of the ESS. When Solana was drawing up the ESS, the delegates to the Convention on the future of Europe were debating a 'solidarity clause' in the draft EU constitution. This says EU member-states should assist each other in their counter-terrorism efforts. In that context, Solana's officials may have felt that policy recommendations on internal security would be too sensitive. Such prudence (if that was the case) underscores the limits to the EU's ability to act. It should be noted, however, that three days before the Madrid bombs, Solana finished a secret report for the member-states on the EU's inadequate resources and capabilities for countering terrorism.

★ **Effective multilateralism:** For the EU to be “more active”, “more capable”, and “more coherent”, as Solana proposes, is fine. For the EU to aspire to champion international organisations and treaties like the United Nations or the nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), so that they become more successful – “effective multilateralism” is the phrase used – is pleasing. But for the EU to be in a position to act decisively is no less essential. That the need for decisive action is missing from the ESS weakens it. The EU should only focus on improving its capabilities and coherence if governments are prepared to use those tools to secure their policy objectives, namely to counter security threats, to create a safer neighbourhood and to promote effective multilateralism. This missing link in the ESS, between policy aspirations on the one hand and a willingness to act on the other, makes the aim of effective multilateralism sound trite rather than convincing. The language in the ESS on effective multilateralism merely says that countries which have placed themselves outside the bounds of international society “should understand that there is a price to be paid, including in their relationship with the European Union”. Regrettably, the ESS does not spell out what the ultimate price may be. The ESS could have been bolder. After all, EU governments agreed at the Thessaloniki summit in June 2003

¹⁴ *The Presidency conclusions from the Thessaloniki European Council, June 19th-20th 2003, say: “The European Council endorses the.... declaration....on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction adopted by General Affairs Council on June 16th 2003”. This declaration mentions that in dealing with WMD the EU may as a last resort have to use “coercive measures under chapter VII of the UN charter and international law (sanctions, selective or global, interceptions of shipments, and, as appropriate, the use of force)”.*

that coercive measures could be used – as a last resort – for preserving international non-proliferation regimes.¹⁴ A more robust ESS would have been welcome, especially since the historical record of the effectiveness of international organisations is ambiguous. The ESS should have a multilateral dimension, since multilateralism has much to commend it, including its ability to draw broad support from otherwise frequently divided Europeans. But EU governments need to demonstrate

what it is that would make multilateralism effective, or at least more effective than in the past.

★ **The Middle East:** The EU gives greater importance to stability than to the introduction of democratic and liberal values in the Middle East. This penchant for stability may or may not be preferable to America’s reckless and ‘Bonapartist’ attempt to promote democratic values through the invasion of Iraq. But there are surely more ways to promote democratic values than by wielding the sword against the Middle East’s many economically retrograde, socially repugnant, politically repressive and strategically regressive regimes. During the 1970s and 1980s, the West was quite effective at promoting peaceful and democratic change in Latin America, Eastern Europe and much of East Asia by linking human rights and democratic change to economic and political bilateral relations. But the West has not even tried such a long-term and peaceful approach – in any systematic way – with the Arab world. Maybe it would not be feasible, but that is not self-evident. It is disturbing that in the ESS the primacy of stability in the Middle East is taken as a given, without much justification. One problem with the European preference for stability is that it may clash with the emerging American strategy towards the ‘greater Middle East’. It may become very difficult to co-ordinate US and European policy towards the wider Middle East in the future. Yet that region is crucial for both Europe’s and America’s security. And there is a real risk that the EU’s strategic stasis will come into conflict with America’s strategic dynamism.

The way forward

The shortcomings in the ESS are a consequence of what the EU is and is not – and this state of affairs will not change soon. Therefore, it would make no sense for Javier Solana to re-write the ESS. At best, the result would be marginally better than Solana’s remarkable achievement. This is because the impetus behind the effort – to

repair intra-European and transatlantic relations after the Iraq crises – would be absent. However, the EU does need to develop some fresh thinking, to take forward the work begun by the ESS. The following five recommendations stem from both the plusses and minuses of the Solana document.

★ Audit the security dimension of EU foreign aid

The European Commission and the member-states should audit their official development assistance (ODA) programmes, with a view to determining the precise interaction of their aid and security policies. The ESS highlights this link when it rightly says that “security is the first condition for development”. Moreover, security cannot exist in the absence of development. External assistance is one of the EU’s supposed comparative advantages: it spends substantially more on aid each year than the US does – \$36 billion versus \$13 billion in 2002.¹⁵ If the EU shifted its development policies in the light of such an audit, it could enhance its strategic influence and effectiveness. Much of Europe’s ODA and humanitarian assistance flows directly

¹⁵ Based on OECD figures, available on www.oecd.org. from the Commission, almost €5 billion in 2003. Foreign aid is an area where the Commission can, and should operate as a strategic actor, as it already does in the field of international trade.

The Commission and EU governments should review their ODA programmes to assess their relevance for improving security. The goal would not be to criticise past aid policies – which have seldom been driven by security concerns – but rather to assess the impact of ODA projects on security priorities. For example, an audit of its aid policies might spur the EU to target more assistance on places such as Sierra Leone or Liberia, and thus help to sustain the current cease-fires in their civil wars. This audit should attempt to incorporate a security dimension into future ODA programmes. This would not be conditionality in the traditional sense – whereby the recipient country has to fulfil specific conditions to receive assistance – but rather a targeting discipline which donors (in this

case the EU) would impose upon themselves. However, ODA is not, and should not be, a simple tool of security policy. It evidently serves other purposes, such as the alleviation of poverty. Furthermore, if Europe targeted aid towards specific countries for security reasons, its traditional concentration on some of the poorer countries in Africa or Asia should not suffer. After all, preventing state failure is both a security objective and a humanitarian goal.

In addition, the EU should try to avoid some of the drawbacks of the US approach to ODA, which sends a disproportionate share of foreign aid to middle- or high-income countries like Israel. For example, the over-emphasis on the security dimension in America’s ‘Plan Colombia’ has yielded questionable results, both in terms of its stated objective – curbing the production and trade of narcotics – and in terms of the internal stability of Colombia and its neighbours. Nevertheless the US has done better than the EU at providing foreign aid with a positive impact on security threats. For example, the US has spent \$10 billion over 12 years on the important Co-operative Threat Reduction Initiative in the former USSR. This US programme has helped countries to improve the safety of their nuclear plants and weapons systems, and to control and monitor their nuclear materials. And the US has spent large amounts of money in Egypt and Jordan, thus sustaining their peace treaties with Israel.

★ Create a ‘wise persons group’ to examine change in the wider Middle East

The European Council should task a group of ‘wise persons’ (such as former foreign ministers or ambassadors) to present options for EU policy in the Middle East. The report should build on the UN’s Human Development reports on the Arab world. It is often easier to outsource the consideration of radical changes than to expect the member-states to rethink their policies. Most EU governments would be loathe to run the risk of compromising their short-term relations with Middle East countries. The wise persons’ group should look at

the long term. It should focus on options for moving from the present, undesirable status quo towards the development of liberal values in the Middle East – while ensuring that militant Islamic fundamentalism

¹⁶ For an initial set of ideas see 'A joint plan to help the Greater Middle East', by Urban Ahlin, Ronald Asmus, Steven Everts, Jana Hybaskova, Mark Leonard, Michael McFaul and Michael Mertes, *International Herald Tribune*, March 15th 2004; and François Heisbourg, 'Mideast democracy is a long-term, global project', *International Herald Tribune*, March 24th 2004.

does not benefit.¹⁶ The EU should see the promotion of human rights as part of a long-term effort to reform the region, rather than as an instrument for the short-term destabilisation of incumbent regimes. The West used human rights in a similar way when it dealt with Soviet-era Central and East European countries. The Middle East is crucial for the EU's long-term strategic position, especially given the potential for transatlantic disagreement on this issue.

★ Produce an EU defence White Paper

Although the EU is not a fully fledged strategic actor, there will be times when it has to use military force. Currently, the 'Petersberg

¹⁷ In March 2002, the Spanish presidency mandated the Paris-based EU Institute for Security Studies to bring together an expert group to undertake a preliminary exercise of this sort. The resulting document, commonly known as 'The European Defence Book', is currently near completion, and could serve as the first step towards an official defence White Paper for the EU.

tasks' set the parameters for EU military missions, which range from humanitarian relief to ending regional conflicts. But in the years to come the EU must develop the organisation and capabilities that would enable it to combat threats like terrorism and WMD proliferation, which are not covered by the Petersberg tasks. Changes in the EU's strategic environment, plus the increasingly ambitious range of its operational commitments, suggest that the EU needs a defence White Paper.¹⁷

Along with the obvious emphasis on scenario development and the organisation of European armed forces, the White Paper should address three issues: the military dimension of European internal security (see below); the extent of, and limits on, the division of

labour between the US and Europe; and elements of an EU military doctrine. The division of labour issue is one of the most difficult topics facing the transatlantic relationship today. The present situation whereby the US 'kicks in doors' and the EU 'cleans the house' is unsustainable politically. The EU and the US need to discuss alternatives. For example, the transatlantic allies could agree that the EU needs greater military power, but that the US should be more involved in stabilisation and reconstruction missions (see Michael O'Hanlon's essay). The idea of an EU military doctrine is controversial (see Lawrence Freedman's essay). But since the EU is now conducting military operations, elements of an EU military doctrine for future missions are bound to emerge from these experiences.

★ Design a strategy for EU internal security

One of the major policy gaps in the ESS is internal security – known in the US as 'homeland security'. The EU urgently needs a document which distinguishes between those aspects of internal security that are a national or regional responsibility, and those that require an EU-wide response. The European arrest warrant, which national governments agreed upon in 2001, is an example of a useful policy development at the European level, but at the time of writing (May 2004) Germany, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands had still not implemented it. A European homeland security strategy would also need to consider how to organise EU-led co-ordination beyond the limited Response Centre in the Commission's environment directorate. The EU Response Centre has been active since January 2002 and operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It co-ordinates the assistance offered by the participating countries in case of natural or man-made disasters, inside and outside the EU. It was active, for instance, during the floods in Central Europe in August 2002, and the forest fires in Portugal and France in August 2003.

An EU internal security strategy would have to articulate the interaction between the broad spectrum of policy tools – intelligence,

justice, police, public health, civil defence and military – that are involved in homeland security and defence.

The EU also needs a High Representative for internal security, answerable to both the Commission and the Council. Such a figure should have three roles: co-ordinating existing EU efforts; planning EU-wide (or EU-supported) preparations for terrorist attacks; and, if there were an EU-scale emergency, mobilising dedicated EU assets and implementing operational plans. For example, if Paris suffered a biological attack, France's neighbours could be affected – infectious agents can travel easily through the air – and there would be a need for an EU-level response. Gijs de Vries, the newly appointed counter-terrorism 'tsar', will only co-ordinate the efforts of national police and intelligence services. He has no mandate to try to improve the EU's preparation for, and response to, terrorist attacks.

★ Establish a permanent EU-US secretariat

NATO cannot co-ordinate the full range of policy areas that concern the US and the EU. Many of the policy instruments that are relevant to tackling the new threats – notably trade and aid – cannot be handled through purely bilateral channels either. A more effective EU-US interface is needed. The annual EU-US summits already provide a foundation for such a development. But thus far these summits have followed a bureaucratic agenda, producing endless shopping lists of 'key priorities'. They have not allowed for action-oriented discussions on a small set of key issues. There are encouraging signs on both sides of the Atlantic of a willingness to discuss areas of common concern, and to consider a wide range of policy options. For example, at the June 2003 EU-US summit, leaders were involved in an intensive discussion on how to handle Iran, including Tehran's nuclear programme. However, there is no proper preparation or follow-up of these annual meetings. Hence the need to set up a permanent EU-US secretariat. This secretariat would be especially useful for handling the increasingly important issue of

relations with East Asia, as well as with the greater Middle East. The EU's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, should head the EU part of the secretariat.

4 The American way of war: the lessons for Europe

Michael O'Hanlon

During the 1990s, the United States significantly changed the capabilities, if not the structure and configuration, of its armed forces. This process of change is sometimes called 'transformation' in defence jargon. Different defence analysts use the term transformation differently. Most narrowly, and most convincingly, it means that the Pentagon has introduced new military technologies, based on computers and telecommunications. According to many defence analysts, this rapid military transformation has increased US advantages over other countries, and simultaneously made it ever more difficult for European allies to work alongside American soldiers. The origins of these perceptions lie in the 1991 Gulf war, when the US dominated the transatlantic military effort. NATO's 1999 war in Kosovo subsequently reinforced these perceptions. Meanwhile, on the ground, European armed forces bore the brunt of the difficult UNPROFOR mission in Bosnia in the early 1990s. And Europeans also provided the bulk of the troops for the subsequent, and more successful, peacekeeping missions in Bosnia starting in 1995 and in Kosovo after the Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic capitulated in 1999.

The conventional wisdom among defence analysts holds that in US-European relations there is a neat division of labour: the US 'cooks dinner', dominating the war-fighting effort, before the Europeans step in to 'do the dishes', consolidating successful battlefield outcomes through peacekeeping. Some defence experts argue that this division of labour plays not only to America's strengths, but to

those of Europe as well, since European soldiers are arguably better at peacekeeping than US forces.

However, the overall record of interventions in the Balkans and elsewhere suggests that the most problematic transatlantic defence issue is not the relative ability to keep the peace, but rather the relative ability to fight wars. And it is in this area that the Europeans are weak. Promises by EU governments to improve their military capabilities have not yet changed this reality. Static, and in some cases falling, defence budgets are an important reason for Europe's failure to improve its ability to deploy troops quickly into crisis areas. But just as important is the tendency of European countries to over-invest in manpower-heavy forces which have a limited ability to deploy and operate abroad. EU enlargement in May 2004 will do nothing to change these trends, since it adds ten more manpower-heavy armies to the Union. In battlefield terms, this is exactly what the EU does not need.

Events since the atrocities of September 11th 2001 have reinforced these perceptions. The US waged an impressive war in Afghanistan with help from the Afghan Northern Alliance. Overall, the European contribution was marginal. Afterwards, the US continued operations against the Taleban, while NATO allies took on the job of trying to keep the peace. Soon after its impressive victory, the US decided not to devote more troops to the Afghan stabilisation effort, focusing instead on the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. As the debate over Iraq developed, Robert Kagan's influential book 'Of Paradise and Power' seemed to capture a transatlantic divide.¹⁸

¹⁸ Robert Kagan, *Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the new world order*, Atlantic Books, 2003. Most memorable was Kagan's claim that Europeans – who stereotypically believe in negotiation, reconciliation, peacekeeping and hence love – are from Venus, whereas their more warlike American counterparts are from Mars.

These images of a growing transatlantic rift have elements of truth behind them. But they are neither as profound nor as systemic as

Kagan has argued. Moreover, transatlantic divisions are not as inherent in the basic realities of modern military technology and defence economics as many analysts believe. If the transatlantic military divide grows in coming years, the biggest cause will be a failure by policy-makers. This is because there are sound strategic and political reasons, along with military and technological factors, why the transatlantic divide should not grow.¹⁹

¹⁹ See Phil Gordon and Jeremy Shapiro, *'Allies at War: America, Europe and the split over Iraq'*, McGraw Hill, 2004.

If the Europeans made smarter defence planning choices, they could have their cake and eat it. EU governments should be able to retain their expertise in peacekeeping and nation-building while improving their high-end combat capabilities. And they can do so, in most cases, without large defence budget increases. To put the same point differently: Europeans should follow the British model. They should opt for somewhat smaller professional forces that are well provisioned logistically, even on a remote battlefield. European governments should be able to deploy these troops to distant locations with adequate numbers of air and sea transport vehicles, and they should be well supported with advanced sensors, munitions, computers and communications systems. None of these capabilities are so expensive as to be beyond European reach.

There is no deep strategic schism across the Atlantic

In contrast to Kagan, it is perfectly plausible to argue that the dominant post-Cold War world-views in Europe and America have been more similar than divergent. First, if the recent American response to overseas crises has been particularly muscular, this is largely because it was the US that was attacked on September 11th 2001, and it is the US which remains al-Qaeda's principal target. Many analysts have suggested that Europe has suffered similar terrorism in recent years. But with the important exceptions of the November 2003 attacks in Istanbul and the March 2004 attacks in Madrid, that assertion is unconvincing. Countries like Britain, France and Italy have suffered terribly from terrorism in recent

decades, and the terrorist death toll in Northern Ireland is cumulatively comparable to that of September 11th. But 3,000 people were killed all at once in New York and Washington. Given the targets struck, the attack had the potential – and the intention – to kill ten times as many. Furthermore, a group pursuing weapons of mass destruction and bent on apocalyptic terror carried out the attacks. Al-Qaeda certainly despises the Saudi regime and Israel, and it targets those countries which collaborate with American policy. However, within the western world, the US was, is and will probably remain al-Qaeda's primary target.

Second, since 1989 Europe has run greater military risks than most pundits in Washington appreciate. America's European allies in NATO deployed some 70,000 troops to Iraq in 1991, half of which were not from Britain. If Europeans did not deploy even more troops, this was principally due to the legacy of Cold War planning and force structures, which focused on defending Europe against a Soviet invasion rather than projecting military forces outside Europe. Moreover, the steadfastness of many European allies in the face of significant losses in Bosnia during 1992-95 stands in a stark contrast to the lack of US resolve in Somalia in 1992-1993 and its non-intervention in Rwanda in 1994. In Bosnia in 1995, European ground forces helped to force Milosevic to sign a peace deal, while US air forces continued in their new habit of staying at – or above – an altitude of 10,000 feet. The US was deeply reluctant to risk a ground war in Kosovo, and the Clinton administration studiously implemented risk-free military actions in response to al-Qaeda attacks in the 1990s.

After September 11th 2001, many European allies stressed that they were willing to do much more in Afghanistan than they were ultimately asked to undertake. The Americans politely declined most offers of aid, which was politically contentious but militarily understandable. The US was unsure of what strategy it would follow in Afghanistan. The Pentagon was more comfortable improvising with its own chain of command, rather than running the operation

through NATO, which would have required Washington to consult with 18 other governments. But none of that lessens the sincerity of the European offers.

Furthermore, American policy towards Iraq suggests that the transatlantic divide is less irreconcilable than it may appear. First, Al Gore, the last Democratic presidential candidate, opposed the war. If the majority of American voters had had their way in 2000, there would almost certainly not have been an invasion of Iraq, absent a much stronger and newer case for decisive action. Second, American and alliance politics required the Bush administration to work through the United Nations before taking military action. Had Saddam Hussein verifiably disarmed, as the UN Security Council demanded in resolution 1441, there probably would not have been a war. That would have disappointed Washington hardliners who had made it clear that they wanted to topple Saddam no matter what. But verifiable disarmament would have made it unlikely that Britain or Kuwait would support an invasion. President Bush would have found it difficult to convince the American people of the case for war, since he had said that he wanted to force Saddam to disarm himself or be disarmed by force. Had verifiable disarmament occurred, the White House's own stated case for war would have dissolved.

There is no transatlantic division of military labour

Talk of a tacit or even explicit military division of labour between Europe and the US should have stopped by now. In post-Saddam Iraq, the US has 'done more dishes' in a year than Europe has collectively ever done in a comparable period.

By far the greatest threat to the health of the US military in the coming months and years is an insufficient number of troops to help with nation-building. The Pentagon's problem is neither an insufficient military transformation nor an inability to work with technologically inferior allies. The US Army has 33 active-duty combat brigades (a brigade usually has 3,000-5,000 soldiers). During

much of the spring and summer of 2003, 16 brigades were in Iraq. Two more brigades were deployed in Korea, away from a permanent base and their families, and another brigade was in Afghanistan.²⁰ That makes a total of 19. In early 2004, about ten more Army

²⁰ *National Guard units, America's equivalent of Britain's Territorial Army, now largely handle the US combat presence in the Balkans.* brigades, together with the 1st Marine division that helped overthrow Saddam Hussein before going home, arrived in Iraq. Thus, virtually the entire combat force structure of the active-duty US Army will have been deployed to combat zones, and away from home bases and families, in either 2003 or 2004. And some units will have done two deployments.

What such regular and intense deployments mean for an all-volunteer force is unclear, but it is potentially dramatic. So far, recruitment and retention efforts have not suffered, in part because

²¹ *'Stop loss' orders mean that personnel whose volunteer commitments expire are forced to remain to the end of their overseas deployments, and up to 90 days after they come home.* 'stop loss' orders have prevented many soldiers from leaving the army, and in part because of the post-September 11th surge of patriotism in the US.²¹ The struggling American economy has limited the number of civilian job alternatives. And policy-makers had not fully conveyed the magnitude of the long-term challenge in Iraq to the American people before the war. Many soldiers are only now fully digesting what the future holds in store for them.

²² *See 'Troop rotation to Iraq continues, units assuming control', American Forces Information Service, March 31st 2004.*

The US has about 130,000 troops in Iraq at the time of writing.²² Even if the post-Saddam stabilisation mission can be largely 'Iraqified' during 2004, American forces there will still number well over 50,000 in 2005, and at least 30,000 in 2006. The new Iraqi army is forming only very slowly. Experience from other stabilisation missions suggests that force requirements drop by 25 to 50 per cent a year, but no more than that. So on its present course, the US will have to send several tens of thousands of troops back to Iraq for a second deployment after those troops have had no more

than a year – and maybe less – at home. Indeed, planning is already underway to have the 3rd infantry division, which did so much to take Baghdad in April 2003, return to Iraq in late 2004.

The problems for the US Army – and the irony about who is doing the dishwashing now – may be largely Iraq-specific. But given the sheer size of the effort in Iraq, the problems are of enormous consequence. Iraq has required roughly three times as many soldiers as Bosnia did at a similar stage, largely because it is at least five times the size, and because of the on-going violence and bloodshed. Moreover, coalition forces are currently engaged in a combination of peacekeeping, nation-building and counter-insurgency tasks. The Iraq experience will surely affect US force planning throughout the rest of this decade.

One important consequence of the Iraq mission is that it has muddied the distinction between the combat and post-combat phases of a conflict. The post-Saddam period is still a time of war. More Americans were killed in November 2003 than in either March or April 2003, when the intervention operation took place. March 2004 witnessed the loss of 50 American troops and the pace of killing accelerated to more than 100 in April. The US experience in Iraq thus proves that stabilisation efforts can be war-fighting missions and that counter-insurgency warfare is not outdated. Iraq has demonstrated that the US needs to be good – and indeed get better – at post-conflict stabilisation. Those European armed forces that are capable of conducting such missions well should not tire of that task, or view themselves as second-class participants.

America's future in messy military operations

Iraq and Afghanistan may not be the end of stabilisation, nation-building or peacekeeping missions. On the one hand, the Bush administration – for all its pre-emptive rhetoric – shies away from confronting the likes of North Korea, Iran and Syria with military force. On the other hand, it is easy to imagine other missions that

could require significant numbers of American combat troops to carry out traditional, somewhat tedious, and supposedly obsolescent activities like peacekeeping. The US is not out of the ‘dishwashing’ business yet. And anyway, ‘dishwashing’ – even in a colloquial and flip way – describes neither the difficulty nor the importance of so-called ‘lower intensity’ combat operations.

Adamant opponents of nation-building in the Bush administration may not like this reality very much. But their time in the White House has become the greatest period of US involvement with nation-building since the Truman administration (1945-53). Even if there is a second Bush term, that involvement will surely continue, given the continuing demands of the Iraq mission. This team of hardliners will be out of power before the US has the opportunity to even consider getting out of ‘dishwashing’ operations. Americans will probably continue to preach their distaste for stabilisation operations. But they will be obliged to remain prepared for post-conflict efforts, and quite often take the lead in carrying them out as well.

Saddam Hussein, one of the two tyrants who drove the Pentagon’s two-war planning paradigm in the 1990s, is out of power (the other was North Korea’s Kim il-Sung, followed by Kim Jong II). The Pentagon therefore has to rethink the basic planning scenarios for US armed forces, and the planning debates will be contentious for many reasons. For one, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wants to put more defence resources into technology and less into troops. For another, ‘nation-building’ remains taboo in some Pentagon circles, even in a world where everyone – progressive and conservative, American and European – seems to end up doing it whether they like the idea or not.

To illustrate: one possible scenario is a collapsing Pakistan, in which an Islamabad government would start to lose control of the country, and the prospect of extremists acquiring nuclear weapons would become real. In such circumstances, it is quite conceivable that US

ground forces would help to restore order in that large country. Ideally this mission would be conducted under multilateral auspices. But if necessary it could be carried out in response to a request from the Pakistani government. Instability – with consequences for the global war on terror – could also affect large countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Congo or Afghanistan. All these cases could require large multinational deployments, for which the Pentagon might have to provide tens of thousands of troops.

It is also possible to imagine scenarios involving more than one country, such as an Indo-Pakistani war over Kashmir that could escalate to the nuclear level. In those circumstances, Islamabad and New Delhi could table a joint request to the United Nations to accept temporary military and political responsibility for the province. That would require Americans and Europeans to participate in a large multinational peacekeeping force in Kashmir. Such a scenario may be anathema today, particularly to the Indians. But if the alternative was a real risk of nuclear war, thinking could evolve in both countries.

In many of these scenarios, US forces would take on a disproportionately large role in the early stages of tackling the conflict. That would not happen because of American spy satellites, precision-guided missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles. It would be because US armed forces have a lot of the simpler technology which most allies sadly lack. The most important examples are fast sea transport, deployable logistics equipment like mobile medical units, and all-volunteer combat units ready to deploy at a moment’s notice.

Europe’s future as part-time chef, part-time dishwasher

There are other combat scenarios in which high technology assets like spy satellites could make a huge difference. Those scenarios include possible wars in East Asia: for example a decision to defend Taiwan from attack by the People’s Republic of China, or to counter North Korean aggression. Another possible scenario would be an

Iranian attempt to wield influence in the Persian Gulf – for example by developing nuclear weapons or by trying to exert control over shipping in the Strait of Hormuz – that might require a military response from the US and Europe. For these and other missions, new defence technologies would be relevant. And it would be important for European armed forces to be able to contribute.

Why should America's NATO partners seek to build up their war-fighting capacity? The various scenarios outlined in the previous section suggest that infantry-oriented combat missions will remain central to NATO security. And there may come a time when a war will test the alliance, rather than just post-conflict peacekeeping operations. In such a war, it would not be healthy if US forces lost 10,000 troops, Britain lost 100, and the remaining 24 members of the alliance lost none at all. Nor would it be fair. In the end, military alliances are largely – if not principally – about preparing for war. They lose their meaning if only some members prepare for that eventuality. Moreover, European countries can hardly expect to have much influence over NATO decision-making if they appear to be 'free riders'. But that is exactly what they would be if they enjoyed secure oil and a stable international economic system, while US troops assumed almost all the military risk, and American taxpayers carried a disproportionate share of the financial burden.

Several consequences for European military planning flow from these observations. First, European competence at peacekeeping, nation-building, and counter-insurgency is nothing to be ashamed of. In fact, the US could use a great deal more help with these tasks in Iraq and Afghanistan. From an American perspective, it is a shame that European governments do not have more capabilities in these areas right now.

Second, if European armies are to perform the full range of prospective missions, they will need forces that governments can deploy rapidly. And they will need to be able to maintain them for sustained periods in conflict zones. Large numbers of troops on

paper contribute little in practice. In broad terms, therefore, European governments should acquire dozens of roll-on/roll-off transport ships, and long-range transport planes. European defence ministries will also need combat units that have logistical support for repairing equipment, for supplying and treating wounded soldiers, and for moving fuel, water and ammunition on the battlefield. The goal for EU governments should be to develop the capacity to move several army divisions and several fighter squadrons rapidly, and with full logistical support – roughly 200,000 troops in total. The US has a deployable capacity of around 400,000 troops, so a European contribution of 200,000 soldiers would compare reasonably well.¹⁷

²³ See Michael O'Hanlon, *Expanding Global Military Capacity for Humanitarian Intervention*, Brookings, 2003.

Third, sophisticated technology and new war-fighting concepts are important. But it is not necessary for Europe to mimic the US armed forces. Britain's relatively inexpensive, yet highly deployable and effective armed forces are a better model for other European countries to emulate. British armed forces account for no more than a fifth of Europe's defence spending, but half of its useful military manpower. Another good model is the US Marine Corps, which on less than €16 billion (\$20 billion) a year is an important complement to the US Army for peace-support and war-fighting missions. At some point, however, money does matter. Germany's armed forces, in particular, have a less than fully credible plan for creating a more deployable force, because of the dramatic decline in its defence budget. Germany will slash a massive €26 billion from its defence spending over the next five years. That said, most European countries do not need large increases in their defence budgets.

Nor do all types of sophisticated technology matter equally. The US Marines depend on other US armed services for high-tech reconnaissance, intelligence and communications equipment. The Marines also depend on the Navy and the Air Force for transport; but even if one adjusts for this bureaucratic fact, their equivalent annual budget is still under €20 billion (\$25 billion). This is not to

suggest that European governments should abandon their efforts to remain at the cutting edge of military technology and depend solely on US technology. But multiple versions of major combat systems are inefficiencies that NATO cannot afford. For example, Europe does not need to continue producing three different types of fighter jet, as it is doing at the moment with the Eurofighter, the Rafale and the Gripen.

The budgetary implications of this set of proposals are straightforward. If they budget well, the European members of NATO can retain and improve their capacity for peace and stabilisation operations, while improving their higher-end combat capabilities even without major increases in defence spending. Over the next five to ten years, European governments should spend €40 billion (\$50 billion) more on long-range transport vehicles (ships as much as planes) and deployable logistics equipment for moving vital supplies like ammunition, food and medicine. And EU defence ministries should collectively spend the same amount, €40 billion, on high-pay-off – but relatively inexpensive – goods, such as precision-guided missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, and advanced sensors like radar.

These initiatives would require almost 10 per cent of annual European defence resources, spread out over a decade. Given European budget constraints, the only way to pay for these initiatives would be to cut troop numbers in each member-state by roughly a quarter, on average. Europe has nearly twice as many ground troops as the US, yet can only deploy 5 per cent of those forces promptly – a ratio that is ten times worse than America's. Thus, the case for change is overwhelmingly strong. With these initiatives, the EU would have several army divisions and air squadrons plus support staff, totalling roughly 200,000 personnel, for use in both conflict and post-conflict operations. EU governments would collectively field half as much deployable military capability as the US. And NATO would also benefit, since the same military resources would be available to the alliance.

With this type of initiative, Europe can move beyond the stereotypes and metaphors of dishwashing and cooking, paradise and power, and Venus and Mars. And NATO would return to the kind of balanced sharing of burdens and risks that made it the most successful alliance in history during the Cold War.

5 Conclusion: the significance of European defence

Charles Grant

The conventional wisdom on the Europeans' attempts to build a common defence policy is that they have achieved little of significance. Many regard the effort as doomed, given the political divisions over how to handle the US, the huge gap in military capabilities between the best- and worst-performing EU countries, and the lack of consensus on when and in what circumstances force should be used. The reality, however, is that shared interests, challenges and experiences are pushing Europe's governments and armed forces to develop a more common approach to warfare. Both NATO and the EU's nascent defence organisation are encouraging this convergence. The result will be a more capable and action-orientated EU – the kind of Union the US should welcome.

The Europeans' hesitant steps towards working together in defence should be viewed in the context of the Union's overall development. The member-states have already integrated the management of their economies to a significant degree – unifying their trade policy, establishing an independent competition authority in Brussels, building a single market and creating the euro. In the coming decades it will be co-operation on justice and home affairs (JHA), and also on foreign and defence policy, that drives European integration. In JHA, practical problems such as terrorism, cross-border crime, asylum-seekers and illegal immigration are motivating governments to work towards common policies. In the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), too, the rationale is not integration for integration's sake – as if the heads of government had said to each other “we've done the single market, wouldn't it be fun

to build a common security policy?” Rather, there are pressing problems in the real world that make it essential for governments to act together at EU level.

The many challenges that will shape the CFSP include the need to stabilise the arc of instability which runs around the EU’s eastern, south-eastern and southern flanks; and the need to prevent the worst kinds of disaster in those parts of the world, notably sub-Saharan Africa, which the US is likely to steer clear of.

The EU must therefore make a better job of co-ordinating its policies and those of the member-states towards problem countries that may become sources of terrorism and instability. As the December 2003 European Security Strategy acknowledges, EU institutions and governments have seldom joined together their various policies on trade, aid, development, immigration and counter-terrorism. One potential strength of the EU – in contrast to NATO, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) or the World Bank – is that it can draw on a broad spectrum of soft- and hard-power resources. It should be able to calibrate its various policies to prevent a trouble-zone from erupting into war (in Macedonia, the diplomacy led by the EU’s Javier Solana and NATO’s George Robertson in the summer of 2001 did just that: the result was a political settlement that prevented the outbreak of war). However, if a war does break out, the EU needs to be able to deploy rapid-reaction forces to end the conflict, and then provide peacekeepers and other essential personnel – such as policemen, engineers and judges – to help rebuild the country.

In addition, four specific challenges face the EU:

- ★ The need to tackle the growing threat from biological, chemical, radiological and nuclear weapons. That means working with the US to strengthen existing non-proliferation regimes, such as the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and to develop new tools, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative. When

confronted with states that make, trade or use weapons of mass destruction, the EU and its member-states must be ready to apply a broad range of policies and instruments, including, as a last resort, military force.

- ★ The need to present a strong and united voice to governments and other partners in the Middle East. That will make it easier for the EU to help the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, and also to encourage the modernisation and democratisation of the wider region.
- ★ The need to forge a common EU policy on Russia, so that the Union can build a more balanced and fruitful political and economic partnership with its large eastern neighbour.
- ★ The need to encourage the US to listen to European views, and to take account of European policies. The US is not likely to do so unless the EU becomes a more coherent and effective international actor.

Europe cannot fulfil these objectives without a more effective CFSP. And part of that must be a meaningful European defence policy. As the European Security Strategy puts it, “we need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention”.

Plenty of commentators, particularly those of a Eurosceptic bent, argue that it is hard to take the idea of EU foreign policy seriously. Haven’t Iraq and numerous other intra-European disputes shown the futility of attempts to build EU foreign policy, and thus of EU defence policy, they ask? It is true that if the European states could not develop any common foreign policy, there would be little rationale for much closer military co-operation. Defence policy is a tool that should work in the service of foreign policy. There is not much point in the EU as such deploying military force – whether to provide humanitarian relief, to keep the peace, to

intervene in a conflict, to destroy a terrorist base or to topple a dangerous regime – unless the member-states share a common view on the nature of the problem, and how best to deal with it.

²⁴ See Steven Everts, 'Engaging Iran: a test case for EU foreign policy', CER, March 2004.

However, notwithstanding the rows on Iraq, Europeans have more in common on foreign policy than many people realise. Europeans agree on Iran, where they support a policy of conditional engagement rather than the US policy of isolation.²⁴

They agree on the Middle East Peace Process, believing that the 'road map' offers a way forward towards a Palestinian state that would be based on the Gaza Strip and most of the West Bank (and they think that if Israel keeps part of the West Bank it should compensate the Palestinians with land swaps); since April 2004 President Bush has, arguably, abandoned that strategy. The Europeans have common policies on the principal international arms control treaties and agreements, several of which the US has rejected. They agree on the future of the Balkans, the Kyoto protocol and the International Criminal Court. And the Europeans believe that the United Nations should play a central role in global governance.

In some important parts of the world, notably Russia, the EU countries have failed to agree on effective common policies – but they do have very similar interests. Silvio Berlusconi, Tony Blair, Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder have each sought a special relationship with Vladimir Putin. They have cosied up and refrained from criticising the Russian president, lest they lose their privileged position to another European leader. Sooner or later they will learn that they stand a better chance of fulfilling their objectives if they concert their efforts.

The member-states went through a not dissimilar learning process in the Balkans during the 1990s. When Yugoslavia fell apart, Britain, France and Germany had their own policies and backed different parties in the conflict. But the painful experience of having to

contain the wars soon taught them and the other EU governments that they could achieve much more through acting together.

Indeed, the idea that the EU should be able to run its own military operations originated in the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s. During the wars in Croatia and Bosnia, Slobodan Milosevic and others of his ilk took little notice of what the Union said: they knew that it could pass resolutions, but never dispatch battalions to enforce them. The Europeans also learned that the US was very reluctant to deploy troops to a region that it did not consider strategic: not until the Dayton accords ended the Bosnian war in 1995 did the US send ground troops to the region, to join the Europeans who had been there for three years. A few years later, when Kosovo was on the brink of exploding, the EU saw that its own diplomacy counted for little in the efforts to reconcile Serbs and Kosovars.

The EU's inability to tackle these Balkan crises spurred British prime minister Tony Blair and French president Jacques Chirac to launch the idea of EU defence at their summit in St Malo in December 1998. Other EU governments rallied to their lead, and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was born. In the spring of 1999, during the Kosovo air campaign, the EU governments – against expectations – held to a common line of supporting the NATO action. Scarred by the July 1995 Srebrenica massacre, which they had been unable to prevent, they wanted to ensure that that kind of tragedy did not occur again in Europe. One reason why the ESDP has made progress in subsequent years is that Europe's political leaders have not forgotten the lessons of the Balkan wars.

Five years of progress

As Lawrence Freedman points out in his essay, Britain and France have sometimes held differing views on the underlying purpose of the ESDP. Both hope that it will make the Union a stronger international actor. They differ on whether the point is for the EU to become a more effective partner for the US, helping it to sort out

global problems, or rather to promote a multipolar world that would serve to constrain US power. Yet they have always managed to agree on the next steps forward for European defence, including on the thorny issue of how the ESDP should fit in with NATO; and they have always managed to persuade the other governments to follow them. In that sense ESDP is a microcosm of the whole EU. The fact that the member-states have never agreed on what the EU is for has not prevented them from building the world's most successful and effective multilateral organisation.

The progress that the EU has made in the five-and-a-half years since St Malo is impressive. It has organised policing missions in Bosnia and Macedonia; a peacekeeping mission in Macedonia that is supported by NATO ('Berlin-plus' in the jargon); and an autonomous military intervention in the Congo.

²⁵ See Daniel Keohane, 'The EU and armaments co-operation', CER, December 2002.

Some of the progress has been institutional. The EU now has a Political and Security Committee of senior national diplomats, tasked with, among other things, the management of ESDP missions; a Military Committee of senior national officers and a full-time Military Staff, to advise the Council of Ministers; an embryonic civilian and military planning unit, that will help to co-ordinate military and non-military resources during autonomous EU missions; the OCCAR project management agency, which brings together the four member-states with the largest defence industries and allows them to run multinational equipment projects more efficiently than in the past;²⁵ and a plan for a European defence agency, to monitor the performance of governments on delivering the capabilities they promise, to co-ordinate R&D spending, and to promote a more common armaments market. The European constitution, if adopted, will commit the member-states to aid each other in the event of a terrorist event or military attack.

Freedman is justly cynical about the obsession of some EU states – often those that have the weakest military capabilities – with

building new institutions. He is right that EU governments should focus more on improving the skills and equipment of their armed forces. But he underestimates the potentially benign impact of the EU's defence institutions, modest though they are.²⁶ By bringing together officials and officers from the various member-states, and exposing them to each others' views and ways of thinking, they should – in the long run – help to forge a more common strategic culture. The result is unlikely to be a homogenised, lowest-common denominator culture. The institutions facilitate a transfer of expertise from the more capable nations to the less capable. They encourage peer-group pressure among the various national military elites. As Freedman acknowledges, the examples of Britain and France have strongly influenced the recent German plan to increase the number of troops that will be available for overseas interventions. The new defence agency could play a crucial role in institutionalising peer group pressure among the national military establishments. It must therefore be allowed to name and shame – in public – those governments which fail to fulfil their pledges on capabilities.

²⁶ *Altogether, including the embryonic defence agency, they will employ less than 300 people – while NATO has 19,500 in its headquarters, commands and agencies.*

Not only the Germans are engaged in military reform. France has introduced an all-professional army, Italy will have one in 2005 and Spain is following suit. Europe's defence ministries have undertaken to provide elite troops for the NATO Response Force (NRF) and also for EU battle groups, both of which should be able to deploy at short notice. These two formations will develop in a mutually reinforcing way, sometimes drawing on the same units, and increasing the total number of soldiers available for serious combat missions.

Few Europeans, let alone Americans, have noticed that the number of European troops deployed outside the EU and NATO areas has roughly doubled over the past ten years. The 15 EU states had about 60,000 soldiers deployed during 2003 – exactly the number the Union had pledged to be capable of deploying in the 'headline goal'

²⁷ For a thorough analysis of European troop numbers, see Bastian Giegerich and William Wallace, 'Not such a soft power: the external deployment of European armed forces', *Survival*, Summer 2004.

adopted in December 1999. If one includes the ten countries that joined the Union in May 2004, plus the other European members of NATO, the number rises to an average of 70,000 troops during 2003. That figure peaked at 90,000 during the British deployment in Iraq.²⁷

The Europeans also have new weapon systems entering into service – though some of them, it must be acknowledged, are probably not worth the huge cost. The Eurofighter is a very capable interceptor, but the Russian airforce that it was designed to fight is no longer a threat. Similarly, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Sweden have invested in the Meteor air-to-air missile, which is apparently more capable than the equivalent American missile. But it is hard to imagine why any European airforce would need the Meteor.

Nevertheless other procurement decisions have endowed the Europeans with more useful sorts of equipment. The Franco-British Storm Shadow air-to-ground cruise missile has entered service and is more accurate than American Tomahawks, while seven nations are building the A-400M transport plane. Britain, Finland, France and Sweden have invested heavily in new telecoms equipment for their ground forces. Britain, France, the Netherlands and Portugal have bought new ships for amphibious warfare. Several countries are developing unmanned aerial vehicles. Several have bought chemical and biological warfare protection suits.

Much of this new equipment will be used by more than one member-state. That in itself will do something to encourage the emergence of common tactics. But a more powerful factor promoting convergence will be the missions that Europeans undertake together. They have already had the experience of working with other Europeans under a NATO hat in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, and under an EU hat in Macedonia and the Congo. The number and scope of such missions is likely to grow

in the years ahead. By the end of 2004 the EU is likely to be running a seven thousand-strong peacekeeping operation in Bosnia.

The ESDP's progress has not depended only on the availability of troops and equipment. One of the new EU institutions is a committee of national officials known as CivCom. Its task is to develop the civilian capabilities that may be needed to support crisis management missions. At the June 2001 Gothenburg summit EU leaders adopted a set of civilian targets, including the ability to deploy:

- ★ five thousand police officers, of whom a thousand would be deployable within 30 days;
- ★ two hundred legal officials, to help the police with criminal justice procedures;
- ★ a pool of experts to take on tasks of civil administration; and
- ★ two thousand personnel for intervention teams for disaster relief.

These targets have been met, thanks to voluntary contributions from the member-states, though so far only policemen have been deployed. More work needs to be done before missions involving the other kinds of expert become feasible. These personnel are available not only to the EU but also to the UN and the OSCE. Any EU decision to deploy civilian capabilities requires unanimity.

Europe's big three

One reason why EU defence has progressed so far is that the 'big three' – Britain, France and Germany – have viewed the project as significant and committed themselves to its success. Ever since St Malo, a certain pattern has repeated itself: Britain and France argue about a new initiative and then agree on the details; Germany lends

²⁸ For an optimistic overview of the recent history of ESDP, see Anand Menon, 'Every cloud...ESDP after Iraq', *International Affairs*, July 2004 (forthcoming).

support; the other member-states follow; and finally, after a lot of grumbling from the Americans, Britain persuades them to tolerate the change.

This trilateral co-operation survived the bust-up over Iraq, but only just.²⁸ In April 2003, when relations between London, on the one hand, and Berlin and Paris, on the other, were at an all-time low, the French,

German, Belgian and Luxembourg leaders met in Brussels. They announced plans for a defence organisation involving an 'inner core' of EU members, and a permanent military headquarters at Tervuren near Brussels. This summit, coming in the midst of the poisonous diplomacy surrounding the Iraq war, nearly killed off the ESDP: the initiative seemed to confirm the worst fears of British and American policy-makers, namely that France's ultimate ambition was to build a defence club that excluded Anglo Saxons and East Europeans, and undermined NATO. Even the most moderate policy-makers in Washington concluded that ESDP had been a big mistake. Yet the Tervuren initiative made sense to the Chirac and Schröder camps, which felt that the Blair government had become so close to the Bush administration that it was no longer capable of working constructively on European defence.

During the summer President Chirac and Chancellor Schröder pulled back from their strongly anti-Anglo Saxon stance. They observed that the overwhelming majority of EU governments was hostile to the Tervuren initiative. Their advisers stopped talking about a triple alliance between France, Germany and Russia. The French and German governments came round to the view that their alliance, on its own, was not enough to forge effective European foreign and defence policies. They needed the British, too – for their diplomatic and military resources, for their contacts in Washington, and for their influence in Central and Eastern Europe on military issues.

Tony Blair also repositioned himself during the summer. He saw how his passionate support for the foreign policy of George Bush

had lost him friends in Europe. Not only in Paris and Berlin, but also in other countries that had not taken sides during the diplomatic rows over Iraq (such as the Nordic states), Blair was a diminished figure. Blair believes that Britain should both lead in Europe and be the US's best European ally. He had sacrificed the first objective to secure the second. He needed to show European governments that he was, Iraq notwithstanding, a committed European. What better way than to reaffirm his commitment to European defence, an area where Britain's expertise made it a natural leader?

The consequence of these shifts was a trilateral summit in Berlin in September 2003. Blair, Chirac and Schröder shared a common concern that enlargement would make decision-making increasingly hard, and they thought that regular meetings *à trois* would help to move along EU business. More specifically they wanted to strengthen EU foreign and defence policy. Soon after this summit they sent their foreign ministers to Tehran, to negotiate with the Iranians on their nuclear facilities.²⁹

The summit also led to a series of discussions between Berlin, London and Paris on three contentious issues in European defence: the question of enhancing the EU's planning staff, the mutual defence clause in the draft constitution, and the 'structured co-operation' clause in the same document. By November the three governments had forged compromises on those issues, and the other EU governments signed up in December.³⁰ With some difficulty, Blair persuaded the Bush administration to accept these agreements.

This pattern repeated itself early in 2004, with the British-French proposal for EU battle groups. Germany gave support at a

²⁹ In the short term, at least, the mission was a success: the Iranian government accepted more stringent International Atomic Energy Authority inspections of its facilities, and announced a suspension of uranium enrichment; in return the EU left open the possibility of a trade agreement and agreed not to refer Iran's violations of the NPT to the UN Security Council.

³⁰ For more details, see Charles Grant, 'Reviving European defence co-operation', *NATO Review*, Winter 2003; and Charles Grant, 'Big three join forces on defence', *E!Sharp*, March 2004.

trilateral summit in Berlin in March, and in April the other governments backed a plan for the EU to have nine deployable battle groups by 2007.

Big three co-operation will continue to be a condition for progress in European defence, for two reasons. One is that each of the three represents a very different tendency: the British are strongly Atlanticist, the French stress the need for Europe to be able to act

autonomously, and the Germans are the most reluctant to deploy troops overseas or to use force. Therefore if these three can agree on a policy or an action, there is a good chance that most of the other member-states will go along with it.

³¹ See Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, 'Peut-il y avoir une défense européenne autonome?', transcript of conference speech, *Les Entretiens d'Europartenaies*, February 24th 2004.

The other reason is that the big three have the means to act. Between them they spend roughly three quarters of the total sum spent by EU governments on procurement, and three quarters of the sum spent on military R&D. They have about three quarters of the European defence industry's capacity.³¹ And although an exact figure is hard to pin down, they provide the overwhelming majority of the troops who are able to serve outside the EU on peacekeeping or combat missions.

Italy is still perceived as a country that punches below its weight in foreign and defence policy. It has suffered from a tradition of relatively unstable governments and inefficient administrations, from having been more peripheral to EU decision-making than France and Germany, and from lacking the intimate ties in Washington that Britain enjoys. Yet the Italians score far better than any country apart from the big three on most military criteria. They spend only a little less than Germany on arms procurement. In spring 2004 they had about 10,000 troops active on overseas missions, including in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. The Italians distinguished themselves in Iraq in April, when their forces recaptured several towns from Muqtada al-Sadr's militia. If Italy could find a way of improving its equipment

– it has inadequate transport planes, yet has pulled out of the A-400M project – it could make a strong case for some trilateral meetings becoming quadrilateral.

Co-operation among the big three is evidently a sensitive matter that is bound to upset some states, particularly those which are not so small, like Italy, Spain and Poland. In order to ensure that trilateral meetings do not provoke hostile alliances of those excluded, the big three will need to observe certain principles. They should run their meetings in a transparent spirit, explaining to the rest of the EU exactly what, if anything, they agree upon, as soon as possible. They should include EU officials where appropriate, to enhance the legitimacy of their gatherings (for example if the three foreign ministers had taken Solana to Tehran, they could have more easily sold the resultant deal to the other EU governments). And, depending on the subject under consideration, they should invite other countries to join them. If the three met to discuss a security crisis in Ukraine, for example, they should involve Poland and Ukraine's other neighbours.

What role for NATO?

Without any doubt, NATO has become a less important organisation for both Americans and Europeans in recent years. The experience of the Kosovo air campaign, with its war-by-committee management structure, made a big impact on American generals and strategists. "If anyone thinks that the US is ever going to use the North Atlantic Council [NATO's supreme body] to run another major military campaign, they must be smoking pot", a senior Pentagon official explained to this author in April 2004. Europeans note some decline in the quality of US personnel sent to NATO's European headquarters. For their part the Europeans – excepting those from Eastern Europe who have recently joined the organisation – talk about NATO rather less than they used to. This is partly because they observe the lower level of American interest, and partly because they have been

spending more time and energy on ESDP. A more important factor, however, is that the rows over Iraq have weakened the transatlantic bond which sustains NATO, and thus diminished the political salience of the alliance.

And yet, in both Washington and the European capitals, senior officials and politicians still view NATO as very useful organisation, albeit one that is less significant geopolitically. The alliance is showing signs of vitality: the new Transformation Command in Norfolk, Virginia is helping Europeans to understand 'network-centric warfare', while the creation of the NATO Response Force is encouraging them to train and equip more troops for war-fighting. NATO has learned to deploy troops outside its European base, to Afghanistan, and may do the same in Iraq, where a majority of its members are engaged in the US-led coalition. Seven East European states joined the alliance in April 2004, while the Western Balkan countries are queuing up to join. These countries want to join because they understand that membership will enhance their stability and security.

There is widespread recognition on both sides of the Atlantic that NATO serves many valuable, if humdrum purposes. In the words of the Pentagon official quoted above, "the real value of NATO is its peacetime preparatory work for what in wartime will become coalitions of the willing". He referred to NATO's efforts to promote common standards and inter-operability among its members' forces, to the training and exercises that it organises, and to the positive effect of armies working together on peacekeeping missions. "The human contact is important. Then when there is a crisis you can pull the team together more easily."

Something that not all Pentagon officials are aware of is that France, since the Iraq war, has decided to take NATO much more seriously. This policy has been laid down by President Chirac himself. The French government sees NATO as the only multilateral organisation that is valued by the hard-liners in the Bush administration, and understands that it is, potentially, a constraint on US unilateralism.

Hence France's enthusiasm for participating at a senior level in the Transformation Command and the NRF.

NATO remains the only transatlantic institution of any substance, and for that reason alone is probably condemned to something close to eternal life. It provides a vehicle for Europeans and Americans to talk about security challenges. The NATO-Russia council is a forum in which Russians, Europeans and Americans can discuss common problems (and one which the Russians find useful). The Partnership for Peace programme now extends far into Asia and probably has a benign if modest effect on spreading good practice to some rather undemocratic regimes. And NATO's formal dialogue with seven countries in the Middle East could become a part of wider plans to assist that region's transformation.

A lot of the things that NATO does are making a positive impact on European defence. Its institutions and procedures encourage a convergence of thinking and the transfer of best practice. So why should the EU itself bother with a role in defence? Why not leave European security to NATO?

The answer is that the EU and NATO are different organisations with different purposes. Europe needs a defence capability because it has, on some issues, a common foreign policy. The EU can better promote its common interests by reinforcing its foreign policy with a military component. NATO serves a different – though usually complementary – purpose to the EU, which is to promote transatlantic co-operation on security policy and military affairs. Of course, if the EU had nothing significant to say about foreign policy, there would be an overwhelming case for scrapping the ESDP and leaving all of Europe's security to NATO. But that is not the case. The ESDP is needed for when the alliance as a whole is not engaged. For example, in 2003 the UN needed elite forces to intervene rapidly in the Eastern Congo. The US did not want to become involved so it made sense for the EU rather than NATO to organise the mission.

Although the political objectives of NATO and the ESDP are distinct, there is much overlap in the nitty-gritty practical work that they engage in. For example, each of them is trying – with much effort but not yet great success – to improve the military capabilities of European forces. If either of them succeeds, both will reap the benefit. The ‘Berlin-plus’ agreements, which allow the EU to borrow NATO military assets, show that the EU does not intend to engage in the most demanding types of mission without NATO support. The same soldiers and equipment which embark on EU missions will later serve under a NATO flag, and vice versa. There is still some mutual suspicion between the two organisations, which is the natural consequence of two bureaucracies being asked to work together. In long run, each will influence and better understand the other. NATO and the EU are condemned to partnership.

A glimpse of the future

The EU needs a defence capability not to fulfil some federalist dream, but rather to help it tackle the challenges mentioned at the start of this chapter. Of all those challenges, the most crucial is the need to ensure the security, stability and prosperity of the EU’s near abroad. Otherwise the EU will be surrounded by countries that are sources of armed conflict, illegal immigration, organised crime and terrorism. It needs to make a better job of exploiting its innate strength, which should be the ability to integrate the use of civilian and military instruments for managing crises. It must not forget the lessons learned in the Balkans during the 1990s: soft power alone is often unable to resolve conflicts. Equally it must take account of the recent experience of Afghanistan and Iraq: hard power can overthrow a noxious regime, but on its own cannot steer a war-torn country along the road to recovery. As the European Security Strategy puts it: “In almost every major intervention, military efficiency has been followed by civilian chaos.”

The Americans, quite rightly, assume that the EU should be able to look after its own neighbourhood. It is highly unlikely that the US

will want to send troops to places like Moldova, Montenegro, Tunisia or Sudan. The Europeans need to be able to improve their ability to act – through NATO for major security crises, and through the EU for other crises, especially those close to home. The need for European troop deployments in the EU’s near abroad is unlikely to diminish and will probably grow.

How will European defence evolve in the coming decades? European armies will employ more women, people from ethnic minorities, scientists, information technology experts and linguists. More Muslims will serve in European forces – as will mullahs – which may be useful for peacekeeping in some parts of the world.

European defence budgets are unlikely to rise a great deal. But Europe will have more usable and better-equipped troops, thanks to further progress with the conversion of conscript armies designed for territorial defence into smaller, professional forces that can deploy overseas. Long before it joins the EU, Turkey will become an active participant in ESDP, providing large numbers of extra troops for peacekeeping missions. As a European member of NATO, it has the right to take part in any EU mission that is mounted with NATO support.

The smaller European countries, well aware that ³² *Bastian Giegerich and William Wallace, op cit.* they will not fight wars on their own, will specialise in military roles that could be useful to the EU or NATO. Certain countries could focus, for example, on mine clearance, anti-submarine warfare, field hospitals, jamming enemy radar, defending troops against hostile missiles, protection against biological and chemical weapons, and so on. In Denmark there is already discussion of leaving air power to others, so that the Danes can invest more in land and sea forces.³² The smaller countries are also likely to club together to form multilateral forces; they will need to do so in order to provide the size of unit that will be required for participation in EU and NATO missions. Multinational forces will become more feasible because English will be the unquestioned military lingua franca.

³³ *The UK, having developed its own airborne ground surveillance system, will opt out of the NATO fleet.*

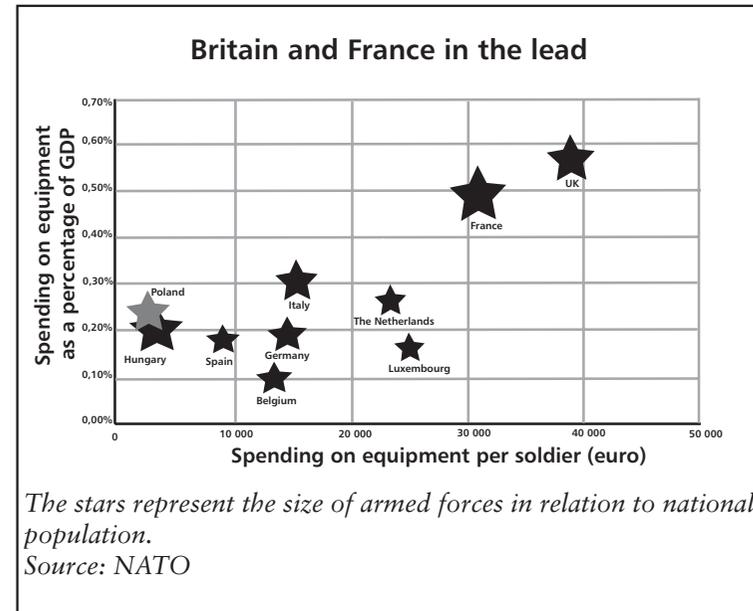
There will be more pooling of military equipment and support functions. NATO's decision in April 2004 to establish a common fleet of 'airborne ground surveillance' manned and unmanned aircraft – a fleet that would also be available to the EU – will set an example.³³ Governments are most likely to apply pooling to the less-sensitive sorts of military task. There will not be a multinational fighter squadron, but there may be a multinational organisation to train fighter pilots. Within a few years the EU governments may be lending their transport planes to a central pool that would service requests from the UN, NATO or the EU – though each member-state would be free to withdraw its aircraft if national needs were pressing. The countries buying the A400M transport plane may establish a single organisation to provide maintenance. And since Britain and France are building similar types of aircraft carrier, a joint support operation for those ships would make sense.

³⁴ *See Tim Garden and Charles Grant, 'Europe could pack a bigger punch by sharing', Financial Times, December 18th 2002.*

National defence bureaucracies will resist such pooling, for it would force them to change the way they work and to accept job losses. Some generals and politicians will complain about having to trust 'Johnny Foreigner'. But finance ministries, understanding that pooling permits a higher level of output for a given financial input, will drive it forward.³⁴

If and when the constitutional treaty enters into force, the EU will be better equipped to bring together the many policies and instruments that it can focus on security crises. The new EU foreign minister will be able to draw on the resources of both the Council of Ministers and the Commission, hitherto divided into separate 'pillars' within the EU bureaucracy. His or her job will be to co-ordinate foreign policy, trade policy, economic aid, humanitarian assistance, intelligence analysis and troop deployments. Within a few years the foreign minister will be able to call on the member-states to deploy not only 5,000 policemen, but also a further force of 5,000

gendarmes, armed police who can operate in a rougher environment (the French and Italian governments have already discussed the creation of such a force). These men and women will normally serve in national police or gendarme units, but be available for EU missions at short notice. The EU will also develop a 'civilian rapid reaction force', consisting of skilled professionals such as judges, prosecutors, doctors, nurses, customs experts, aid workers, water engineers and electrical engineers, all 'ear-marked' as ready to fly to a trouble zone at a few weeks' notice.



The net result of all the military co-operation within the EU and NATO will be a transfer of expertise from the most capable EU states to the less proficient. A European staff college (already under discussion at the time of writing) will encourage this transfer. More countries' armed forces will adopt the mentality, training and equipment that are appropriate for engaging in the kind of high-

intensity warfare at which France and Britain excel. The gap between Europe's most capable and least capable forces will remain large (the graphic on page 73 shows how large it is), but be less wide than it is today. For their part, the British and French forces and defence ministries will have to adapt to working in a more multilateral environment than is their wont. They will have to learn to listen to the views of other EU countries and be willing to take their preferences into account. But they will do so, in order to legitimise their informal leadership role. There will be no formal *directoire* of large countries to lead EU military operations. Those countries which provide the most troops, with the best equipment and the capacity to take on arduous missions, will inevitably fill the senior command positions.

In the coming years the foreign policy interests of the EU states are more likely to converge than diverge. They will therefore continue to develop a more coherent CFSP – and it will seem natural for them to step up co-operation on military operations. Public opinion, although generally sceptical of much that the EU does, is unlikely to object very much to EU military missions. Opinion polls show that the public is more appreciative of EU involvement in defence policy than in most other areas. According to the February 2004 Eurobarometer poll, 70 per cent of EU citizens support a common defence and security policy,

³⁵ http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb60/eb60_rapport_standard_en.pdf while 19 per cent do not; there is a majority in favour of the principle of a common defence and security policy in every member-state, Britain included.³⁵

In any case, EU military operations will not involve member-states giving up sovereignty through, for example, majority voting on troop deployments. Unanimity will be the rule. Those countries that wish to become involved in a mission will do so, and those which do not will opt out. Very slowly, the practice of working together on crisis-management missions will foster a more common European approach to warfare.

★



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A EUROPEAN WAY OF WAR

**Steven Everts, Lawrence Freedman,
Charles Grant, François Heisbourg,
Daniel Keohane and Michael O'Hanlon**

The Europeans should develop their own distinctive approach to warfare, argue the authors of this pamphlet. Although the Europeans can learn from the Americans on how to prepare for the most demanding sorts of military mission, they should build on their core strengths of peacekeeping, nation-building and counter-insurgency. Britain and France, having the most battle-honed armed forces, should take a lead in defining the European way. And the Americans have plenty to learn from the Europeans when it comes to stabilising countries after a conflict.

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